

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Vaughn Barrett

Part II:
March, 1945
Vaughn went
by motor con-
voy to Manila
assigned to
operations of
Port of Manila.

The
Veterans'
Corner
Scott
Drummond
USCG Veteran

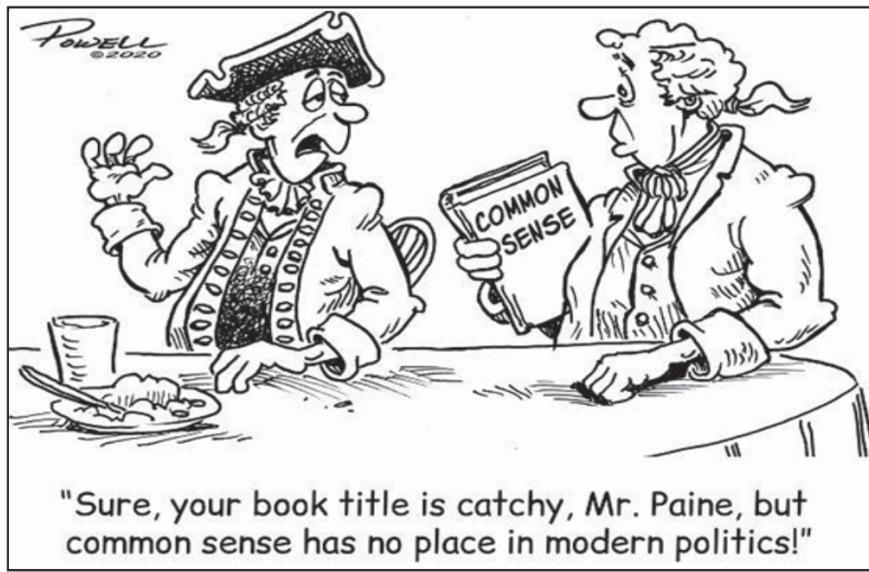


As well as supporting ground troops and riding the area of the Japanese he was an expert with heavy equipment and rebuilding damaged roads and infrastructure for the Filipinos. Later on he was moved to Aringay, the Northern port of Luzon for preparations of a full scale invasion of Japan. His 544th then then went ashore at Waykayama, Japan, September 25th, 1945. In spite of what naysayers allude to, Vaughn and millions of other Allied lives were saved by President Truman's orders to finish that war with atomic bombs dropped into the heartland of Japan, resulting in the surrender of the fanatical Japanese government and end of WWII.

Vaughn was awarded: Good Conduct Ribbon; Bronze Arrowhead; American Theater Ribbon; WWII Victory Ribbon; Luzon Campaign Bronze Star; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; New Guinea Campaign Bronze Star; Northern Solomons Campaign Bronze Star; Philippine Liberation Ribbon Bronze Star; Four overseas bars. His Certificate of Meritorious Service plainly states He was of excellent character and efficiency as a soldier. And applied himself diligently and with integrity. His CO stated that he was a credit to his organization that made it possible for the Regiment to successfully complete its war mission.

Allow me to add, after meeting this wonderful man at his 100th birthday celebration, that last description of Vaughn Barrett applies to his entire 100 years of blessing his family and America with his presence. His large family and scale of friends are amongst the very best of the best Americans. Plus like many of my mentors of the Greatest Generation, they are endowed by humility, and calm common sense honesty with no strings attached, no doubt influenced by Vaughn Barrett, an exemplary, outstanding icon for Americanism. Vaughn has a great sense of humor also. In my humble opinion it is virtually impossible to not love and respect this man, Vaughn Barrett, and all others like him, all across our great Blessing, our United States of America. And there are lots of others, who may or may not have accomplished what Vaughn did, doing their duty Honorably, coming home and continuing their lives as good, decent, humble, productive Americans, never seeing or promoting themselves as heroes. All of them serving something far greater than self.

Semper Paratus



Fire on the Farm - Hay Fire

My usual topic is about wildfire around the forests and your home, but there are fire dangers in rural areas also, particularly on our farms. Farms have a lot of excess "fuel" laying around just waiting for a match, spark, or a hot exhaust to start a fire that will put a farmer out of business for a long time or forever. If a hay barn burns then the feed that the farmer has invested time and money into to harvest and store for the livestock for that year could be gone. A fire in an equipment shed could take away all the (really) expensive equipment that is necessary to carry on farming. Fences cost \$10,000 per mile so burning them could be a business or life changing event.

Many farms have old buildings that insurance cannot replace. Most farmers are like most homeowners, they think that it will never happen to them, but I remind them that that first one is a real bummer! They could be the "somebody else" that it happened to instead of somebody else.

