

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

May we never forget...

LT. RITTICHER, Part 2
Continued from Veterans Corner
TCH issue 08/31/2022:
He never quits!
Lieutenant

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Rittichier's following awards were issued as authorized by an act of Congress, July 2, 1926. As attached to 7th AF, 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron while serving in Vietnam. Edited for brevity:

Coast Guard Rank: Lieutenant, Distinguished Flying Cross Awarded posthumously for actions during the Vietnam War, a Second Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Third Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (Posthumously), United States Coast Guard, for heroism while participating in aerial flight, Lieutenant Rittichier distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as an HH-3E Rescue Crew Commander near Da Nang, Republic of Vietnam, on 12 May 1968. On that date, Lieutenant Rittichier twice entered an extremely hostile area to effect the rescue of four survivors of a downed helicopter and five seriously wounded personnel. The survivors were located on an extremely small landing zone, surrounded by tall trees, on the side of a steep mountain slope. With great determination and superior airmanship, Lieutenant Rittichier executed the second approach and departure at night by flarelight even though the distress site was obscured by smoke and clouds. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Rittichier reflect great credit upon himself, USCG/USAF. Air Medal Awarded posthumously for actions during the Vietnam War, Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Second Award of the Air Medal (Posthumously), United States Coast Guard, for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight on 4 May 1968, on that date, Lieutenant Rittichier entered the A Shau Valley, heavily defended by hostile forces and numerous antiaircraft sites, and landed at a bomb cratered landing zone to prepare two downed helicopters for aerial recovery out of the hostile area. Lieutenant Rittichier then on-loaded a crew, complete with all personnel equipment, and all portable aircraft equipment, departed the landing zone littered with unexploded bombs and mines, for recovery to Da Nang Air Base.

Lieutenant Rittichier distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as Rescue Crew Copilot of an HH-3E Helicopter in Southeast Asia on 21 April 1968. On that date, Lieutenant Rittichier was instrumental in the rescue of four crew members of two United States Army helicopter gunships shot down by hostile ground fire. With great determination and superior airmanship, Lieutenant RITTICHER effected the rescue in the face of hostile ground fire. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Rittichier reflect great credit upon himself and the USAF/USCG.

Earlier: For meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight on the afternoon of 29 November 1966 as copilot of a Coast Guard helicopter, engaged in the transfer of eight crewmen from the grounded West German Motor NOR-DMEER to the USCGC MACKINAW (WAGB 83). Despite heavy snow, icing, turbulence and gale force winds, Lieutenant RITTICHER skillfully assisted in navigating the helicopter 150 miles to the vicinity of the distressed vessel grounded on Thunder Bay Island Shoal in Lake Huron. The final 80 miles of the route was flown through snow showers at 200 feet over the lake utilizing the shoreline for navigation. Upon arrival he assisted in locating the vessel and establishing communications with the crew who advised that they were stranded on the forward deck, with no power or heat and desired immediate removal. Lieutenant Rittichier aided the pilot in maneuvering the helicopter and accomplishing the hoist of the eight crewmen from the NOR-DMEER to the decks of the MACKINAW in less than 22 minutes. Minutes after the operation was completed, the NOR-DMEER broke athwartships and her decks became awash. Lieutenant Rittichier displayed expert airmanship throughout this perilous mission. His initiative, skill, sound judgment and unwavering devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

-Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

More on "Rename Lake Winfield Scott"

Dear Editor,

Unless I misunderstand, Brigadier General Winfield Scott was only following military orders. I assume that he did not get up one morning and on his own decide to go out and round up the Cherokees.

As I sit here on the porch of the house I was raised in, I look directly across to the entrance to Lake Winfield Scott. I appreciate history, but we also need to view today's events. Currently, another uninvited warring nation has intruded and claimed the lands surrounding the lake, causing the local inhabitants to go inside, lock their doors and pull the drapes.

The invasion is that of the bicycles, motorcycles and sports cars. Therefore, upon my authority, I declare the name for the bicycles should be changed to "Lake Move Your Butt Over," for the motorcycles to "Lake Constant Roar," and for the sports cars "Lake Daytona 500." If those are not sufficient suggestions, I have a long list of others.

