

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Miss Georgia Mountain Fair

I've been out of commission for quite some time. I'm back at work now, and I'm getting out to cover various events in Towns and Union counties. On July 22, I covered Mountain Home Music and Crystal Gayle at Anderson Music Hall.

Straight Shooting
Charles Duncan
Editor



As my friends and I were leaving, I saw a familiar face, who welcomed me back to doing what I love to do - cover my community. We talked a bit about Crystal Gayle, then the conversation turned to Marty Haggard, son of the legendary Merle Haggard. She had to go back to work, so I had to end our conversation quickly.

I went back July 26 to cover Soco Creek out of Murphy, North Carolina (an excellent band), and Marty Haggard. The show was incredible, from both entertainers. However, I saw that familiar face again, standing on stage, and welcoming the crowd to the Soco Creek opening for Marty Haggard. It was there I learned that the familiar face had been crowned Miss Georgia Mountain Fair 2017. She also was named Miss Congeniality, and she claimed the talent competition.

After the show, I ran into the familiar face again. Towns County's own Eryn Cochran is the familiar face. She is going to college at Young Harris, where she will continue her collegiate basketball career this fall. I can't tell you how many stories that Jerry Kendall and I have written about Eryn during her outstanding high school career with the Lady Indians.

I don't mean to offend any Union County readers writing about a legendary Towns County basketball star. However, Eryn is a classic example of doing what you are meant to do.

She has the personality that makes her easy to communicate with - Eryn's goal is to become a physical therapist. Having dealt with many physical therapists over the last two years, I can tell you, she picked the right career. She's not shy, after all, she is Miss Georgia Mountain Fair 2017, and she has no problem speaking in front of large crowds.

She's a hometown girl - done good. When you become Miss Georgia Mountain Fair, all county lines are erased. I am so proud of Eryn, and I know the folks in Towns and Union counties are as well.

She'll likely be around for Fall Festival at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Take in a Lady Mountain Lion basketball game this season, and watch as Eryn lights up the court. She's not afraid to drive the lane and draw a foul. In fact, she's one of the best free throw shooters around in the NCAA.

So please join me in wishing Eryn Cochran much success as Miss Georgia Mountain Fair, and as a Young Harris College Lady Mountain Lion.

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

Many people are noticing changes occurring in the City of Hiawassee. New sidewalks (paid for with \$30K grant & \$22K SPLOST), cleanup all around town, at the Square, dead trees removed, new plantings, irrigation system, and the list goes on.

None of this would have occurred without Liz Ordiales, as former Council Member, now Mayor Pro Tem, working closely with other City Council members: Kris Berrong, Anne Mitchell, Rayette Ross, Jay Chastain, to make decisions that will finally put the City of Hiawassee into the 21st century without affecting our small town aura located in this beautiful setting of Lake Chatuge and the mountains.

As City Council Member and Mayor Pro Tem, Liz has led this Council in adopting ordinances for building construction, getting rid of blighted buildings, and the City Business Licenses are now paid by all businesses. The City of Hiawassee has beer and wine sales, and Sunday sales, as adopted by this Council. Ordinances are now being archived and will be on line, as well as the ability to pay city water bills on line.

An Employee Handbook detailing job responsibilities and establishing step evaluations for employees of each department of the City was completed. The City of Hiawassee is now in compliance with State Regulations for doing business under the City Charter. Liz has assisted Water Department personnel in resolving and finding the "200 missing water meters." Resources have been applied for, and been obtained, reserving City resources.

This Council and Mayor Pro Tem are reaching great strides to work with not only Towns County, but with other local area elected officials to share ideas and resources. Thank you for working on behalf of all citizens of Hiawassee.

We encourage City residents to attend the two monthly meetings held at City Hall, the regular meeting on the first Tuesday of the month and the work session on the last Monday of the month. Be a part of the exciting upcoming plans for the City of Hiawassee.

Joan Crothers and LaJean Turner

Dear Editor:

Climatic Change- A Matter of Risk Assessment

Depending on the study, the expert scientific consensus that climate change is real and caused by humans varies between 93% to 99.9%. Consider the following facts. The National Academy of Science of every country in the world agrees with climate change being caused by the human production of greenhouse gases. A recent study was done reviewing all peer reviewed papers mentioning climate change agreed that climate change was caused by humans. Only 5 rejected the idea. Every major scientific society in the world also agrees with this. 195 nations of the earth signed onto the Paris Climate Agreement. Only Syria and Nicaragua did not sign. Now the US is considering joining those elite two. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says there is a 95% chance that climate change is real and human caused. Considering the monumental risks involved if we do not act, that certainly would seem convincing evidence to act.

