

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

History of Battle of Iwo Jima

The Battle of Iwo Jima from 19 February 1945 to 26 March 1945 marks one of the key offensives by American forces to achieve victory in our WW2 effort against the Japanese. This Japanese island is located 650 miles from Tokyo, midway between Japan and US bomber bases in the Marianas. The strategy anticipated was to allow for landing strips on Iwo Jima to accommodate short range escorts for our long range bombers, en route to bombing missions in Japan, to be defended from Japan's air assault by short range escorts. The Japanese didn't care for this American idea too much and had already begun a campaign to defend Iwo Jima to the very last Japanese soldier, with no hope of surrender or retreat, as there was no place to retreat to.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



American naval forces, about 450 ships had the island surrounded as never before that time in history, but yet the Japanese, numbering approximately 22,060 and were entrenched in over 16 miles of underground tunnels and interlocking caves. Even though our naval and air forces had commenced heavy shelling and bombing of the island on 15 June 1944, and continuing through the morning of 19 February 1945 our 30,000 Marines of 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine divisions encountered very heavy resistance because the heavily entrenched and fortified caves had provided shelter for the determined Japanese who knew these islands so close to Japan were instrumental to American forces who were just as determined to end this war as the Japanese were to conquer all American forces. Before it was over we had committed more than 60,000 US Marines, several thousand US Navy Seabees, alongside our US Navy, Army, Air Force, & Coast Guardsmen who represent, to this day the very best of American determination and love of country.

Mount Suribachi, on the south end of this small island where our Marines raised the first flag on this rough volcanic island is often thought of as the final chapter of this horribly expensive piece of real estate. It wasn't the final task of our Marines and our entire amphibious landing forces tough mission. The Motoyama Plateau on the northern end was yet heavily defended and must be taken in order for our forces to completely command and control this soon to be American outpost. As always and forever, our US Marines, in spite of heavy losses completed the arduous task of overcoming Japanese possession of Iwo Jima.

Almost 19,000 Japanese died, only 216 taken prisoner. There were 26,000 US casualties including 6,800 dead. Our Americans have risen to the occasion and always will, in spite of very heavy odds, and despite inevitable broken hearts, wounds to bodies, scars to souls and minds never to be erased. These young men of the Marines, Navy, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard well aware of these hardships in advance, were not deterred, as they knew they were there for our USA, you and I. Never, ever forget them; always honor our men & women of our armed forces.

Semper Paratus

Letters to The Editor

Feed the Hikers?

Dear Editor,

Very shortly, hundreds of hikers will descend upon Georgia with the dream of hiking the entire 2190 miles of the Appalachian Trail. So, is it time to buy up and organize food so that the "poor hikers" will be fed? Wait a minute! Remember when we used to feed the wild animals because they could not get enough to eat during the cold winter? Animals that are fed lose their survival skills and begin to count on humans to feed them. Then they get into trouble. As the saying goes, "a fed bear is a dead bear" is true for all animals.

Hikers organize and plan their food so that they can function properly when they are hiking the Trail. During the first week, they try out their food to see if they have the correct kind of food as well as its preparation. However, when there is a "Hiker Feed" at every road crossing, the rhythm is never developed. Thus, hikers do not get the chance to re-adjust their food when they come into Hiawassee. Then North Carolina comes along and they find they are unprepared. This may be part of the reason most hikers drop out in the first two weeks or so. By trying to help, you may be contributing to the problem!

The national organization that manages the A.T., (the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC)), writes: "Trail magic is an emotional subject for many hikers and for the people providing it. Strangers bestowing acts of kindness on A.T. hikers is a tradition documented in the earliest thru-hiker accounts. Most AT hikers have fond memories of receiving or giving this type of trail magic. Many thru-hikers have said being given food or drink by strangers, or even more, being brought home by strangers, and being housed and fed, renewed their "faith in humanity." For the people giving the trail magic it is also an emotional and rewarding experience. It often gives people, who might not otherwise be involved, a way to connect to the AT."