It also suits me to leave it alone as is. I thrive at the foot of Blood Mountain, and the name has not bothered me for 70 years.

I must go now to prepare for the onslaught of 3,000 bicycles headed to run through my front yard at the end of the month. Best wishes to those concerned.

Dianne Wood
Fifth Generation Suches Resident

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Have I told you about my little dog?

In the movie, "Defending Your Life," Albert Brooks is seated next to an elderly woman riding on a bus to Judgment City. She asks, "Have I told you about my little dog?" Some time later she asks the same question, ready to begin the story again.

When I got married my wife came complete with a truck bed tool box, her own set of tools, and a little Shih Tzu named Barkley. In the fullness of time her little dog became semi-affectionately known as Barkley J. Poopenhouser.

Barkley J. did everything his name implies. He barked. Often. He barked from places where he had no business being, and always in 3/4 rhythm. "Here I am. By myself. Eat me up." He did unmentionable things inside the house, and I'm confident that during those years we bought enough carpet cleaner to float a bass boat.

I've never been a devotee of little dogs. I like shepherds, pits, huskies; dogs that still resemble the noble wolves from which they descend. But Tracey loved Barkley unconditionally, and he loved her. It's amazing, the calming and curative influence the right little dog can have on a person.

When we love something we have a tendency to talk about it, and Tracey loved talking about Barkley. Little dogs are admittedly a better topic of conversation than most of what is peddled by corporate media. Talking about headlines and breaking news makes your stomach hurt, but talking about little dogs makes you feel good.

There are other good things to talk about, however, and too much of a good thing has diminishing returns. So when the conversation would sometimes linger too long on the topic of little dogs, some of us who had enjoyed the movie would quip, "Have I told you about my little dog?"

My opinion of little dogs began to change the night we were visited by one of our bears who had developed an interest in the beehives below the barn. I went out with my headlamp and a shotgun to fire the warning shot in the air which lets the experienced bear know that it's best to move on. My big, brave German shepherd and the pit bull stayed on the deck and barked encouragement. But in the tall grass on a foggy night I looked down to see none other than Barkley J. Poopenhouser by my side, alert and ready for action.

Barkley left us at a ripe old age. He lived a full life and had many adventures. Tracey never stopped missing him, and always wanted another little dog to sit in her lap. For several years we had only giants, but when we lost one of our two golden huskies, there was an opening, and along came "Maxby."

Frankly I wasn't thrilled at the idea of resuming the purchase of large amounts of carpet cleaner, but we had replaced much of the carpet with tile by then, and Tracey was joyful. I did insist on changing "Maxby's" name. That name belongs to a dog destined to ride in an elderly woman's purse on the bus to Judgment City, not to a dog who lives on a farm.

I was slow to warm to the little Maltese/Shih Tzu, and he regarded me as some kind of appliance, just something that came with the house. Max was, and is, wilful. His nasty habits earned him the nickname, "Nub. Nub Terdloe. That's 'Terdloe' with an 'e'" He was also known as "Shutup Max." He barked at everything that moved or might possibly move. He might warm to a friend or neighbor while they were in the room, but if they stepped out and came right back, they were an enemy to be vanquished. The woman who sold us Nub said, "He's going to require a lot of patience."

It takes a long time to train little dogs. I think a lot of that time is taken up by their study of you and how to steal your heart. One frosty morning Bonnie, our 14 year old, didn't come back from her morning constitutional. I called and whistled to no avail. At Bonnie's age, she didn't go far, so I took to the woods to find her body. I searched far and wide and could not find her. In an inspiration born of desperation, I took Max outside and said, "Where's Bonnie?"

To my amazement, Max immediately hit the trail, nose to the ground. He was following something intently, and every 20 feet or so he would stop and look back, waiting for me to catch up. It was like an episode of "Lassie," but this was real. In just a few minutes he led me directly to the pond, where Bonnie was stuck in the mud in the shallow end, out of sight and unable to pull herself out. She was exhausted from the effort and shivering from the cold, and we were both spent after I pulled her out and carried her 90 lbs back up the hill. Max saved Bonnie's life.

