

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Meet Us, Greet Us, Now Let Us Eat

Isn't it lovely to have good friends? People whose company you enjoy. Whose advice and counsel, sought or not, is appreciated even if unheeded. Appreciated because agree or disagree, you know it was considered and given out of care.

Around Towns
Dale Harmon



People who mean it when they say, "If there is anything you need, let me help" when the sunny side isn't up. I'm one lucky old woman because I have such friends. They are my selected family.

My friends are interesting and interested. And they lead busy lives. Careful orchestration and proper star alignment is needed to procure unassigned time to enjoy the pleasure of each other's company. We grab it where we can. Sometimes we can sit down to a leisurely dinner with even time for dessert. Most times it is a lunch bolted with barely a chew so the call of duty and obligations can resume. Free weekends are slated for family time and are sacred.

Before I launch into my holier-than-thou sermon, in full disclosure, I have done what I deplore.

I have a friend who is a veterinarian. Actually, she's my cousin but handles both titles with ease. On one of those rare occasions when we were able to share a sandwich at a nice little deli, a client approached the table with a "How are you". Without waiting for a response, he asked about the procedure to express the anal gland of his beloved toy poodle. Seems Jock (named changed to protect the innocent) was dragging his rump on the floor, excessively. Tracy was used to " talking shop" but I wasn't. She politely told the gentleman to call her office for an appointment. She was unruffled. I was sort of put off my feed.

One of the most customer-accommodating people I know is a top-notch hair stylist. Her business card even gives a hair emergency phone number. While professional food prep workers are required by law (and decency) the wearing of head covers, patrons looming over the restaurant table asking my stylist friend if a current up-do would be complimentary to her face, is not. Of course, the hair must be flung and slung for full effect and understanding.

I have seen lunches grow cold and romantic dinners deflated by the thoughtless commandeering of personal, off-duty time. As earlier stated, I was one of the thoughtless.

The realization of this selfishness came in my fitness professional days. "Oh, I didn't recognize you without your clothes". I understood. The person speaking had never seen me in street clothes. We had a little chuckle. The line was draw when she wanted to be shown the inner thigh stretch introduced in our last session. A grocery store check-out seemed inappropriate for such personal posturing and I didn't want to be banned from my favorite market.

Don't let The Golden Rule tarnish. See you around Towns.

Letters to The Editor

The Good Ol' Days

Dear Editor,

I would go back a lot earlier in time, but with the closing of Fred's I am recently reminded of when we had just begun our venture in the winter of '96.

I could go to the Post Office, wave at Knox, get my mail, come back, and not even have passed one single car. Our kids were only four, six, and eight then. After school they were eager to go down the hall to Fred's to see Miss Vickie and Ginny, take a little money with them, or none, and be gone almost forever, only to realize they wandered from Fred's to another office in "The Mall". Fancy as it was, we had no running water in our office and had to go down the hall to the restroom that required a key to enter. Back in the days "The Mall" used to be the Elementary school but was now home to a few small businesses and the anchor store Fred's. Many days were spent not getting anything done, just visiting with whoever wandered in.

One day the back door was open, as usual, and a big shadow wandered in, a man with a helmet that had horns on it shouts out "who rides this bike out here?" "Not knowing then that "Wild Bill" would turn out to be a lifelong friend. We would pick up our landline telephone and call Johnny's to see what the daily lunch special was and head to the family business I remembered as a teenager. The local Diner would be filled with everybody from attorneys, dentists, mechanics, and shop owners, old and young all glad to be on break from their daily work. My lunch back then was often served by a happy young man with a great smile who would later become an entrepreneur in town with a family of his own. Over the years we have been blessed to meet so many people who have come and gone through this town. As a small business owner you realize how important and valued each person is. Fred's since moved, grew Larger in a new location, then closed. But we can still go to town and visit the folks that make Hiawassee home. Times are changing, kids are growing up bringing new smiling faces into our world. As for the "Good Ol' Days", I am ever grateful to call today the "Good Ol' Days"

Alec Therrel

Recognition

Dear Editor,

This letter is to recognize Shawn Henrikson, an employee of the newspaper, for an outstanding job. Shawn's devotion to the paper, community, and veterans organizations is unwavering. She always goes the extra mile, ensuring positive results of articles and coverage within the paper. We in the community sincerely appreciate her dedication.