Here is an article that talks about a fire danger that we don't think about. It may have taken its time getting here, but warm weather has finally arrived. Farmers are glad to be out in the hay fields baling hay for the winter.. One of the worst ways to waste your time and labor on the tractor is to put up hay that is too wet. Molded hay is bad, but a barn fire is even worse. All the tedding, raking, and waiting on the sun to cook your hay is a good thing that takes the hay from the original near 80% moisture down to the 20% or less it needs to be before you start the baler.

A small amount of heat up may occur after baling and not cause any damage to hay quality or risk of fire. It can cause the evaporation of any remaining moisture. With moisture at less than 10%, hay will be dry and brittle. The 10-15% range is optimal with the least chance of fire. Up to 20% is when there is the potential for mold in hay especially if a preservative was not used when baling. Hay baled with 21-25% moisture will mold and there is a moderate chance of fire. Hay should never be baled above 25% moisture because of the extreme risk of fire. Leave hay in the field for at least a few days on purpose to allow heat to dissipate. Stacking bales outside or in a barn too soon will concentrate the heat together and accelerate the chances of a fire because the heat cannot escape.

The easiest method to check for heat in hay is to use a compost thermometer. This is an affordable tool that everyone who bales hay should have on hand. Stick the it into the side of the bale and wait. Alternatively, you can also take a piece of metal conduit and drive it into a bale and then place a candy thermometer inside of that for at least ten minutes to get an accurate reading.

The guidelines for internal temperature measured in degrees F are as follows: Less than 130 has the least risk of fire, 130-140 has little risk but recheck it to see if the temperature climbs, 150 Has a moderate risk of fire. Move hay to a safe location and check often, 170 Fire is imminent. Over 190 Fire is present, run away fast!. Hay bales may combust when moved. Inject water and soak it when moving. The rate of increase in temperature while checking is an indicator of how much it is at risk of fire. A slow rise in temperature is much different than a rapid rise in which you should take precautionary measures.

If there is the smell of caramel around your hay bales it is an indicator that it is warming up and a good sign that you should check the temperature. Other symptoms include a browning in color, visible vapor, and feeling heat with your hand especially if you put your fingers slightly into the side of the bale.

If your hay is heating up then there are several steps you can take. The first would be to move them away from buildings and spread them out. Only do this if there is no smell or sight of smoke because moving those could expose the smoldering hay to oxygen and exacerbate the situation. If fire is present, call for emergency help. They should first put out visible flames. Next, use a straight tip nozzle to penetrate the hay with water. Soak the hay until the moisture content is so high it cannot burn. When the hay is no longer hot, you can consider moving the bales from barns or stacks, but keep water handy in case there are flare-ups.

Never walk across hay that has the potential for fire. it takes a long time to grow a good stand of hay and much work to mow and bale it. Let patience be your guide in getting it ready to bale so your hay will be of high quality for your livestock, and you can hopefully avoid the risks of any fires.

For more information check with your local UGA Cooperative Extension office.

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

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor
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.

RC&D

Frank
Riley
Executive
Director



Hornworms

You may be familiar with these mean looking creatures. Tomato hornworms look menacing, but the real damage that they do is in your garden. Let's talk about what they look like and what you can do about them in the garden.

Watching
and Working
Jacob
Williams



The tomato hornworm doesn't only feed on tomatoes; they will eat anything in the solanaceae plant family. This includes tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, and potatoes. They will grow and go into their cocoon phase to emerge as a type of sphinx moth. Tomato hornworms have v-shaped yellow lines that run the length of their body. They have small brownish dots that look like eyes running the length of their body too. There is a black protrusion on the end of their body that looks like a stinger. This is to scare predators away and can't actually hurt you. There is another hornworm called the tobacco hornworm that looks very similar to the tomato hornworm. The main difference is the tobacco hornworm just have diagonal white lines instead of a V-shape on its body. The horn on the tobacco hornworm is more reddish. Both can cause a lot of damage in your garden, and are controlled the same way.

The older and larger hornworms get the more damage they do, until they turn into moths. They start out pretty small at about half an inch long. At this size, they won't do a lot of damage to plants. However, they grow quickly, and within four weeks are full-grown and up to 4 inches long.

A 4-inch long hornworm can cause some serious damage very quickly, especially if you have a lot of them. They can rapidly defoliate entire plants. Because of their green body, they blend in with the plants, so you might not notice them until they have done significant damage. They will also leave behind dark green or black droppings that you might be able to see.

Managing hornworms that is not difficult if you are walking through and closely looking at your plants a couple of times a week. Handpicking them and putting them in a container of soapy water usually works pretty well. If a jar of soapy water isn't handy, you can also sling them onto the ground. A sight that you might see is a hornworm with lots of small white egg sacks attached to its back. These are from a parasitoid wasp. The eggs will hatch and the larvae will eat the hornworm from the inside out. Ladybugs and lacewings also serve as predators of hornworm eggs and young caterpillars.