We think we know a few things. We believe we have mastered the tenets of our faith and the better ideals of our culture. You can't judge a book by its cover. You can't judge the size of the spirit or the greatness of the heart by the package they come in. Better yet, you simply can't judge. All God's creatures are worthy of love and respect. All of them. That's not easy to remember at times, but little dogs are here to remind us. Have I told you about my little dog?

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.

Chrysanthemums

Chrysanthemums, also called mums, are the Queen of Fall Flowers. They can have gorgeous flowers each fall and bring a lot of color to the home about this time of the year. There are several nurseries around here that grow beautiful mums. Let's talk about some of the properties of this plant and what you could do to have mums in your yard.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Mums are a member of the daisy family (Asteraceae). This is one of the biggest families in the plant kingdom with a wide variety of flowering plants. The mums was first cultivated in the 15th century B.C. in China. In the 8th century A.D. the mum made its way to Japan. They were so popular there that the mum became the

official seal of the emperor. The mum was introduced to the Western world in 1753 by Karl Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist. Growers from ancient China would probably not recognize modern day mums due to the breeding that has given them more showy flowers. Chrysanthemum is also the source for an insecticide called pyrethrum. Because this insecticide is developed from a natural source it is considered an organic insecticide.

The easiest way to have blooming mums at your house each year will be to buy them in the fall from a local nursery. However, if you are interested in growing your own mums it is possible. There are many different varieties available, so talking with a local nursery will help you choose a variety that is acclimatized to our area. They do best when planted in the spring after the last frost. Planting in the spring will give them time to develop a root system so that the following winter they will be able to survive. Well drained soils with full sun are the best for growth. Mums need a slightly acidic soil with a pH near 6.5.

After planting fertilize mums with 5-10-5 fertilizer. The high phosphorus will assist root growth on mums. As the mum is growing in the summer pinching the tips of the mum will increase the amount of branching on the plant. More branching will lead to a fuller plant. Pinch the top half inch to six inches of the plant to encourage branching. Pinch every four to six weeks until August when the flower buds begin to appear.

Mums are relatively easy to take care of, but there are a couple of diseases to look out for. Some of the most common diseases are powdery mildew, blight, leaf spot, and rust. These diseases are fairly easy to control either by fungicide applications or removing the infected leaves. Spider mites and aphids can be pests of mums. They can be controlled by insecticides but good coverage of the plant is necessary to control these pests. Spider mites and aphids are capable of population explosions in a very short amount of time, therefore make sure that you completely cover the top and bottom of the leaves when spraying for these pests.

If you have questions about growing mums please contact your local Extension Office. Or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

I am hosting program on Georgia Ginseng on October 3rd via webinar from 6 - 8 pm. If you are interested in attending you can register at this link: https://ugeorgia.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5aUUKTwfao23ZQ

Habitat for Humanity

Over the years at Habitat, I have worked with several nonprofits in the area. As the holiday season quickly approaches, we should all remember those less fortunate, and bring a greater sense of empathy to our community. James "Boo" Spiva, the Executive Director of Freedom Ministries, is a wonderful example of ways to serve members in the community, especially those that are not given a second chance very easily.

Habitat Happenings
Executive Director
Charlotte Randall



Freedom Ministries of North Georgia Inc. is a faith-based nonprofit dedicated to helping those struggling with addiction overcome their addictions and issues in life through Christ-based adult curriculum, in hopes that they might become productive members of society, and to become reunited with their families and children.

Boo states that the biggest obstacles they face are employment, child care, and mainly adequate low-income housing. Freedom Ministries is a fully accredited 501(c)(3), and donations can be made directly to them.

For the past five years, Freedom Ministries has partnered with the Skillet Café, House of Prayer, and Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties to collect toys for children whose parents are in accountability court. Since the closing of the Skillet, the toy drive this year will be even more needed than previous years. Bring in unwrapped toys of at least \$10 value to Habitat for Humanity this year and receive a 20% off coupon for your next visit. The toys are distributed to underprivileged children only in Towns/Union Counties.

Freedom Ministries offers adult challenged curriculum every Monday night from 7-8:30 p.m. at 627 Kimsey St. Blairsville, GA, 30512. For any questions, call Boo Spiva at 706-487-0775.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

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P.O. 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.

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