

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Home is Where the Height Is

It was an impromptu outing. He said "let's". I said "yes", and into the car we got. John had The Best of The Beatles cd in his car. We were Day Trippers just for sure. John Lennon had just belted out the last refrain of Come Together as we turned from GA Highway 75 S onto Owl Creek Road. On cue, Paul McCartney raised his voice to The Long and Winding Road. Talk about a good omen.

Thus began our ascent to Georgia's highest point, Brasstown Bald. Both John and I had been before (Harmon not Lennon) but it had been years ago.

I had forgotten how the drive to the Visitor Center is. Winding, yes, but gently. Mountain laurel, rosebay, and purple rhododendron enticed us around each bend. The shaded road kept the southern summer sun at bay.

My bravado to climb the walking trail to the summit lost track when we disembarked from the air conditioned car. While only mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun, even they might think twice if unusually high snake sightings had been reported on their trail.

We opted for the shuttle provided by the National Forest Service. We lumbered onto the bus and took our seats. We felt safe and happy. Phil Kelley, our driver, was not only professional but fun.

Some people headed straight away to the observation deck for its panoramic views. John and I, the unabashed tourists, went for the fascinating fauna and flora facts and depictions of early and current life in the natural science and history museum first.

Mary Elder, Site Superintendent, filled us in on what was and is the past and present of Brasstown Bald. The current structure was built in 1965. Mary was informative and obviously proud of the natural treasure right in our own backyard.

We boarded the bus for the trip back down with Phil Kelley again our driver. He faced his passengers and told us that he'd heard of a woman who had recently been arrested for shoplifting a can of peaches. She was brought before the judge for sentencing. The judge knew the woman and knew that she could easily afford to buy a can of peaches. Wanting to impress the seriousness of the crime, he asked the woman how many peaches were in the can. "Four, your Honor" he was told. The judge sentenced her to 1 night in jail for each peach. The woman retorted that seemed a bit harsh for the crime. Her husband jumped up and said, "Your Honor, she stole a can of peas before she took the peaches."

Phil told me the spelling of his Irish last name and asked if I knew why some are Kelley and some are Kelly. Long ago the spelling denoted Protestant or Catholic. I don't which is which and I don't care, but I loved learning the fact.

See America first and start with Towns County. Oh, what heights you'll hit!

### Around Towns

Dale Harmon



## The Forest Stewards Guild

The Fire Adapted Communities Network (FAC NET) is the national group that Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D is a founding member of, one of the original 8 nationally. We are still only one of 2 east of the Mississippi river and as usual we are running circles around those from the west.

They think they are smarter than we are but they don't have 21 Firewise Communities in one county (Towns) like we do or they can't attract 200+ people to a Prescribed Fire Council meeting like we do, but we don't rub it in their face, we just keep on doing what we do best and that is help our citizens make their communities safer from wildfire and the numbers show that we know what we are doing.

We don't get suggestions on how to do what we know how to do any more, but congratulatory cards from those who lead FAC NET out west. Actions speak louder than words and we are showing them how to do it with our Appalachian RC&D FAC Coalition stretching from here to Virginia.

One of the main goals of FAC NET is to network the FAC message across the region (we are the SE hub) using partners and people talking to their peers in communities. Works a lot better that way than "uniforms" speaking all of the time. We recently have an addition to our long list of partners to build the Fac network here in the SE. The Forest Stewards Guild has been a FAC NET partner in New Mexico since 2013 but this year they added an office in Asheville, so Mike Davis, Lynn Sprague, and I met with Nick Biemiller, the Forest Guild's SE Regional coordinator, to build a partnership with him and the Guild for projects and programs where we can help each other.

The Forest Stewards Guild practices and promotes responsible forestry as a means of sustaining the integrity of forest ecosystems and the human communities dependent upon them. The Guild engages in education, training, policy analysis, research, and advocacy to foster excellence in stewardship, support practicing foresters and allied professionals, and engage a broader community in the challenges of forest conservation and management. They envision ecologically, economically, and socially responsible forestry as the standard for professional forest management, from coast to coast.

Their principles are: 1. The well-being of human society is dependent on responsible forest management that places the highest priority on the maintenance and enhancement of the entire forest ecosystem. 2. The natural forest provides a model for sustainable resource management; therefore, responsible forest management imitates nature's dynamic processes and minimizes impacts when harvesting trees and other products. 3. The forest has value in its own right, independent of human intentions and needs. 4. Human knowledge of forest ecosystems is limited. Responsible management that sustains the forest requires a humble approach and continuous learning. 5. The practice of forestry must be grounded in field observation and experience as well as in the biological sciences. This practical knowledge should be developed and shared with both traditional and non-traditional educational institutions and programs. 6. The Guild's first duty is to forests and their future. When confronted with circumstances that threaten the integrity of the forest and conflict with the Mission and Principles of the Forest Stewards Guild, members must respond through education, advocacy, or where necessary, disassociation. Guild membership signifies a commitment to the highest forest stewardship ethic.

