

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Fifth annual All-Military Ball

March 14, 2020 at the Ridges Resort, Hiawassee, GA. Once again sponsored by our US Navy Seabees, Island X-3, Blairsville, GA. Social hour begins at 1730; Dinner: 1830; Ceremony: 1930 Dancing 2000-2330. For those who don't know military time, that'd be 5:30 PM through 11:30 PM.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



Everyone is invited to this very special event. Attire for military is Dinner Dress. Civilian attire is optional black tie with ladies evening wear.

Tickets on sale until March 8. Active duty and reserve E3-E5 only \$30. All others \$50 per person. Make checks payable to: NSVA Island X-3, Blairsville.

Ticket sales POC: Ed Crenshaw, 706-897-2649 (cecibret@windstream.net) or Bob Ramay, 706-400-9245 (bobramay@windstream.net). Mailing address for checks: Ed Crenshaw, 9021 Sharons Way, Young Harris, GA 30582.

This year on 05 March 2020 the US Navy Seabees are celebrating their 78th Birthday! They were instrumental in America's survival and winning WWII.

Only the details of this upcoming celebration are mentioned above. To meet and understand more history of this fine engineering organization, please plan on attending and again meeting some very fine individuals who are our neighbors, fine friends and Veterans of various assignments. You'll be hard pressed to rub shoulders with a better bunch of folks. There should be representatives of all our military services there.

Don't miss this; it won't be back until next year!

If you plan on paying at the door please contact one of the Navy Seabees listed above in order to aid them in their headcount for the purpose of ordering food.

There aren't a lot of US Navy Seabees, being a very special and somewhat elite force within our Navy. This Ball is one of the best opportunities to meet and greet members of this unique military force, and you'll meet several of them along with many other military Veterans and have a fun filled time sharing fellowship with good folks of our community.

Please come!

Semper Paratus

Stories that Grow Faith

There are ancient stories which are as pertinent today as they were when they were first spoken; stories that inspire, stories that grow faith, that inform us, caution and amuse us. These stories survive the passage of time because they speak truth about human nature, and that nature doesn't change, no matter how society or technology does.

How society or technology does within the context of their times. In my family we have several stories like that. A lifelong resident of our area or anyone who grew up in a rural community would need no further explanation, but for our younger friends and our friends from the city, let me take you back in time.

If you moved here from the urban cliff dwellings or from any place where traffic and congestion are commonplace, you might, even today, feel isolated and far from the beaten path when you look at the mountains around us. You might find it hard to understand when those of us with a living memory of unbroken ridgelines and clear running streams look at the same mountains with more than a little sadness.

There are some few still among us, however, with a living memory that stretches even further, back to a time before electricity came to this area, a time when there were more dirt roads than paved ones. Among that precious few are people who had a parent or a grandparent with a living memory of a time when some of our mountain valleys were little changed from the days of the first non-native settlers to our area. This is a story from that time.

It's hard for us to conceive of the hardships that were common to the early residents of the Southern Appalachians. Entire communities lived days away from hospitals or medical help, even if they could have afforded such. Many farms were almost entirely self reliant for food, clothing and shelter. Cash was always in short supply, and carefully reserved for things that could not be produced at home, like nails, salt, sugar and the occasional visit from the itinerant doctor. The biggest need for cash every year was likely to be for taxes. Indeed, some things never change.

I think my grandfather had something in common with Daniel Boone, who once said that when he could see the smoke from his neighbor's chimney, it was time to move. When my grandparents were newlyweds, he chose a beautiful and isolated cove to build their first home. The cove was at the end of a box canyon, protected from the wind on all sides by ridgelines, but with a southern exposure for maximum sunlight. The house was built on a small knoll with a gentle slope. The knoll was bordered on three sides by creeks and a bold spring where he built a springhouse for water and natural refrigeration.

There was not a neighbor within sight or sound, and a single lane tunneling through a quarter mile of mountain laurel led to a one lane dirt road and then about 12 more miles of dirt road into Hiawassee. To this day, that cove is still hidden by mountain laurel and as quiet as a whisper of wind.

