

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## 4th of July is Never Over

Even though our actual Fourth of July weekend is past, never let it be over in your heart, mind or soul. Our Independence Day celebration represents the greatest nation in the history of mankind, our Sovereign Republic, our United States of America. And we need to remember that those Veterans who have served in our military service, our "Thin Blue Line", our EMTs, our Fire fighters, all have stood to serve in order to protect our nation and our people, ALL of us. Please remember those who from our nation's birth those who sacrificed their very lives, as the ultimate heroes, many of them unknown and unsung. From my very humble view point they are among st the very best and now reside at the omnipotent Right Hand of our Supreme Commander.

And what symbol have they all served underneath? Why our American Flag of course, never to be surrendered, abused, trampled upon, burned or torn down out of hatred.

Just a small bit of history about our precious flag:

January 1, 1776: The first United States flag, the "Grand Union," was displayed by George Washington. It became the unofficial national flag, preceding the 13-star, 13-stripe version.

June 14, 1777: The Stars and Stripes were adopted by the Continental Congress as the Flag of the United States.

June 14, 1877: Flag Day was observed nationally for the first time on the 100th anniversary of the Stars and Stripes—and continues today.

June 14, 1937: Pennsylvania became the first state in the United States to celebrate Flag Day officially as a state holiday.

July 4, 1960: The new 50-star flag was flown for the first time—the flag that still flies today.

Have we ever considered the colors, Red, white and Blue of our beautiful American banner?

Here's why those colors were chosen:

White, for purity and innocence.

Red, for valor and hardiness

Blue, for vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

Please remember and honor our flag and America and keep our Independence Day alive in our hearts forever.

And always, Stand for our Flag, and kneel for our Cross. - *Semper Paratus*



"Sure, your book title is catchy, Mr. Paine, but common sense has no place in modern politics!"

## Professor Karen's New Rules

Over the weekend we disconnected from the infomatrix. It was nice to relax and spend time with family, but we started the week without being properly conditioned and now we're not sure what we're supposed to worry about. When I have a chance, I'll login to Facebook and I'm sure someone will let me know.

Someone told us last week that we didn't have to worry about the virus anymore, that we should worry about the lives of African Americans instead. That's fine with me. I already do, as this directly affects the lives of several people I care deeply about. There is a lot of room for improvement when it comes to healing the age old problem of racism that still exists in this country.

What I have difficulty understanding is all the complicated new rules about privilege and microaggressions and such. I'm not sure who wrote them. I think an associate professor at a junior college somewhere wrote a paper and tweeted some tweets and our information commissars decided it was important enough to spread around. These new rules are going to take some getting used to. For most of my life I've had much simpler guides for dealing with folks. The Golden Rule works very well when it's actually used, and the Bible even states that it sums up the whole law of the prophets. That's a pretty heavy recommendation, and it really clarifies things.

But Americans like complexity, and we like to hear ourselves talk, and some of us, not naming any names, enjoy language so much that we get a little wordy. So, whenever I needed something more than "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," I had some fine material to draw on, like this great quotation which encapsulates the most central of American values. Some of you have heard it before:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." There is no mention of race in that statement, and right there at the founding of the American state it begins the long and painful process of abolishing slavery in the United States, though for some it required a series of uncomfortable rationalizations to justify that horrendous institution. Those of us who have spent much of our lives dealing with people based on the quality of their characters will find it difficult to have to modify our interactions to accommodate a person's pigmentation, but we're told that to fail to do so now is a "microaggression." I'm not sure what a microaggression is, but I know it's bad. It can get people called on the carpet at work or even fired, or worse – it can attract a whole flock of angry tweets.

There's already too much anger being passed around. I think some of it is frustration from being cooped up and told what to do...and then told something completely different to do by the people who are supposed to be in charge. Talk about confusion! But it takes more than frustration to send people into the streets to protest. Not that we should worry about the protests. Our country was founded on protest. Go back and read the Declaration of Independence again and note the long list of grievances. No, people should be able to peacefully protest anything they wish at any time and in any way that does not impinge on the rights of others.

