

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

The Twelve Anchors

Part II - I'm hesitant to label this as the final of last week's introduction to these fine heroic ladies, as stories like these have no ending. Americans like this are forever on earth as well as in Heaven! After over two centuries, economic turmoil, unending struggle and warfare, the best of the best ALWAYS come forward to volunteer to sacrifice for our America and a vision, a belief in something far greater than themselves. One such American is Laura Mae Cobb and The Twelve Anchors. As a reminder we are on the heels of National Nurses' Week.

So how did she rate so many awards and decorations?

In March, 1942, 49 year old Cobb and her 11 nurses were ordered into the internment camp at Santo Tomas University. They had the impossible task of caring for 3,000 men, women, and children.

Under the iron, sadistic fists of the Japanese, she and her nurses were all that the internees had to look over them. Cobb managed to hide away extra food, money and supplies for those they cared for. Under penalty of death they mislabeled drugs and medicinal supplies to prevent the Japanese from looting lifesaving drugs. Laura Mae managed to smuggle in all her nurses' service records and keep them from the Japs, also a death sentence if she was caught.

May, 1943 the Japanese commander announced they were transferring 800 male prisoners to Los Banos, another prison camp under construction. The Army nurses refused to leave, however Cobb and her 11 nurses plus three civilian nurses volunteered for Los Banos prison camp to provide much needed medical care. She again managed to smuggle her nurses' service records along the ride to Los Banos.

Once there, in their makeshift hospital a very sadistic Lt. Sadaaki Konishi took command and reduced food intake for the prisoners to less than 900 calories per person and no salt, per day. In effect he was starving them to death. There were many other abuses also withstood The Twelve Anchors were also starved and lost weight as none of them lost their courage, cheerful attitudes, and commitment to serve others.

February 23, 1945 in an early morning raid, US Paratroopers and Filipino guerrillas over ran Los Banos and rescued the entire prison population. They were moved to another liberated prison camp, Bilibid, outside Manila. The nurses themselves were in dire need of medical care, later diagnosed with heart ailment, tuberculosis, beriberi and debilitating arthritis. Thanks to the foresight and bravery of Cobb and her smuggled personnel records all their nurses received back pay and promotions.

Laura Mae Cobb never believed herself to be a hero even though the Navy and Army presented her and her nurses the Bronze Star with a gold device for, "dauntless determination, Zealous efforts, and unselfish devotion to duty in the face of unprecedented hardship." Because of her arthritis she retired from the Navy at the rank of Commander in 1947.

I am left questioning myself, "Could I have withstood what this fine, very special nurse managed to survive, endure, and care for others as well?"

Semper Paratus



IN OUR HEARTS...
MEMORIAL DAY - MONDAY, MAY 25

Late Freezes

A late freeze like the one that we've had here are damaging to agriculture in more ways than you'd expect. Some of the effects won't be seen for several months. I think as humans we always want to know what's coming next. We can't know anything for certain. That is something we've all learned over the last couple of months. However, the weather conditions that we've had can give us some clues on what might happen.

The main part of the plant that is impacted is the flower. If the flower on a plant dies prematurely, then that plant won't produce any fruit or seed. Locally, many of the apple growers have been hit by the late frosts. The vineyards have also had a hard time dealing with the late frost.

In some orchards and vineyards, growers will place fires around to try to keep plants just above freezing temperatures. It takes a lot of work to keep those fires going through the coldest part of the night. Some vineyards have giant wind machines that mix the air from high and low lying areas to try to raise the temperature.

Annual plants can also be bit by freezes. Perennials are more hardy and able to withstand a freeze. Scientists believe a plant's ability to withstand a freeze has to do with the fats that make up the cell membrane. Usually it takes a week or so before you see freeze damage. Covering annuals with a bucket or sheet traps the heat that is radiated from the earth at night, creating a miniature greenhouse.

Seed germination rates will also decline with a freeze. Cold temperatures allow seedling diseases to get in and attack a seed. Low soil temperatures also slow down germination. Generally speaking, seeds need soil to be at least 65 degrees to be able to germinate.

Acorn production is also negatively impacted by a late freeze. Oak trees will have male and female flowers on the same tree. The technical term for this is monoecious. Oak flowers are very small, and are wind pollinated. Generally speaking red oaks can be broke down into white oaks and red oaks. A red oak's acorns take 15 months to mature. Therefore, in years with a late freeze, red oaks will still produce a crop. White oaks can be froze out by a late freeze.

