

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

A Soldier's Burden (2)

This bears repeating from when I first published it in 2015: This was given to me by our own US Navy Iwo Jima Vet, "Chief" Bud Johnson [RIP], from his Battleship Missouri Association memorabilia. A very appropriate poetic remembrance for our Vietnam Veterans who are very often overlooked, written by one of their own brothers, Stan Hutchinson, MSG, US Army (Ret.) RVN 1968-69.

As we near Easter, please remember and pray for all our active duty men and women; honor and revere ALL those who have served. After speaking to one of our own Hiawassees, Towns County, GA US Army Infantry Veterans who served in Vietnam and was with Clyde Owenby who gave his all for all of us, then reading this poem, it became imperative that this poem needed to be presented for all readers to share. Alvin Gibson also served with Ernest Garrett, who also gave his life, in that far away place. It should be noted that our VFW/American Legion Post 7807 bears their names in perpetual honor of their sacrifice as well as their family's unforgettable losses. Alvin also informed me that Bruce Keen and Tommy Gibson were a part of our infantry over there back in those days. The following poem is dedicated to all of those, who committed to do so much, written by one whose skills far supersede my own scarce ability. Our One Nation under God would not survive minus these type Americans, thus none of us would be celebrating our forthcoming freedoms and liberties in America. Whether they volunteered or were drafted, they did their duty as best as they could.



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran

"A SOLDIER'S BURDEN"

Lay down that burden, soldier
You've done your duty well
You honored your fallen brother
In ways that words can't tell
You met him and made friends
In that far off distant place
And still today, in your memories
You can see that youthful face
You lived and laughed together
Into combat, you flew side by side
Until that day he did not return
That day, your good friend died
You mourned for your comrade
Though you held back your tears
And he flew with you, in your soul
For all these many years
You did so many things "for him"
In your mind, with him, you'd share
The fun and crazy things in life
As this burden you continued to bear
Now, today you stand here at his grave
On the grass where he now lies
And the emotions comes out as tears fall from your eyes
Then you feel a great relief
As a weight comes off your chest
You stand there in honor
Where a warrior lies in rest
For all those many, many years
You never spoke of how you feel
Now is time to lay down that burden
The time has come to heal
And we shall not forget your friend
As we honor those from the past
But we'll also hold open our hearts for you
So you can lay down your burden at last

-Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Tarnished Beyond Repair

Dear Editor,

The mission of The Walt Disney Company, commonly known as Disney, is to entertain, inform and inspire people around the globe through the power of unparalleled storytelling. Now it's gone woke. For example, Disney World is now removing "gender greetings" from its parks, meaning, those inside the theme parks will no longer be addressed or greeted by the phrases "boys and girls" or "ladies and gentlemen." Now we are told that instead of addressing the biological males and females, park goers will hear "Hello, everyone" or "Hello, friends." Has any little girl anywhere, ever been offended at a Disney Park by being called a Princess? Really? Walt is rolling in his grave right now.

If you're wondering if Disney has lost its marbles, wonder no more. Does Disney really believe they can get away with alienating the very people who purchase their products? Just remember, it is not the children who spend all that money, it's the parents and grandparents. As far as I'm concerned, the Disney image has been tarnished beyond repair.

Tim Groza

Resurrection News

Dear Editor,

Read all about it, folks. Not much good news on the airwaves these days as we see our world slowly moving into a chaotic mess with no hope in sight and wonder what is coming next as we star gaze into the future of the unknown. To the believer in Christ, we know who holds the future in the palm of His mighty hand. His perfect plan and will is right on track, though a lot of folks don't know the love of Christ because they have chosen not to worship Him in any form or fashion, and the Lord God honors their decision but still loves them more than they will ever know.

Easter Sunday Service is fast approaching in which all believers in Christ go to their local church and worship the death, burial and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ. He did not come to die for some folks but came and died for all mankind, whether one chooses to believe or not. What a waste of a life that God created to love, and all He asked was for you to love Him back. Jesus' dying on the cross opened the door for all sinners to come to the saving knowledge of who God is, your Creator, your loving heavenly Father who wants to shower you with all of His promises that are yours to claim in the Bible, if you are willing to confess your sins and repent of them and believe upon the Name of Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is still the best news that is true and faithful to all who come and worship Him in spirit and truth. Only God above has the authority and power over death and the grave. Don't miss out on the best news that has eternal value forevermore in glory. He has risen indeed.