Many of the protesters have a valid point. There's little doubt that black people are more likely to be arrested and more likely to suffer at the hands of a very small percentage of police officers who should not be allowed to wear a badge. And if you dig into those fractions, you'll also find that economic status is an even better predictor of arrest and mistreatment by the criminal justice system, which leads to another discussion as to why the majority of young black men are stuck in the lowest economic class year after year.

That would be a great starting point for a legitimate discussion about race, but it's not all about race. Race might have been the spark that ignited the current unrest, but the fuel for that fire has been collecting for decades, and it is decidedly economic in nature. When you think about it, "fire" is a good metaphor for what's going on now, and we should all be aware of who, or what, is fanning the flames. Look no further than the screens that dominate our waking hours and awareness. No one fanned the flames two weeks ago when over 100 black folks were killed in Chicago by other black folks. Every single one of those deaths was a tragedy. Every one of those lives mattered. But corporate media and social media had very little to say about it.

Sometimes it helps me to remember that the Supreme Court some years ago decided that corporations were people. Some people can't be trusted. That's why I was suspicious when I first learned about the corporate person of Black Lives Matter. Have you read their mission statement? It's on their website, and though some of it sounds pretty good, some of it sounds more like Karl Marx than Martin Luther King.

Then I noticed that several companies had donated over \$100 million to another corporation called The Movement for Black Lives, which is affiliated with BLM. Now, corporations give a lot of money to a lot of causes, and lot of charities and a lot of politicians. There's nothing wrong with that. But I thought it was curious that corporate America had suddenly discovered black folks. Then I remembered that this is an election year.

Of course, some corporations already knew quite a lot about black folks, like the entertainment companies that exploited performers and mass produced, marketed and sold a violent, misogynistic gangster culture made popular and profitable through hip hop music. Corporations knew how to put their most polluting industries and toxic waste in the poorest neighborhoods with the least ability to resist. They didn't seem to know a lot about providing jobs for the folks they now say they support. After seeing "BLM" every time I logged into Amazon or turned on my Fire TV, I found myself wishing I could inject it with truth serum so I could hear it say, "Hi, I'm Alexa and I'd like to thank all the people who destroyed neighborhood businesses and helped give Amazon one of the most profitable quarters in our history!"

Come to think of it, I believe the best thing for me to do personally is to, with all due respect, disregard Professor "Karen's" Rules for White Folks about Black Folks. If I meet a guy named "Steve" tomorrow and he's black, all I need to know is his name and all I need to observe is the choices he makes. If Steve wants me to acknowledge his skin color or tell me about his history, he'll let me know. His choice. Not mine.

And I'm sorry, Professor Karen, but not too long ago, to make assumptions about someone based on race, creed, color or ethnicity was the definition of prejudice. It seems to me that if I immediately assume a history of victimization and a set list of opinions and needs based on skin pigment, that is prejudice also. I think Martin Luther King had it exactly right when he said, "I look to a day when people will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

## Fungal Diseases

This year has been very wet. We've received more cumulative rainfall than we did in 2018 and 2019 through July 1st. Rainfall creates good conditions for a number of different plant diseases. Let's talk about fungal diseases.

A useful tool for understanding why plant diseases occur is the plant disease triangle. In one corner is plant susceptibility. Susceptibility is predetermined by the plant's physiology. The second corner of the triangle is the pathogen. It may seem like a no-brainer, but the disease causing pathogen must be present for plants to get sick. The third corner is a favorable environment for the disease to occur. Most diseases like wet conditions, which is why all the rain we've been getting can be problematic. If any one of the corners is missing from the disease triangle then disease will not be present in your plants.

Root rots are a problematic disease in Georgia. They love humid, wet conditions, with poorly drained soils. Root rots do most of their damage below the soil line so they may not be obvious at first. Some symptoms to look out for are wilting leaves, yellowing leaves, and poor growth. Root rots attack the roots, decreasing the plant's ability to uptake water and nutrients. Incorporating organic matter into your soil and reducing plant stress will make a less favorable environment for root rots.