Putting the forest first means: A balanced view. Rather than wilderness views vs economic development, we focus on solutions with a balanced approach to forest management.

Most forest land must support ecological as well as human economic needs. They acknowledge and consider all of these needs in the policies they support and the forest management they do, recommend, and teach on the ground.

They focus on doing. Donations, memberships and support of the Forest Stewards Guild have a direct impact on forest land.

They focus on programming and supporting professional members who are implementing responsible forestry every single day.

They will always have more to learn from forests, so they keep listening, watching, researching and sharing knowledge.

They invest in the next generation of forest stewards by providing training and experience to youth and college students, professional development to current professionals, and education and empowerment to landowners.

The Guild also promotes prescribed fire because we know that fire plays an essential role in shaping our forests. They follow nature's model and use fire where it is needed to make communities more fire-adapted, restore ecosystems, encourage the next generation of forest stewards, and reduce the threat of unnaturally severe wildfire. The Forest Stewardship Guild is just another spoke for our FAC Wheel and makes our network stronger.

For more information on The Forest Stewards Guild or FACNET check [www.FACNET.org](http://www.FACNET.org) or [www.foreststewards-guild.org](http://www.foreststewards-guild.org) or [www.appcofac.net](http://www.appcofac.net)

RC&D  
Frank Riley  
Executive Director



## Japanese Beetles

The Japanese beetles are out in full force. If you haven't had an encounter with them yet consider yourself lucky. They are a huge pest as they munch their way through your yard. Controlling them can be challenging because they are such voracious eaters. Let's talk about some strategies for lessening their impact.

Japanese beetles in the U.S. 1916. They have spread to much of the East coast and across the Mississippi River. They will feed on a wide range of ornamentals, fruit trees, vegetables, and shade trees. Having such a wide range to feed on means that your yard may look like an all you can eat buffet to them. They have a metallic green color on their abdomen. They look similar to June beetles. June beetles are typically about 1.5 to twice as large as Japanese beetles. Japanese beetles also have a row of five white dots along the side of the abdomen that can be used to differentiate them from other beetles. The damage that you see from them looks like skeletonizing of the leaves. They'll eat everything between the leaf vein, but leave the veins.

Thankfully, Japanese beetles only have a single generation each year. Usually the adults, which are the beetles that we see flying around eating leaves, will begin to appear in late May. They live four to six weeks. The females will lay eggs for most of their adult life. The eggs are laid in the soil. They hatch in about two weeks. After hatching, the beetles live in the soil until they come back out as adults in May.

There are three times a year that are most ideal for controlling Japanese beetles. The most obvious is when they are adults and are out feeding on leaves. You can use carbaryl, which is the active ingredient in Sevin to control adults. Sevin comes as a liquid or in dust form. If you don't have a heavy infestation you can also use a cup with soapy water in it. Knock Japanese beetles off plants using the cup and they will drown. The second time to control Japanese beetles is in September. By that time of year all the Japanese beetles are grubs living in the soil. Every as grubs they can do organic to turf by feeding on the roots. Milky spore is an organic product that can be used to kill grubs in the ground. It's a bacteria that feeds on Japanese beetle grubs after they ingest it. September is the optimal time to make a milky spore application. The third time to control Japanese beetles would be in February with another milky spore application.

Using milky spore to kill the grubs doesn't mean that you won't have any Japanese beetles the following year, but you can significantly reduce the population that is present in your area. Some people will use traps to kill Japanese beetles. I try to discourage people from this practice because traps will bring beetles in from the surrounding area, meaning that you have more beetles.

If you have questions about Japanese beetles contact your county Extension Office or email me at the address below. On July 25, the Union County Extension is putting on a Well Water Program. It will be at 5:30 in the Union County Civic Center. If you would like to attend, please RSVP with Union County Extension Office at 706-439-6030 or email me at [Jacob.Williams@uga.edu](mailto:Jacob.Williams@uga.edu).

UGA extension  
Watching and Working  
Jacob Williams



## Letters to The Editor

### Expectations Exceeded!

Dear Editor,

As first year residents of Towns County, my wife and I took the opportunity to view the Fourth of July decorated boat parade from the shores of the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. We didn't expect much but, boy, were we surprised!

It exceeded our expectations by leaps and bounds. We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the participants for the time, effort, expense and talents they displayed in decorating their boats. We are still talking about how enjoyable and entertaining it was. We hope the organizers continue this tradition next year and in the years to come.

