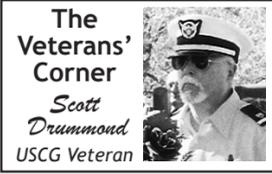


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## A Very Important Weekend

We know and celebrated Sunday, May 8, Mothers' Day, the day we traditionally honor all our Mothers, without whom none of us would be here. Our mothers and wives all bear distinct, unsung, uncelebrated, often ignored sacrifices they are imbued with, when their loved ones serving our nation in uniform are deployed to unknown areas throughout our unstable world. Often dangerous locales, and dangerous jobs those who serve are sent, leaving the mothers, wives and families to worry and pray in silence and carry on with family duties. I would say very stressful at the least. In their important way, they too have served our nation. Without their undying strength and love where would we be? How would any of us ever have mustered the resolve and courage to do what must be done? Our nation's men and women in uniform couldn't have succeeded in what they've done without those pillars of strength and love at home, here in our America.



**The Veterans' Corner**  
Scott Drummond  
USCG Veteran

Also regarding May 8, for some almost forgotten history as well. We often think of the end of WWII as VJ day, as 15 August 1945 when Japan officially surrendered to our Allied forces, and since is commemorated every 2 September.

However we were fighting that tough fight on two huge fronts. Besides Mothers' Day celebrated last weekend, in 1945 the NAZI horror was ended when Germany surrendered unconditionally on 7 May 1945 and ever since we have celebrated VE (Victory in Europe) day on May 8. On 7 May 1945 the German troops, all across Europe ceased hostilities and laid down their arms. In Prague the NAZI forces surrendered to the Soviet Russians. The Russians weren't particularly concerned about the German surrender as they and the Germans kept at it until 9 May, more lives lost and more POWs taken. Moscow celebrates VE day on 9 May. However more than 13,000 British POWs were released and sent back to Great Britain. We, in modern fast moving America often overlook, never learned of or forget about these events, the end results of events we hope and pray never occur again. We, especially those Veterans and their mothers who have suffered and sacrificed, celebrate the ending of wars and hostilities, not the brutality and violence associated with those events. Reality forces us to realize that as long as there are evil minded humans, as long as we wish to live in a free and Sovereign Republic of our USA, we will have to remain vigilant, strong and maintain a strong military presence. No truer phrase in civilized mankind's history has ever been spoken in any language than this Latin phrase: Si vis pacem, para bellum. Meaning, if you desire peace then prepare for war.

So let us never forget those Veterans who have served us all here and abroad, those on active duty as you read this, and never forget those mothers and wives who always do their duty on the home front.

*Semper Paratus*

## Cultural Literacy

Politics is often a shell game, and we are supposed to watch the "pea" so closely that we don't notice that our pockets are being picked. Great effort is expended to make sure that we remain distracted and docile, that we pay our tribute, buy what is on sale and participate in the illusion that the people presented to us as national candidates represent some kind of choice.



Every election cycle the media is seeded with issues of fear and prejudice designed to smoke out the most outrageous opinions and extreme behavior of opposing camps in the hopes of herding swing voters to one side of the fence or the other. We protest. We post our opinions. We vote, and when Pepsi defeats Coke, or vice versa, we go back to work and continue borrowing and shopping, feeling like we have made a difference. The agenda of global economic hegemony continues unabated.

The latest opportunity presented to us by corporate media, the propaganda division of the oligarchy, to express our outrage, involves bathrooms. The 24 hour news cycle is chumming the waters with new opinions and recycling old ones, about bathrooms. Social media is obsessed with bathrooms. People are leaving Walmart to protest the bathrooms at Target.

Why? Because it is an artfully conceived distraction. As noble as an effort to support any disadvantaged and misunderstood group might be, when the executive branch of government attempts to further expand its power by reaching its meddlesome hand all the way into school restrooms, the timing of this effort, in the middle of an election year when the momentum of the primaries continues to go against the Deep State candidate, is certainly suspect. Three tenths of one percent of people in America identify as transgender, and they have been using bathrooms unnoticed for millennia, many going out of their way to shun the attention given them now. What Aldous Huxley said is true: "Idealism is the noble toga that political gentlemen drape over their will to power."

I have friends on the left who celebrate every such maneuver by Obama and justify it in much the same way that he has, by claiming, "Well, Congress wouldn't do the right thing, so he had to." We disagree. We warned you when Bill Clinton began making excessive use of Executive Orders and when George Bush did the same, many of the people now crying "foul" at Obama's efforts justified Bush's actions with the broad brush of "national security." Now Clinton Part II is vowing to use the expanded powers of the Executive Office to pursue her own enlightened agenda. When a president goes outside the law to "do the right thing" (that we agree with), rest assured that another chief executive will come along that will use those expanded powers to do things that we think are utterly wrong.