Why does acorn production matter? Many species of wildlife rely heavily on acorns for food. Pigeons, ducks, woodpeckers, bears, deer, and hogs all eat acorns. Throughout the summer, there is enough forage for wildlife to eat, but as fall and winter arrive, they need acorns for their diet. If there aren't enough acorns to go around, they will come looking for food. With smaller animals, this isn't very problematic. However, with bears, deer, and especially hogs they can do damage. Hogs in particular can be very damaging to property including lawns, pastures, and anything else they can get their tusks into. Hogs cause \$1.5 billion in damage every year in the US.

If you have questions about freeze damage contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



Watching and Working
Jacob Williams

Back to the Garden

Welcome to all of you who took a step back from the virtual world and bought seeds, plants, fertilizer, garden tools, even baby chicks during our recent cultural and economic shift.

It doesn't matter why you did it, fear of food shortages, frustration with high prices or just an abundance of time to spend at home. It was a healthy choice for sunshine, fresh air and mobility versus more hours spent sitting, pointing and clicking.

Apparently, we are a nation of gardeners and small holders again, or closer to it than we have been in decades. Garden seed, fertilizer, potting soil, even baby chickens and chicken feed have been as scarce in some parts of the country as meat was in Hiawassee a few weeks ago.

Many of us are gardening for the first time, and many are returning to it after a long absence. Now that we've made that all important first move, it's important to be patient and persistent and to hold fast to the intentions behind our choice.

We have long been conditioned to seek immediate gratification, and the garden doesn't grow that. From the first spade breaking the sod to the last tomato we pick in October, a garden is an exercise in faith and endurance. It requires setting aside short-term desires to achieve long term goals, and many of us are no longer accustomed to investing our time (or our money) in this manner.

All too soon the old economy, fractured but still functioning, will seek to draw us back in, and that is to be expected. Every business wants to survive, even the diseased ones. Those (gassed green and tasteless) tomatoes are cheaper at the grocery now. Hollywood is making movies again. There is breaking news happening, and I haven't posted anything on Facebook in days. I'll spray those beans tomorrow...

To me it's a clear choice. A few more tiny doses of serotonin when someone "likes" my post on Facebook, a minute by minute awareness of News Talker One's opinion of how today's broken news will play out, another BOGO gizmo for the kitchen or dustable for the shelf - or, the perfect tomato, picked at the peak of ripeness from my own vine, thickly sliced between two pieces of sourdough bread and a generous layer of Duke's mayonnaise.

Go, water those cucumber seedlings right now...Was that my phone? I can't believe she posted that....

Just stop for a minute. Let's be honest. We've got 6 more months of politics to endure. That's enough time to grow a prize winning pumpkin or add another roll of belly fat. Nobody cares about your political opinion anyway. The only people who agree with you, who provide your micro doses of brain candy for the mean-spirited memes you share, are people who already think and vote like you do. When is the last time you were so insulted that you changed your opinion about something?

"But it's important to stay informed." Agreed. Now tell us the last time corporate news provided you information that made you either richer or happier? We'll wait....

How useful is it to know who got shot in another town or another state, or the opinion of a talk show comedian on a question of medical science, or what the polls say today that they didn't say yesterday, now that Politician Pepsi was "slammed" by Politician Coke? If you curate your information intake, everything you need to know for the day, from financial news to the weather, can be absorbed over a single cup of coffee in the morning.

That leaves plenty of time to check those potatoes for flea beetles. I like neem oil sprayed with enough Dr. Bronner's peppermint for a good emulsion to solve that problem. Just keep after it, and don't get discouraged when you start to feel withdrawal symptoms away from the pixel pushers. We have been conditioned for a long time now. Marketing, propaganda, social engineering and manipulation are intensely studied and heavily invested to keep us consuming goods, services and information as much and as often as possible.

In your garden there is no one to convince you to be so outraged or afraid that you need to keep checking back to see if you should be less outraged or afraid, or more so. If you like drama, the garden is full of it, with its life and death struggles and physical challenges and heartaches and triumphs. If you're patient and enduring, you can even post pictures of your prize tomatoes on Facebook. They'll get more "likes" than your political opinions. I guarantee it, or your money back.

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

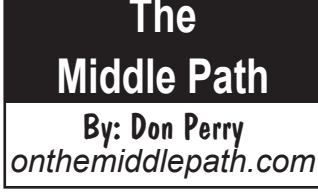
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Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially 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.