But what if the chance of it being real was only 50%, or 25%, or even 10%? With the risk of badly damaging life on earth as we know it for countless billions of people for many generations to come if we do not act, would even that 10% chance be enough to act? Let's put it another way. Consider that you and your family were considering crossing a bridge with a 2000 foot drop off below. Now consider that 93-99% of experts said that the bridge would break if you tried to cross it and you would be hurled downward, probably to your death. Would you cross? Would you cross if there were only a 10% chance of this happening? It is a matter of risk assessment. Now, considering the fact that we have clean energy alternatives available for almost the same price as fossil fuels, would it not be prudent to rapidly begin that conversion?

Plans such as a carbon fee and dividend plan show us that we can actually grow the economy while curbing greenhouse gases. Why not act? How much risk are we willing to take? The fate of the world may depend on our choices.

Vernon Dixon, MD

An Important Reminder

I'm thinking of the official "armistice" here of what is often referred to as our "Forgotten War".

On 27 July 1953 this armistice went into effect; however we are still dealing with the radical Communist regime of North Korea today, as this UN decreed "Police Action" never seems to end.

The purpose of this week's column is so that we do not forget our valiant men and women who served in this attempt to stop the violent spread of Communism.

We are very blessed to have many of those Korean War Veterans living here and those who served during the Korean War Era, as well as those who served in the Republic of South Korea after America and her allies liberated South Korea from those determined invaders which began in June of 1950.

President Truman, who had made the decision to use nuclear force to end WWII, just a few years earlier, was fearful that WWII was starting when the North Korean Communists aided and abetted by the Soviets and Red Chinese began their invasion of South Korea.

Perhaps General George Patton was right in his assessment of what he thought should have been done to the Communist regime of Stalin in Europe and the Red Chinese, post WWII. Americans were sick of war, always seeking peace, but standing guard for liberty when needed. Loss of life and suffering during WWII were to influence Eisenhower to deny Patton's desire to finish the global Communists once and for all.

As it turned out the horrific and often mismanaged Korean conflict cost us 33,686 American lives, many of whom are still missing. This conflict was horrific in so many ways, our forces being ill prepared for extreme cold weather warfare and other conditions. And this is also marked as the beginning of our "Cold War" era, very significant in how world affairs remain today.

Truman found the decision to send our troops into warfare in North Korea extremely difficult. He was savvy enough at that time to call in UN forces, as had he not our Americans would have had to go it alone. The resulting armistice of July 27 ceased hostilities at the infamous 38th Parallel.

The blessed and remarkable victory achieved was the new birth of the Republic of South Korea, and the people there today who sincerely appreciate our United States of America and those sacrifices we made for others. That is the true nature of our men and women who have served America.

Our Veterans have always served for others, their brothers, sisters, families, God and Country, often ignoring their own safety and well being by doing whatever needed to be done.

Just as I love and appreciate all our WWII mentors, let us not forget those also great Americans who served in the "Forgotten War". And let us not forget those who never came home. Those are the heroes closest to God who gave their very lives for others, all others.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Semper Paratus

Mushrooms

With the wet warm summer we've been having, I haven't been able to go a week without some sort of fungus showing up on my desk for identification. They're growing in lawns, on forest floors, in mulch and sometimes even in vehicles!

They come in all shapes, sizes and colors, and though they may look big and tasty, it's never recommended to eat a wild mushroom unless you are 100% sure of its species. Personally, even then, I don't recommend anyone eat wild mushrooms at all because there are subtle differences between edible and toxic species. As a wise man once said, "All mushrooms are edible. Unfortunately, most of them are only edible once." This time of year there are two main fungi found in garden mulch or leaf litter: dog vomit slime mold and artillery fungus. Dog vomit slime mold, or Fuligo septica is a visually striking slime mold that, as its name implies, resembles something pretty unsavory. It ranges in color from bright yellow to beige and is found in rounded, fuzzy, puddle-like patches about an inch or two thick. When this fungus is disturbed, the affected area will become smooth and slimy and change color to a deep rust orange. The puddle itself will sometimes move about a small area over a period of days as it breaks down decaying wood. Though unsightly, slime molds do not harm plants and often dry up within a few days of forming.

Artillery fungus, or Sphaerobolus, is a group of wood-eating fungi that typically inhabit mulch beds. Though most of the time you will notice the actual mushroom before its spores, in this case, most people notice the dark round spore packets, or peridioles, on their vinyl siding, cars or other outdoor surfaces, and never even see the fungus itself. These peridioles sit on top of cup-shaped cells that absorb water from the environment. Once the cells have enough water, they explode, shooting spores onto any surrounding surfaces up to six meters high. This fungus is not particularly harmful.

Stinkhorns are another common mushroom that can often be found after long periods of wet weather. Just as their name implies, you will most likely smell them before you see the actual mushrooms. Though they are putrid and sometimes unsightly, they do not harm plants. If the smell becomes overwhelming, you can pluck up the mushrooms and seal them in an airtight container and throw them away.