I do believe that it is a legitimate function of government to ensure that no one is denied justice or opportunity based on any arbitrary personal or religious belief. However, our nation, and indeed our civilization itself has much more pressing concerns than the hurt feelings of college students, or the bathroom breaks of the point three percent.

We are currently in the eye of a storm, and regardless of the fact that our own leaders are partially responsible for that storm, that storm is now moving under its own power. Social unrest is combining with changing climate and environmental degradation to create, perhaps, a perfect storm of chaos, threatening to starve and displace hundreds of millions of people. Yet the world's elite still play chess with our lives over who gets to control the oil and gas.

To lead us through these troubled times, we are offered a choice between a likely criminal who does not have one legitimate accomplishment to her credit (other than the destabilization of North Africa), and a celebrity buffoon with a track record of failed businesses. Do we still want to argue about bathrooms?

## Lichens - Tree & Shrub Parasites

Lichens are complex parasites of trees, shrubs, and other woody ornamental plants that many people believe to be the downfall of their plants. However, the truth is that these pests are actually indicative of a bigger problem with your plant and don't harm anything they grow on at all.



**From the Ground Up**  
Melissa Mattee

The lichens that we typically find on our woody plants are made of a few different organisms that rely on each other for survival. The main part of the lichen that we see growing on bark and stems can be any one of a variety of different fungi. Some are broad and leaf-like, and some are slender and look like clumps of thread. This fungus will absorb moisture from the air, and eventually algae will take advantage of the moist surface of the fungus and begin to grow on it. These algae are what give lichens their characteristic blue-green color, and they use sunlight and air to create nutrients, much like the green leafy plants we have in our own gardens. The fungus will also get some of the food the algae makes, and in turn give the algae a safe, damp place to live.

Despite their ability to take over a large percentage of a tree or shrub, lichens are never the cause of its decline. Usually, when plants become stressed because of disease, undesirable weather conditions, or a lack of nutrients in the soil, they will not produce as many leaves. This means more sunlight will hit the stems and promote the growth of lichens and their partner algae, which allows them to produce more nutrients and continue to thrive. As long as your plant is unhappy and its canopy is reduced, the lichen will continue to grow and become unsightly. Lichens are also common in the winter, especially if it has been a damp season. As plants naturally lose their leaves, the fungal spores have more access to the bark and more light availability. If a plant is healthy, the lichens will hardly be present in the summer as the leaves keep out sunlight. However, if they are still around at the end of summer, there is a bigger problem at hand.

As tempting as it may be, spraying your plant to get rid of the lichens will not solve your problem. Currently, there are no recommended treatments for lichens that are also safe to use on plants. Spraying a plant that is already stressed and in decline with a home remedy or unapproved chemical could injure it or make its condition even worse. Instead, manually remove any unwanted lichens by gently scraping them from the bark. If you have an extensive lichen problem, you should also examine your plant for signs of disease or an insect infestation. A soil test is also recommended because most of the time, plant stress comes from a source under the surface that we can't see. The soil test will show what nutrients are deficient in the soil and it will tell you what to add in order to improve it.

Though lichens can be an unsightly pest on our plants, they are actually a warning sign that there may be something wrong with your soil or the plant itself. It's important to scout your plants throughout the growing season, even your ornamentals, to make sure that there are no diseases or insects stressing them and ruining all your hard work!

As of this week, I will be in Towns County Tuesday mornings and Thursdays, and Union County Mondays, Tuesday afternoons, Wednesdays and Fridays.

## Letters to The Editor

**Dear Editor:**

*Our special Peeves*  
We all have our particular pet peeves, be it someone's untidiness, lack of help around the house, even leaving the seat up or down, whatever. My pet peeve involves drivers. When I learned to drive some 55 plus years ago, I was taught to drive right and pass left. Also courtesy to other drivers.

A few weeks ago I was returning one evening from Blairsville and when I reached the two lane section of Hwy. 76 by the EMC building, I moved over to the left lane to pass a slower vehicle. Not far along I came up on a red SUV moseying along in the left lane. While still at a respectable distance I flashed my lights. For those who don't know, that is the international request for passage. The vehicle ignored my request but I noticed that the distance between us had closed rapidly, making it obvious that the driver had lifted off the accelerator. When the gap was about a car and a half the driver put on the brakes. Fortunately with that amount of gap there was plenty of room for me to just pull into the right lane. I passed the vehicle without making any fuss; however, I was honored with a cacophony of horn blowing. While passing I noticed out of the corner of my eyes that the vehicle in question had a big sign advertising a well-known realty company in Towns County. What some people do not realize is that while displaying a sign of the company you are associated with, you are their representative and actually you could say the company's ambassador. I know many people who, if being in my position and ever in need of the services of such industry, would steer very clear from that particular company thinking that if they have a fool out there representing them, how many more they may have in the office.