So, what can you do to help hikers and become somewhat of a "trail angel"? Again, ATC has some suggestions if you want to serve food:

1. Locate events in developed areas on durable surfaces. Large gatherings in the backcountry can lead to trampling of plants, soil compaction, and disturbance of wildlife habitat.
 2. Prepare and serve food safely.
 3. Be present if you provide food or drink. Unattended items—including their packaging—can harm wildlife that consume them, or hikers, when unrefrigerated products grow bacteria or become contaminated. Do not leave food at trail crossings since animals will attack the food.
 4. Restore the site. Leave the site as you found it.
 5. Advertise off-trail. Advertising—even noncommercial—is prohibited on the A.T.
 6. Forgo alcoholic beverages. Don't risk the legality and liability associated with serving minors.
 7. Be hospitable to all. While many long-distance hikers will likely appreciate trail magic, be sure to make all trail users and volunteers feel welcome.
- When you see hikers in Hiawassee, speak to them. Ask them how their hike is going and if you can help them in any way. One of their biggest needs is to get a ride back to the Trail. Go to Unicoi Gap or Dicks Creek Gap and greet hikers and give them a ride into Hiawassee. Perhaps even invite them to your home to share your southern hospitality.
- Remember: hikers do not really need your food, just your help, encouragement, and support!

Jerry Carnes
 Chair, Hiawassee/Towns County AT Community Program

In Their Own Words

We watched the State of the Union address. We watch those speeches no matter who occupies the White House, and though the words rarely move the needle for change, there is still a sense of watching history unfold.

Whether we're standing in ovation or scowling in our seats (like some of our celebrated representatives in Congress), we never expect to hear a speech that will make us richer or wiser. Politicians are not in the business of giving information we can use. They know we don't like to be bothered with details. We just want them to make us feel good.

But feeling good has become a zero sum equation in America. If one group of partisans feels good, it's necessary for their opposite to feel bad.

As the republicans applauded President Trump's statement about unemployment among African Americans being at an historic low, the cameras panned to a group of black representatives and democrats sitting in stony silence.

Like many of you reading this today, they probably knew that official unemployment numbers are meaningless when calculated independently of labor force participation, which is also near historic lows. Democrats only recognize that fact when republicans are in power, and vice versa.

Some of us want to believe that words are important, but in modern times the economy of words suffers inflation like the economy of money. Words and dollars are both cheaper by the dozen, and the vastly inflated money supply is matched by the volume of words circling the globe.

In recent years the weeping angels of western civilization have attempted to revalue certain words with bigger denominations. We have "trigger" words now, and we have to be careful that our inclusive and gender neutral words are understood within the proper context of identity and privilege. And culture. And religion. And political affiliation.

It's confusing. We don't like being offended, but we spend an inordinate amount of time taking offense from words, and trying to ferret out any hidden meaning or subtle offense hidden between the lines. We draw word boundaries around ourselves and dare people to offend us.

It is unfortunate for our feelings as well as our bank accounts that we have become so hypersensitive, almost allergic, to words. Some of us are so busy being "triggered" that we have trouble understanding what people say, and we are oblivious to what they actually do.

Mr. Trump, for example, has kept the echo chamber so occupied with being outraged and signalling virtue that few are noticing the long lasting changes, for good or for ill, that he is bringing to the judicial landscape and the administrative state.

Many of us have become poorer during all these years of wordy distraction. If our goal is to be offended (and poor) we don't need to do anything differently, but if we want to be better informed, we need to learn to assign proper value to words, especially where our great leaders are concerned. We need to pay much less attention to what they say, and much more to what they do.

How can we learn the true value of words when so much of the business of politics and broadcasting is dependent on keeping us offended? Perhaps a small shock to the system will broaden our perspective.

The following are quotes from people honored by history and popular culture. All have been praised for what they did, and some for what they said. Try to guess who made the statement before we tell you at the end of the quote, and remember, no one can offend you without your permission. In their own words:

"I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races." Abraham Lincoln.

"I don't go so far as to think that the only good Indians are dead Indians, but I believe nine out of ten are, and I should n't like to inquire too closely into the case of the tenth." Theodore Roosevelt said that.

"Some method must be devised to eliminate the degenerate and the defective; for

these act constantly to impede progress and ever increasingly drag down the human race." This quote is from birth control activist, Margaret Sanger.

"When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best... They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." Candidate Donald Trump

"...we have to send a clear message, just because your child gets across the border, that doesn't mean the child gets to stay." Hillary Clinton speaking about her book, "Hard Choices."

Finally, to quote someone who appears in pixel land as another political savior on the horizon, "I said this for apartheid South Africa, I said this for my own community in the South — there are still generations of people, older people, who were born and bred and marinated in it, in that prejudice and racism, and they just have to die." Oprah Winfrey said that.