Fungal leaf spots covers a wide range of plant diseases that are often specific to certain plants. Symptoms are small spots on leaves that have tan or gray centers, and dark brown to purple margins. Fungal leaf spots survive on fallen plant debris, so it's important to remove debris after it's fallen to keep your area sanitary. Leaf spots also like high humidity. Pruning your plants to increase air flow can help reduce the risk of disease. If you are irrigating your plants try to do it in the morning so that the foliage has time to dry off by the nighttime. Wet, cool leaves is a like an all you can eat buffet to fungal leaf spots.

Rusts are easily identified by the raised pustules on the undersides of the leaves. The pustules will break open and release an orange powder. Keeping leaves dry and removing infected leaves will help keep disease pressure down.

Finally, Botrytis is a specific disease that loves wet, dead plant material. Quick removal of dead flowers or leaves will keep Botrytis in check. Botrytis will usually only be a problem if a plant is wounded or if air flow is poor.

There are many more types of plant diseases out there, and a variety of different pathogens within the diseases that I've described. Removing infected leaves and branches, increasing air circulation, and well drained soils are the best tools against fungal diseases. There are many fungicides that can be used to control fungal diseases. However, proper identification of the fungus so that the correct fungicide is used is highly important.

If you have questions about diseases on your plants contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu. The Union County Extension Office has a new drop box in place on at the Northeast entrance of the Union County Civic Center. The box has a UGA Extension logo on it. You can drop water and soil samples along with payment in this drop box to increase social distancing.

## 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.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:** Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO 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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## The Veterans' Corner

Scott Drummond  
USCG Veteran



## Watching and Working

Jacob Williams



## The Middle Path

By: Don Perry  
onthemiddlepath.com

## Letters to The Editor

### That's Not Quite All

Dear Editor,  
One letter writer to the editor recently stated: "All Black Lives Matter is trying to do is bring everyone regardless of skin color, to the same stature as the rest of the citizens in our country." Really? That's not quite all.

Patrisse Cullors, the co-founder of Black Lives Matter recently admitted that she's a radical, anti-white Marxist. Black Lives Matter (BLM) is seeking to transform America by defunding the police, dismantling capitalism, breaking down the nuclear family unit, emptying prisons, redistributing wealth in the form of reparations among other far left objectives.

BLM and Antifa rioters have destroyed small businesses, targeted churches and razed buildings to the ground. Their ultimate objective is to fan the flames of class warfare and demonize all conservatives.

To move forward we do not eliminate racism by engaging in more of it, nor by embracing organizations and causes which seek to divide us.

Tim Groza

### Regarding Local Protests

Dear Editor,  
Regarding the recent local protests and the three thoughtful letters published in the TCH June 24, please permit me to add a few additional thoughts.

To those protestors who say "no justice, no peace", I say "no peace, no justice", because all of us need to think clearly and meaningfully to address and act on the pertinent issues, and we can't do that if we're attacking each other.

To those protestors who say "Jesus was a man of color" and "Jesus was a protestor", I say let's listen to and heed the actual words of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Matthew 5:9.

Claude Spears

### A Time for Healing

Dear Editor,  
It is time for America to put aside partisan politics and to act for the common good. The rhetoric coming from both sides of the aisle is filled with anger and bitterness.

Each side tries to vilify the other, and each side seems so entrenched in their viewpoints that proving that they are right is more important than doing what is right.

How did we come to this? The only way we can ever solve the monumental problems of our day is to treat each other with respect and dignity.

We all want what is best for America, and I believe we are all basically good people. We share common values of believing in human dignity, the value of hard work, the need to care for all our people, fairness, and wanting a better life for our children.

I hope we share the Christian values of loving our neighbor, and we are all neighbors. We ask you, our representatives, to talk, listen, compromise, and begin the process of healing.

Vernon Dixon, MD

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## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Kenneth West  
Owner/Publisher

Shawn Jarrard  
Editor

Todd Forrest  
Staff Writer

Derek Richards  
Advertising Director

Shawn Henrikson  
Copy Editor

Lowell Nicholson  
Photographer

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$25. Out of County (1 Year) \$35. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee  
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