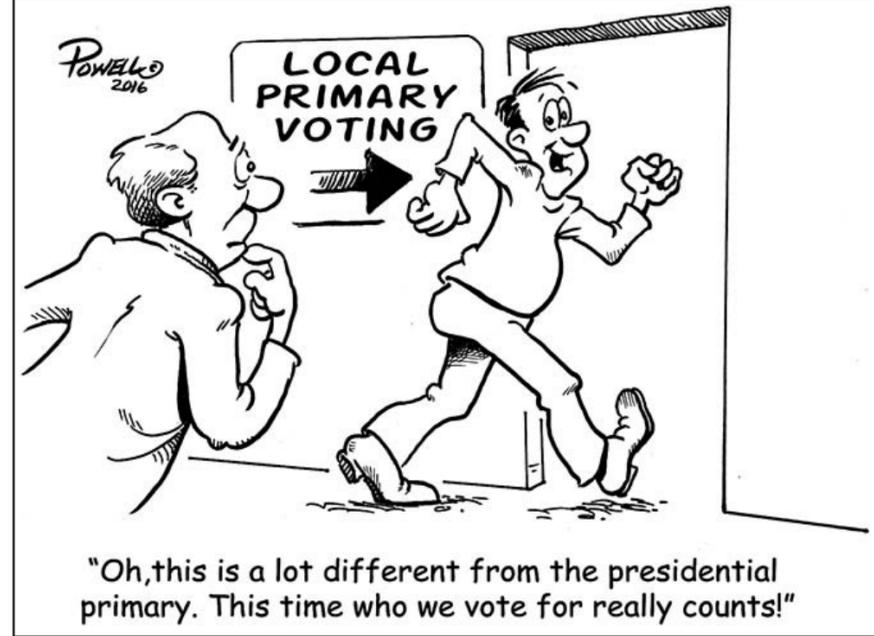
I am not dreaming up this rule, it is actually in the manual, and also while leaving Hiawassee as soon as you cross the bridge onto Denton Straight, GDOT has a sign referring to slower traffic keeping right. I have heard from a few people that it is rude to flash your lights. I wouldn't say that to a European, especially a German on the Autobahn for they would run you right off the road for not heeding their request. Even if you are in the right lane and they are coming up on your left, they will flash their lights to make sure you know they are there.

Please be courteous and remember drive right, pass left.

*Richard Botting*

**Editor:**  
Monday, May 30 is Memorial Day. On December 9, 2015, shortly after the November 11, 2015 Veterans Day ceremonies, the TCH published my letter about the very poor condition of the sidewalks in Veterans Park and that letter inquired if and when they would be repaired. No public officials responded and I have made several inquiries since, likewise with no response. As of May 10, the same deplorable condition persists. Simply put, our veterans deserve better and I believe most would agree. But here's the reality: after all is said and done, more is said (a lot of oratory) than done.

*Claude Spears  
Combat Veteran*



**Have something to sell?**  
Let the Herald work for you!  
Contact us at 706-896-4454  
Deadline for the T.C. Herald is Friday by 5 PM

**GUEST COLUMNS**  
From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial. Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea. Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper. If so, please write. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:** Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net. Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should address issues of general interest, such as politics, the community, environment, school issues, etc.

Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.\*

*Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.*

## Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	<b>Every Monday:</b>	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
Bingo		Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Free GED prep.	<b>Every Tuesday:</b>	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	<b>Every Wednesday</b>	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Free GED prep.	<b>Every Thursday:</b>	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Bridge Players	<b>Every Friday:</b>	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
Alcoholics Anon.		Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	<b>Every Sunday:</b>	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Square Dance Club	<b>Second Friday of each month:</b>	Rec. Center	7 pm
Hospital Auxiliary	<b>Third Monday of each month:</b>	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Water Board		Water Office	6 pm
YH Plan Comm.	<b>Third Tuesday of each month:</b>	YH City Hall	5 pm
Quilting Bee	<b>Third Wednesday of each month:</b>	McConnell Church	10 am
MOAA		Call Jack @ 828-321-2896	
Co. Comm. Mtg	<b>Third Thursday of each month:</b>	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Friendship Comm.		Clubhouse	6 pm
Goldwing Riders	<b>Third Saturday of each month:</b>	Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
Red Cross DAT	<b>Fourth Monday of each month:</b>	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Lions Club	<b>Fourth Tuesday of each month:</b>	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Republican Party	<b>Fourth Thursday of each month:</b>	New Senior Cir.	6:30 pm
Square Dance Club	<b>Fourth Friday of each month:</b>	Rec. Center	7 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	<b>Last Thursday of each month:</b>	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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**Charles Duncan** Editor  
**Shawn Henrikson** Copy Editor  
**Lowell Nicholson** Photographer

**Joe Collins** Advertising Director  
**Shawn Jarrard** Staff Writer  
**Lily Avery** Staff Writer  
**Website:** townscountyherald.net

Publication No: 635540

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

Towns County (1 Year) \$20. 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.

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Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net  
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546