Frank F. Combs

Bee the Mystery

I began beekeeping with my dad at age 15. At that age, indeed at any age, a rebellious or irresponsible nature benefits from any lesson which teaches there are consequences for our actions, and there are immediate consequences from any action with honeybees.

If you hurry while working with them, bees protest. If you get angry, they get angrier. If you are scared or nervous they will react to the pheromones those emotions release. If you work with bees on a regular basis, you will develop an almost "zen" state of calm or you will be stung often.

For Dad, keeping bees became an avocation which brought him contentment for the rest of his life. A corner of his basement became a workshop for preparing hives and frames, and he and my mother spent many hours extracting honey with a hand-cranked extractor. Our entire family gradually overcame hay fever eating large quantities of raw honey.

As a mountaineer, Dad had a tremendous respect for Nature. When he spoke the word you could always tell that the "N" was capitalized. To him, honeybees were one of Nature's most mysterious and fascinating creatures. Their stylized dancing to communicate the location of nectar sources, their ritualized mating flights, their ability to tell friend from foe and to recognize individuals were all part of God's plan partially revealed in the mysteries of Nature. Everything, he believed, is connected to everything else, and the truth of that statement could be found everywhere we might care to look in the natural world.

At the height of his beekeeping career, Dad had hives from central Georgia to the mountains, and after he retired he even had his own honey label. As he grew older, his activity diminished, but not his interest. In his eighties he was down to a single hive in the back yard, but his desk was still covered with beekeeping books and periodicals.

When my mother passed away, we thought Dad might die from a broken heart. For a while he lost interest in everything, including his bees. When his last remaining hive succumbed to one of the many ailments that plague honeybees, he sadly remarked, "I guess I'm finished as a bee man." But when we surprised him with a new package of bees and a queen that spring, his interest rekindled, and soon he was back in action.

Dad's last beehive was still thriving two years later when he had to leave home for assisted living. Fortunately, his retirement community was only 4 miles from the family home, so we were able to take him back home to visit on a regular basis. Every time he came home, Dad would walk to the back of the yard and visit his bees.

During the third year of the life of his last beehive, Dad was able to make that walk under his own power with the help of a cane. In year four, the terrain was too uneven for his walker, but he could make the journey using two walking sticks. In year five, the short walk to the back yard took about half an hour each way, with several rest stops for conversation and contemplation. It was a highlight of the day for both of us.

When we visited his bees, Dad would stand quietly just a few feet from the entrance of the hive and watch them coming and going. He was always happy to see their legs covered with an abundant supply of pollen because he knew that this meant the hive was getting plenty to eat. The bees would fly all around him. Never once did they offer to sting.

Dad's beehive was healthy and thriving during his last autumn, and still looking forward to the future, he planted turnips and cabbages in his garden at the retirement home. Nature never pauses to consider our plans. My father passed away quietly in January of the next year. His last beehive died soon after him.

That beehive was five years old when it died, which is a ripe old age for a hive. Science could probably provide a technical reason for its demise, but I think there was more mystery than science involved. It might have been disease, colony collapse, or the brutally cold winter, but Dad always said that science could only scratch the surface of the mysteries of Nature. The year my uncle passed away, the three remaining apple trees in his beloved orchard all died as well, though he was hundreds of miles away. My grandmother's oak tree departed the same year she left us.

As for me, I'll be looking for a package of bees arriving in the mail this month, grateful for a gift of a lifetime from long ago. When I'm working the hives, I'll feel a familiar presence and hear Dad's voice saying, "Give them just a little smoke. Slow and easy now. Talk to them." And they will listen.

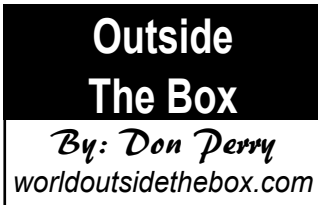
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Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net

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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.



Outside The Box
By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

Have you seen small white cottony balls on hemlock trees? If you have then that means those trees are infested with Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA). Let's look at why it's important to preserve hemlocks, what is the pest that is killing them, and what you can do to save them. We are getting to the time of year when they really start to come out.

Hemlocks are a native species that ranges from Maine to Northern Alabama. They are a keystone species that provides habitat for about 120 species of vertebrates and over 90 species of birds. Hemlocks are unique in their ability to thrive in shade. This attribute makes them common in ravines and along rivers and streams. Their proximity to streams and rivers means that they are crucial in reducing erosion and watershed protection. Hemlocks can be identified by their needles. They have short flat needles with two distinctive pale white stripes on the underside. The needles are wider at the base and taper to a rounded tip, unlike firs that have parallel sides the whole way down.