There are a couple of insecticides that you can use. It's best to use insecticides on hornworms before they are full grown, because insecticides won't be as effective against a 4-inch caterpillar. Bt is an organic insecticide that is effective against caterpillars. Spinosad is an insecticide that is derived from natural microorganisms that also works well. Permethrin will also work well to control many different types of pests on vegetables.

Always read and follow the label for any insecticide that you use, whether it is organic or synthetic.

If you have questions about hornworms or other garden pests contact your County Extension office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Urban Sprawl vs. Urban Y'all

This is out of my comfort zone so it may sound clumsy. It is important to me so here goes. As a child I was privy to hearing my parents and their friends discussing the past, the current, and the future state of affairs on many political issues.

Although not really listening, through osmosis I absorbed bits and pieces which left an incomplete or distorted picture. It was at one of these round-table feasts that I first heard the term urban sprawl.

Before the "Age of Abnormality" inflicted by Covid, there was a palpable sense of change coming to Towns County, and particularly to Hiawassee. An opening-up, if you will, both exciting and scary.

Everything was shelved and the task of staying alive was paramount. Wounds are healing and scars will remain but we, collectively as humans, return to not just staying but being alive. With luck, sadder but wiser.

The words polite and politics begin similarly but sometimes ravel in the ending. Having neither the temperament nor the bent to be a politico, I'm grateful to those who do and can, while trusting they accept the duty with the purpose of serving honorably.

I have seen every episode of The Andy Griffith Show about 99 times apiece. That may be a touch exaggerated, but just. That show may have been formula TV but it sure went down sweet.

When the movie director came to Mayberry scouting for a film location, he loved the charm and quaintness of the city. Of course the citizens wanted to appear gentrified and set about in their half-cocked manner to update and make trendy the shops, the people, and even Otis.

When they tried to cut down the century old oak tree which graced the middle of town, acorns hit the fan with Andy and the director setting all right, preserving Mayberry and Barney taking the credit.

When shopping centers with stores under one roof became "the in thing" in big cities, Toccoa GA built metal roofing over everything in town hoping to compete with the larger cities. It did not and left the city with falling metal and a huge removal tab.

For this column, research on urban sprawl was done. Much has been written, but what hit home for me was, "Urban sprawl has been correlated with increased energy use, pollution, and traffic congestion and a decline in community distinctiveness and cohesiveness."

A few corporate chain eateries have functions in a community but too many may prohibit the great and even the not so great independent restaurants.

Sort of like weeds do a garden. Wonderful, interesting locals become Anyplace, USA.

I love the distinctiveness of our community. Nothing stays the same forever but the hose has a nozzle. If the water blasts too forcefully, there's flooding. If it trickles too little, there's draught.

It is sort of like a face lift. Iron out the wrinkles but don't get a different nose.

I'd like to still recognize you.
See You Around Towns!

Around
Towns
Dale
Harmon



Letters to The Editor

Thank you, North Georgia

Dear Editor,

Vaughn Barrett and his family would like to express their thanks and appreciation to all those who sent birthday cards to Vaughn. In total, Vaughn received 169 cards from people throughout our area. Thank you for making this WWII veteran feel special on his 100th birthday.

Karen and Mitzi

The Filibuster has no Place

Dear Editor,

Year after year, we see politicians in Congress make promises about what they can do for constituents like me. And year after year, the progress is usually less than we hoped for.

The solution is clear: It's time to get rid of the filibuster -- a Senate rule that allows a minority of senators to block any piece of legislation. Democrats have introduced some great bills that would help a vast majority of Americans. Right now, the Senate is deciding whether to pass the For the People Act, for instance, a big reform bill that addresses everything from making voting more accessible and streamlined to getting rid of corruption in government. But the fate of the For the People Act is uncertain as long as it can be filibustered by senators like Ted Cruz and Lindsey Graham.

And that's only one bill. Imagine all the progress that's being held up in Congress because the filibuster stands in the way. For me, for my community, and for communities like mine all across America, I'm asking senators to do away with the filibuster once and for all.

Sincerely,
Thomas Repp

Kudos to State Board of Education

Dear Editor,

Kudos to the Georgia State Board of Education for adopting a resolution affirming it will work to prevent the promotion of any divisive ideologies based on race or sex from being incorporated into Georgia's K-12 public education standards. It is great that they will continue to be focused on educating students rather than indoctrinating students.

Critical race theory (CRT) has been injected into public school systems and teacher training programs in the form of diversity training programs and school curricula. There are a series of expressions deployed by CRT supporters to describe their ideology, including equity, social justice, diversity and inclusions and culturally responsive teaching. This year, several state legislatures have introduced bills to achieve the goal of preventing public institutions from conducting programs that stereotype, scapegoat, or demean people on the basis of race. Georgia needs to move forward and pass legislation completely eliminating critical race theory (CRT) from being taught in our Georgia schools.

Tim Groza

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