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Letters to The Editor

One Must Ask Why

Dear Editor,

The United States is the richest and most advanced country in the world with the most advanced and expensive medical industry making up approximately 18% of its Gross Domestic Product. The world population is approximately 7.8 billion human beings as of May 6, 2020. Of this amount, the United States had 330,711,766 people, or approximately 4.2% of world population. On that date, the United States had 1,215,008 confirmed cases of COVID-19 out of total worldwide confirmed cases 3,685,517 or approximately 33% and 72,225 confirmed deaths out of total worldwide confirmed deaths of 258,721 or approximately 27.9%. Given the United States' medical industry's status, one must ask why the incidents of COVID-19 and the deaths attributable to the disease in our country is so great in relation to the rest of the world.

Lawrence H. Katz

Water Vapor

Dear Editor,

According to YaleClimateConnections.org/2008/02/com:

Water Vapor, H2O, a green house gas, like carbon dioxide, represents around 80% of total Green House Gas mass in the atmosphere and 90% of greenhouse gas volume. Water Vapor and Clouds (They absorb HEAT from the SUN) account for 66 to 85% of the greenhouse effect, compared to a range of 9 to 26% for CO2.

The American Chemical Society's ACS Climate Science Toolkit cuts right to the chase in an excellent analysis on its website, Water Vapor is the largest contributor to the Earth's Greenhouse Effect. (Forbes)

By the way, don't forget about the SUN and its affect on so called climate change. The SUN has a great effect on the Earths atmosphere and global warming!! The Sun is The source of energy and HEAT!

I have read numerous articles about global warming and climate change and air pollution which is supposed to be the cause of these two issues, I have witnessed major reduction in air pollution by the shutting down of steel plants and I have personally be involved in cleaning up the atmosphere in industrial plants.

One thing that amazes me about the total HOAX of this discusion is the lack of facts, P T Barnum would be proud of the people who concocted the idea that man could control climate change and global warming.

The next time you hear someone say that we need a tax on carbon (0.0412%) of the atmosphere, less than 1%, Remember that this tax will have no effect on either global warming or climate change, it will have an effect on the way you live and how much money you have. This is all about POWER AND MONEY!

Chuck Luca

North Georgia Prescribed Fire Virtual Meeting

The Georgia Prescribed Fire Council, a statewide coalition of land managers, foresters, forestry consultants, conservation organizations, universities, and state and federal agencies promotes the safe use of prescribed fire as an essential natural resource management tool to ensure ecosystem health and reduce wildfire risk.

The first North Georgia Prescribed Fire Council meeting was held in 2019 at North Georgia Technical College in Jasper, GA with 200+ in attendance.

The Council has plans to hold the 2020 North Georgia Prescribed Fire meeting on Thursday, June 4, 2020 but due to the COVID 19 restrictions on large groups, the 2020 meeting will be a virtual meeting using ZOOM technology.

There will be a normal full agenda of speakers with live interaction from the audience available for questions and comments. ZOOM is very easy to use and there will be technical help for any issues.

The 5-hour meeting, with breaks, will address critical issues for prescribed fire practitioners and advocates, with a special emphasis on north Georgia and its unique terrain, population and forest types. Meeting attendees will hear from prescribed fire experts on 8 different topics as you will see on the meeting agenda.

North Georgia's public and privately-owned forestland is a significant economic, biological, recreational, and aesthetic resource.

Carefully planned prescribed fires prevent the build-up of flammable, naturally occurring fuels that set the stage for destructive wildfires.

Prescribed fire also helps ensure healthy habitat for plants and animals, including rare and endangered species in Georgia.

Continuing Forestry Education and Master Timber Harvester credits will be available for those participating in the full conference.

Join us on June 4th at 10 AM on your computer or other device with ZOOM to learn about the state of prescribed fire in North Georgia. Joining is easy just one click to get on ZOOM and into the program.

Here is the agenda 1. "The State of Fire in Georgia 2. "Changes in the Vegetative Structure in he first decade in an Old Growth Mountain Longleaf Forest" 3. "Burning in Stands other than Longleaf: Opportunities Overlooked" 4. "Basics of a Burn Plan" 5. "Online Tools for Managing Smoke 6. "Prescribed Fire-A Look at Landowner's Legal Liability in Georgia" 7. "The Role of Prescribed Fire for Deer Management" 8. "Patterns of Delayed Overstory Mortality following Severe Wildfire in the Southern Appalachians"

For more information about the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council and to register for this free program, visit www.garx-fire.com or go to Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Facebook or www.chestchattred.orgf.

Frank M Riley Jr. CF Chair, Georgia Prescribed Fire Council



RC&D
Frank Riley
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Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546