Being isolated didn't mean that our ancestors were not social. They depended on their neighbors and friends and their community churches and they achieved a level of interdependence and trust rarely seen in our society today.

Being isolated also did not spare them from the ravages of poorly understood diseases which occasionally plagued our mountain communities. My grandmother in her 96 years had seen influenza or "the grip," as they called it, typhoid, cholera, scarlet fever, diphtheria and dysentery. The graveyards of our older mountain cemeteries are dotted with the infant graves of many who succumbed to those diseases.

Soon after my grandparents had settled into their new cabin, and before they had their first child, typhoid fever came to Upper Hightower. This would have been about 1914/1915. Several of the neighbors came down with the fever, and even the doctor was sick.

My grandparents got the fever in the fall, and over time they became progressively weaker. With sick neighbors and the doctor out of commission, the system of interdependence the community depended on was severely threatened. Normally at that time of year my grandparents would have been busy putting away stores for the winter, cutting firewood, butchering a hog and hunting game. They would have had some canned goods they could have eaten while they were sick and too weak to do anything else, but as my grandfather told the story, after several days growing weaker without any protein, he was beginning to wonder whether they would survive.

Typhoid fever puts you flat on your back with migraine-level headaches and severe cramps. Grandpa said they slept as much as they could, and as they grew progressively weaker, they would pass out in bed until they woke up again and tried to get a little water to drink. After sleeping for most of one day, he said he woke up and prayed that if the Good Lord willed it, he was ready to go home, but if not, they sure could use a little help.

Just then he said he heard the sound of squirrels barking in a big black walnut tree across the clearing from the cabin. He forced himself up out of bed and staggered over to get his shotgun down off the rack. His head swam with the effort and he fell down, but when he came to, he could still hear those squirrels barking.

Grandpa said it felt like it took an hour to stagger across that clearing, using his shotgun as a support. When he got to the base of the walnut tree, he collapsed with his back against the tree and passed out again. The sun was starting to go down behind the mountain, and with his head swimming he was having a hard time seeing the squirrels in the tree.

When he realized that he had with him only the two shells in chamber of the double barreled shotgun, Grandpa said he prayed again and said, "Lord, I can't do this by myself." He raised the gun, his head swam and he closed his eyes and pulled both triggers. Two squirrels fell dead out of the tree.

Hope is a tonic, and Grandpa said the trip back to the cabin was a lot shorter. He was able to skin the squirrels and help Grandma cook them up, and he said it was the best meal they ever ate. It gave them the needed strength to keep going, and helped grow the faith that sustained both of them into their late nineties.

The Middle Path
 By: Don Perry
 onthemiddlepath.com

Chill Hours

This week I'm going to talk about chill hours and the affect that cold has on plants. The cold weather can feel very dreary and like there is no life with plants not growing, trees without leaves, and wildlife holing up for the winter. However, winter is a very important and necessary time of the year for plants. Without it there's a number of important fruits and flowers that would not bloom every year. Let's talk about the effect that cold weather can have on plants and why it's so important.

For some plants they are not just responding to the cold but they are also responding to the change in day length as the days grow shorter in winter and then longer into the spring. These kinds of plants are called photosensitive, because they are responding to the changes in light. Mums and poinsettias are some common examples. A change in the day length can trigger blooming or other responses in these plants.

Many fruit plants require chill hours to be able to put on blooms. Chill hours is a count of the number of hours where the temperature is less than 45 degrees Fahrenheit. After a satisfactory number of chilling hours has been reached, the plant will break into bloom. This chilling process is called vernalization. Without vernalization, we wouldn't be able to enjoy apples, peaches, tulips, foxgloves, blueberries, and many other plants. Different varieties of plants require different numbers of chilling hours, so it's always best to pick varieties that are well adapted to our climate so that you have the most success with your fruits and flowers. For example if you select a variety of apples that requires too many chill hours, the apple tree will not bloom. However, if you select a variety of apple tree that has a chill hour requirement that is too low, it could bloom too early, and the flowers would be killed in a frost.