HWA is a very small insect. The white cottony sacks on the hemlock trees are what the HWA wraps itself with for protection. They are an invasive species from Asia that doesn't have a natural predator here. HWA feeds on the sap inside of hemlock trees. Wind, birds, deer, or humans can spread the HWA. Once a tree has become infected, it will die within four to 10 years. Therefore, it is important to treat trees as soon as possible after finding that they have been infected.

It is important to treat your own trees with cultural and chemical controls. Cultural controls include keeping hemlocks well mulched and watered. Hemlock trees don't have very deep roots and droughts can make them more susceptible to infection. Don't place any bird feeders or deer feeders near your trees. Birds and deer can carry the eggs for long distances. If you are hiking in an area that has HWA wash your clothes afterward because you may be carrying eggs. Be careful to not over-fertilize your trees as that could make them more enticing to HWA. Cultural controls may keep your trees healthy, but when they become infested, chemical controls are the only option. Chemical controls involves treating your tree with either Imidacloprid or Dinotefuran, and is the most common and effective method of control. An imidacloprid treatment will last four or five years. However, it may take one year before it is effective. Dinotefuran will last for two years in the tree and will take about four to six weeks to take effect. The ideal way to apply either of these insecticides is by soil drench. Putting the insecticide in the soil will mean quicker uptake by the plant and reduce the chance of off target drift. A soil drench does not require any special equipment. Soil injection can also be used, however, I only recommend using an injector if you are treating a large number of trees. Soil injection and soil drench are equally effective. You can also purchase imidacloprid in tablet form, so you don't have to mix with water. If the trees are near open water, a trunk injection of insecticide is necessary, which will require a professional. Whenever applying a pesticide follow the label.

The Union County Extension Office has a soil injector that is available to be checked out. Checking it out requires a \$250 dollar deposit that will be returned when the injector is brought back. If you would like instructions on how to treat hemlock trees contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu. The organization Save Georgia's Hemlocks have a website that also has lots of information. Contact your local Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu if you have any questions about HWA.

Habitat for Humanity

Have you met our ReStore Manager Stephanie Low? Stephanie has been with Habitat for just shy of a year now. Stephanie is a carefree, amazingly fun person to be around. She brings life into the store with her care for customers and her dedication to our mission of raising funds to make sure everyone has affordable and safe housing to call home.

Stephanie and her husband Mike moved to this area over 5 years ago from San Diego California. She came to the area for a family reunion and fell in love with the Blairsville. She has 3 adult children who are currently living in California. She tries to visit her children and the beautiful state of California as often as she can. Stephanie loves to travel and try new things. She would describe herself as adventurous.

Some of Stephanie's hobbies outside of work include, thrifting and antique shopping, spending time with her husband and her dogs. Stephanie is such an incredible part of our team. She works so hard at creating an enjoyable shopping atmosphere, customer satisfaction, and creating revenue for our mission.

Stephanie states, "I love coming to work here at Habitat, I absolutely love helping the community. We have the best crew here. We all have become family. Lots of laughs and memories made in this place."

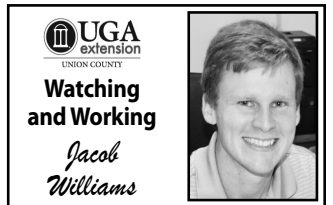
She became the ReStore Manager this past December and has enhanced the ReStore ever since. We are constantly improving and changing our arrangements. There is always something to shop for, here at the ReStore as we are always getting new donations in.

When asked what the community can do to contribute and help the ReStore remain successful, she responded, "Shopping in our ReStore is essential as all our sales go directly to helping people. Also getting the word out, sharing our content on Facebook and telling your friends and family that we are here. Lastly, volunteering, we can always use volunteers

in our ReStore to help customers load and unload donations/purchases and help with inventory in the store. We are community minded here at Habitat as we are always looking to help those in need, so having our community come around us and our organization overall is essential to our success."

Stephanie has big plans for the ReStore this summer, with new events, and sales. She plans to put together a large Christmas in July sale, Customer Appreciation Day, Volunteers Day, and so much more. She is looking forward to reaching more people this summer and be a Habitat that people from all over come to visit. Be sure to join our Facebook group at Habitat for Humanity Towns | Union Counties for details on these events, sales, and employee/volunteer fun!

Be sure to stop by the ReStore and see our ReStore Manager Stephanie, she is incredibly dedicated and so much fun to work with and be around as she is a light to those around her. We are so thankful to have her be apart of our team!



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Jacob Williams



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