Should we judge these people by what they said, or by what they accomplished? Do we understand the context of their statements?

In considering their careers and the body of work they produced, do we accept into evidence only those words that are misguided and impulsive, or do we give equal value to what is uplifting and constructive?

Did any of these random quotes reveal a flaw in someone we once venerated? Do we now see evil intent behind everything they said and did, or do we try to rationalize their mistakes? Do we rationalize only for the people we like?

Going forward, if someone we don't like does something good, can we recognize it? Or will we fail to recognize bad actions camouflaged by words that make us feel good?

Yes, words are important, but like our fiat currency they only have the value we give them. In politics, and especially in the nation's capital, words are almost meaningless.

The only thing that counts there is action, and distracted by words, we are increasingly blind to it.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Growing Transplants from Seeds

If you're like me, our January thaw always gets you in the mood for some planting! Well, the good news is that while spring may be a couple more months away, you can still start planning for growing your vegetable and ornamental transplants as the ground thaws.

UGA extension
 From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



I know many of us will buy transplants from garden centers, but honestly, the most cost effective way to produce your own fruits and veggies is by starting from seed and growing your own transplants. You should plant your seeds 6-8 weeks before you plan on putting them in the ground, so now is the perfect time to be shopping around for vegetable and flower varieties. When purchasing your seeds, make sure that they were packaged recently by looking at the information on the packet. The packaging will also have valuable information on how far apart the transplants will eventually need to be spaced, how deep the seed needs to be planted, and much more information.

Always use a "seed starting" mixture in a flat or some small pots as a planting medium. This material drains much better than top soil or potting soil, because seedlings are highly susceptible to rot diseases. This ensures your seeds and seedlings have enough water to germinate and grow while still avoiding disease. Though their roots are at risk of rot, the tissue above ground is also at risk of drying out, so use a cover on your flats or pots to hold in some humidity. Starting seedlings in individual cells of a flat or their own pots will prevent overcrowding, root entanglement, and competition for resources, reducing transplant shock upon planting.

Seedlings do best with 16 hours of daylight. Sometimes, you might need to supplement their light with a lamp if you do not get much sunlight indoors. If this is the case, always keep the light positioned 2-3 inches above the seedlings, raising the light source as they grow. After a few weeks, you will see the first "true" leaves emerge. At this point, the plant is ready to be "hardened off." This process also prevents transplant shock and should be started about two weeks prior to planting the transplants. Move the pots or flats containing your seedlings outside (as long as weather permits) and gradually expose them to more and more sunlight each day. This will allow them to get used to outdoor conditions so they will be better able to adapt once they are in the ground.

Once you are ready to plant them, make soil amendments according to the recommendations listed on your soil test, or on the seed packets. Garden soil and compost are great additions, but make sure to have some topsoil in there to support the plant. You'll be eating your favorite veggies are before you know it!

Speaking of transplanting, I feel that you all should know that I have accepted a position as a County Extension Agent in the metro-Atlanta area and will be transferring at the end of February. Unfortunately, that means I'll be unable to contribute columns beyond the first week of March. This column has been an absolute joy for me to write over the past two years, and I want to take the time to thank all of you for being such avid and faithful readers.

We will still have our North Georgia Vegetable Production Meeting on February 28th at the Experiment Station from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., so call the Union County Extension Office at 706-439-6030 to reserve your spot. Dinner and pesticide credit are provided for those who pre-register!



Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
	Every Tuesday:	
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Wednesday	
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Thursday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Friday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Sunday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	First Monday of each month:	
Mtn. Amat. Radio	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
	First Tuesday of each month:	
Alzheimer's Supp.	McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	6 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
	First Wednesday of each month:	
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
	First Thursday of each month:	
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Second Monday of each month:	
Chamber Board	1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
Historical Society	Old Rec. Center	5:30 pm
Mtn. Comp. Users	www.mcug.org	6 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	7 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Second Tuesday of each month:	
Caregiver support	Brasstown Manor	3 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Church	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Kenneth West Owner/Publisher
Charles Duncan Editor
Shawn Henrikson Copy Editor
Lowell Nicholson Photographer

Derek Richards Advertising Director
Shawn Jarrard Assistant Editor
Lily Avery Staff Writer
Website: townscountyherald.net

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$25. Out of County (1 Year) \$30. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee
 Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net
 Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546