Fairy rings are the most common problem mushrooms that can actually damage lawns. These rings of mushrooms range in size from a few inches to several feet in diameter. Once you see these in your lawn, they are very hard to control and unlike the other fungi I have mentioned, they produce harmful toxins that will kill surrounding grass. Remove the mushrooms as soon as you see them and tend to your grass in September. Aerating, fertilizing and watering appropriately will help prevent these mushrooms from doing more damage. You can minimize the amount of grass they kill by making sure your lawn is as healthy as possible.

For more information on mushrooms in Georgia, visit www.gamushroomclub.org, or contact your local extension office.

UGA extension
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



From the Desk of:



Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

New CLEA class

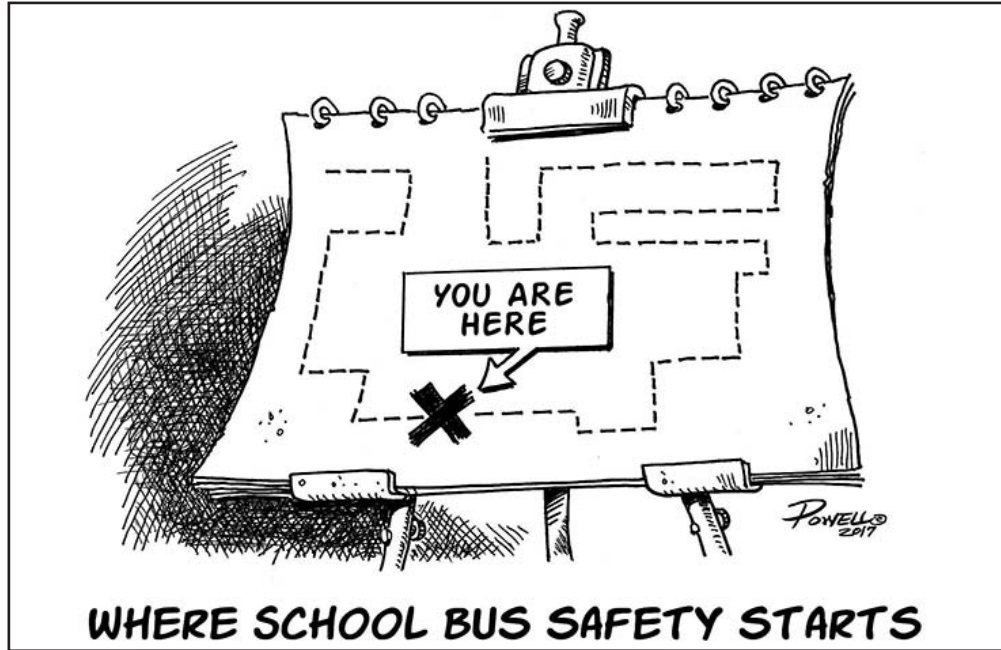
This past week we began the seventh Citizen Law Enforcement Academy (CLEA). This course is being held on Tuesdays with most of the classroom portions being conducted at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church.

I would like to thank Senior Pastor Steve Taylor and his generous staff for providing the classroom for our students and supporting this effort to educate our community on the duties and responsibilities of the Office of Sheriff. CLEA is a 10-week course that gives students a firsthand look at the duties and role of the Office of Sheriff. The class begins with an overview spanning from the historical beginnings of the oldest elected office in the history of the world to the modern challenges faced by the Sheriff's Office. Students are given the opportunity to "look under the hood," if you will, and see what really happens on a daily basis in our community. They learn about the daily functions of uniform patrol from the perspective of a deputy sheriff. They learn the reasons we perform certain functions in the community and what it is like to carry out these duties. The same approach is given to the duties and responsibilities of our deputies in the detention center, court services, school resource deputy, detectives, K-9 units, administrative personnel, drug agents, and our chaplain program. The group spends time with us learning about and watching demonstrations by our K-9s and marine patrol.

They learn what court services personnel do on a daily basis and some of the challenges of providing for the security of the court, while arranging transports of inmates and serving writs, warrants, and precepts of processes. By the end of the course, the group has an opportunity to "ride along" with a deputy sheriff and see exactly what their duties are like each day. From responding to a call of service, performing a traffic stop, checking businesses, and extra patrols, there is always plenty to do and our students are able to be a part of that process and gain a much better understanding of our office. At the end of the program, successful graduates are given the opportunity to remain involved in our volunteer Sheriff's Auxiliary. These volunteers provide a valuable resource to our community and save a tremendous amount to the tax payer by providing volunteer efforts.

We plan to offer another CLEA in the late fall of this year. Anyone interested in attending should contact us at 706-896-4444.

Have something to sell?
Let the Herald work for you!
Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM • 706-896-4454



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	Mtn. Regional Library	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
	Second Wednesday of each month:	
Basket Weavers	SC Fire Hall	10 am
Board of Elections	67 Lakeview Cir., Ste. A	4 pm
	Second Thursday of each month:	
CVB Board	Rec Center	9 am
Awake America Prayer	Civic Center	Noon
Mtn. Comm. Seniors	Senior Center	1 pm
Democratic Party	Civic Center	6 pm

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Towns County Herald

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