In these plants, a repressor gene is keeping the plants from blooming. The cold causes that repressor gene to be altered so that it's no longer controlling the blooming of the flower. That way when warmer temperatures arrive the flowers can bloom out. The timing of when cold happens is also critical. Oftentimes in the mountains, we'll have a late freeze after many of the apple trees have already bloomed. Freezing temperatures after bloom can result in flowers dying and falling off. If the blooms fall off a fruit tree, that tree won't be able to bear any fruit that year. For a freeze to damage blooms the temperature usually need to be 28 or lower. Early freezes can be damaging to plants as well. They are forced into freezing temperatures before being able to harden off properly, and can be severely damaged.

Some plants are able to tolerate cold weather while others can't. Scientist believe the ability to tolerate cold weather comes down to the makeup of the cell membranes in the plant. Cell membranes are made up of fat molecules. Some of them are saturated and some unsaturated. Similar to what you read on the nutrition facts label for packaged food. Scientists think that plants with a higher ratio of saturated fats can freeze more easily.

Winter can seem like a dead time of the year, really it's Mother Nature's way of preparing for spring. If you have questions about the effect of winter on plants contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

UGA extension
 Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Letters to The Editor

Response to "What are we getting for our Money?"

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your comments concerning the two derelict buildings the City recently purchased. Previously, the City conducted numerous meetings concerning the development and improvements to Hiawassee with the citizens of Hiawassee and Towns County. An over-whelming majority wanted to keep the historic look and feel of the town and renovate as much as possible. An artist rendering of the two buildings was included in the resulting Strategic Plan for Hiawassee.

A second consideration to renovate as apposed to tear down and build new was that the City does not have the funds for such a project. Since the buildings are considered historic because of their age, grants to preserve them are available. Many of them could possibly cover the full restoration of the buildings, those will be applied for hence, the renovations will not be paid by taxes.

The goal is to provide a business incubator with lower rents to small, start-up businesses that do not need a large space and can not afford the higher rents in the City. As these businesses grow and move to larger space within the City, other homegrown businesses will take their place. The City would like businesses that will attract people to downtown for entertainment and shopping. There are 80 parking spaces around the square within walking distance with additional parking planned.

The question was "What do we get for our Money?" The short answer is the City gets nothing. The City only exists for the benefit of its citizens. Citizens of Hiawassee and Towns County get to remove two eyesores in the town, acquires two renovated buildings without the use of taxpayer money for renovations, provides an opportunity to attract businesses to downtown, will increase tax revenue and help to improve the look of the downtown corridor.

Herbert Bruce, Chairman
 Downtown Development Authority

Whether We Want it to be or Not

Dear Editor,

Regarding the recent letter denying the reality of human caused climate change, perhaps the writer would like to know that 97-99% of climate change experts agree it is real and very dangerous. The U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change agrees. Virtually every scientific organization in the world agrees. Our military agrees, and virtually every nation in the world, except the US, agrees. The ice ages in the past were caused by the earth's elliptical rotation around the sun, but the scientific fact is that we should actually be cooling now from this. If these facts do not seem convincing, then perhaps a new report by economists at JP Morgan Chase, the largest investment firm in the country, will help. In an alarming document sent to clients, they state that human life "as we know it" could be threatened by climate change. They warned of the "catastrophic" potential of climate change. They said that deaths, immigration and conflicts will soar as the planet heats, water supplies will dry up, famines will increase, species will be wiped, and all this will have a devastating impact on economic growth and the stock market. Climate change is real, whether we want it to be or not.

Bob Dalsemer

Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!
 Contact us at 706-896-4454
 Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM



Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
	Every Tuesday:	
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Sharp UMC (Men)	7 pm
	Every Wednesday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Hiawassee UMC	Noon
	Every Thursday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Friday:	
Movers & Shakers	Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Sunday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	First Tuesday of each month:	
Alzheimer's Supp.	McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
MRAAC	Calvary Alliance	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
VFW	VFW Post	5 pm
Historical Society	Hist. Soc. Bldg.	6 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Second Tuesday of each month:	
Conv./Vis. Bureau	Civic Center	8 am
Gem & Mineral Club	Senior Center	1:30 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Church	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
USCG Aux.	Senior Center	7 pm

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Towns County Herald

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