To all the participants, we say: "Bravo Zulu," which is naval speak for a job well done.

Bernie Wasilewski

### What a deal

Dear Editor,

Several Presidential Candidates plan to offer free college education to anyone seeking it.

College and University tuitions have already escalated by a far greater percentage than all other budget line items. Why not? They can raise their fees, pay themselves generous salaries, hoard their endowment monies, and know that the students will get loans to finance their education, whatever the cost. Too bad for students that they will spend years paying the loans off!

Under the proposed plans, the institutions can raise their fees even more and send the bill to the tax payers. What a deal!

Aside from the fact that this plan is financially unfeasible, it totally violates the need for individual responsibility. One should pay for one's own education. You should not have to pay for mine, nor I for yours.

To facilitate this, however, universities need to bring their costs in line and stop fleecing students and tax payers.

Carol McKechnie

### 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.

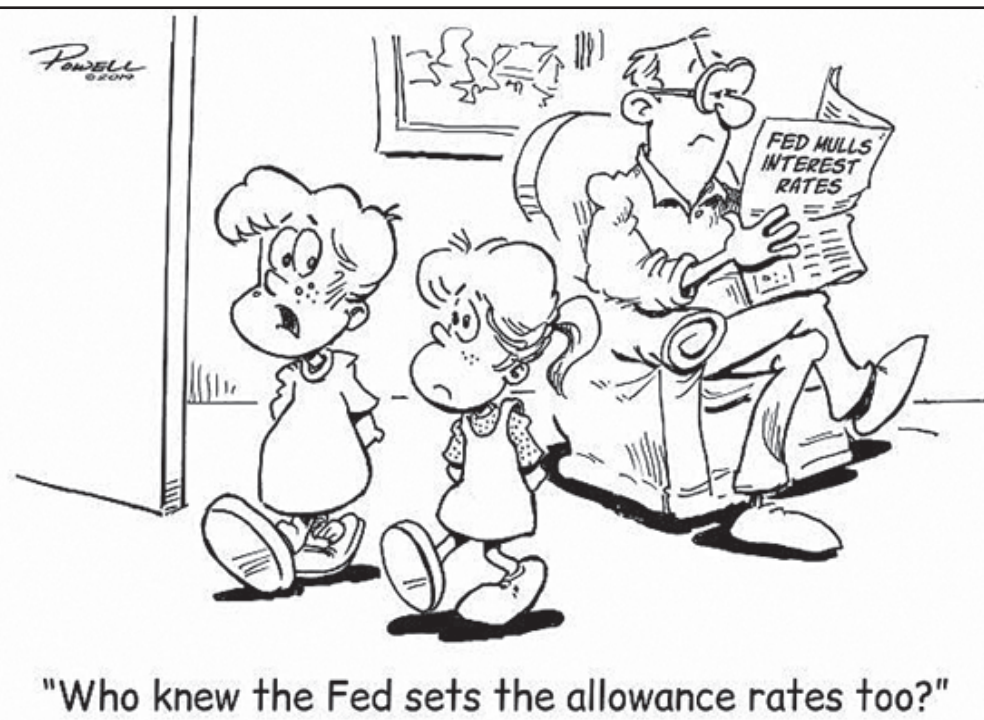
**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:** Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Our email address: [tcherald@windstream.net](mailto:tcherald@windstream.net). Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number 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.*

## 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



"Who knew the Fed sets the allowance rates too?"

## Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday: Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	Every Thursday: All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Movers & Shakers	Every Friday: Sundance Grill	8 am
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday: Red Cross Building	7 pm
Basket Weavers	Second Wednesday of each month: SC Fire Hall	10 am
USCG Aux.	Senior Center	7 pm
Hiaw Writers	Second Thursday of each month: Hiaw Pk. Comm. Rm.	10:30
Awake America Prayer	Civic Center	Noon
Mtn. Comm. Seniors	Senior Center	1 pm
Democratic Party	Civic Center	6 pm
Hospital Auxiliary	Third Monday of each month: Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	6 pm
MOAA	Michael email <a href="mailto:mva62sgn@brmcmc.net">mva62sgn@brmcmc.net</a>	
YH Plan Comm.	Third Tuesday of each month: YH City Hall	5 pm
Co. Comm. Mtg	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Blairsville store	5:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 pm
Quilting Bee	Third Wednesday of each month: McConnell Church	10 am
Book Bunch & Lunch	Daniels Steakhouse	11:30 am
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month: Clubhouse	6 pm
Republican Party	Civic Center	5:30 pm
Goldwing Riders	Third Saturday of each month: Daniel's Restaurant	11 am

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.

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## Towns County Herald

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