Julie Andrews

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

Time For a Change

How are you feeling with just over two weeks of Eastern Standard Time under our belts? Are you still waking up an hour "early?" Having an extra cup of coffee in the middle of the afternoon? Do the circles under your eyes remind you, in an unflattering way, of a grumpy raccoon?

Here at home when the time "changes" in the spring, we leave a clock or two alone in a largely futile, slightly confusing but grimly satisfying protest against "government time. Someone usually resurrects the old Ian Anderson song, "Living in the Past."

Then on that first Monday in November, someone announces they are refusing to set their clocks back in order to live one hour in the future. We greet you, people of the past. Your ways are quaint. We go through these motions every year in what has become a kind of ritual, and like many rituals, it accomplishes little of value. The whole thing reminds me of...a tomato plant I once knew. Bet you didn't see that one coming.

Once upon a time I worked for a corporation, and like many human organizations, it had its own rituals. The company was housed in an old building. The building had grown up with the company, and wings had been added over time as the business expanded and room was needed for more employees. The building had plumbing issues. No one alive knew exactly how the pipes were connected underground or where the storm water drained to. Sometimes when there was a heavy downpour, water would go places water shouldn't go, like inside the lower offices and the lobby where customers waited. I remember one such occasion, as I trudged into work on a Monday after a time change thinking, "I know I'm not awake yet, but carpet is not supposed to splash."

There was a lot of head scratching over the problem. Old blueprints were dusted off. Flashlights were shined into holes, followed by a plumber's snake or two. The problem persisted, as did the smell of dank, moldy carpet.

Plumbing is a good metaphor for the type of things that indicate the overall health of a company (or a government). In a healthy situation, storm water goes where it's supposed to go, and when a pipe breaks or stops up, you know how to fix it because you know how all your pipes are connected.

One rainy day our drainage mysteries got a lot more personal when the raw sewage somehow combined with storm water and they started traveling together like a Dodge Ram pulling an Airstream trailer. If there's anything less motivating than splashy carpet, it's splashy carpet with sewage, and it's a serious health hazard.

Yet our pipes remained blocked and our migrating bacteria, propelled by foot traffic, started learning to fly after the carpet dried. When a company's (or a government's) metaphorical pipes are stopped up, it can take a long time for actions to flow where they are needed. Eventually someone shocked a decision maker into action with an anonymously circulated Department of Health publication on airborne bacteria from wastewater. Our carpet was ripped up and a backhoe tore into the ground to find out just what needed to be done to our pipes.

It turned out that the offending sewer line passed right under the sidewalk leading to the customer lobby of our department. The sidewalk was torn up and pipes were replaced. There was mud everywhere, and sewage. The lobby was closed, and we all stepped very carefully coming into the office. Fast forward a couple of weeks and our company, though it had a new sewer line, still had a metaphorical blockage. The sidewalk was still in pieces. The mud had dried, for the moment. Alongside the old sidewalk there appeared a familiar looking plant.

It's a testament to the vitality of the life force that the seed of a cherry tomato could travel from a farm in Florida to a grocery store in North Georgia and survive the indignities of the checkout line, then resist the gnashing of teeth and the assault of stomach acid, negotiate some 29 feet of intestines and an unknown length of sewer pipe to be unearthed by a backhoe and spring to life in the red clay of the southern Appalachians.

That tomato didn't just sprout. It thrived. In a week it was a foot high, then two feet. Someone chopped it down (as we often do to deal with the appearance of a problem) but it didn't die. It grew back even faster. When the tomato was approaching three feet in height, someone, anonymously of course, staked it to a pole. Four feet high and it started to bear fruit. Five feet high and you couldn't miss it, a lush, verdant specimen covered in beautiful but somehow unappetizing tomatoes, standing in silent accusation, a testimony to the incredible inertia of large human organizations.

After several months the sidewalk was repaired and the unfortunate tomato plant was cut down in the prime of its life. I don't think anyone was standing in line to sample its fruit. So, what does our well traveled tomato have to do with Eastern Standard Time? Hang in there. You would have gotten it already if you weren't so sleepy. Our system of government has grown as our country has expanded. New "wings" were added to house more employees needed to monitor us and tell us what to do. No one alive knows how all the pipes are connected, or where the waste water goes, other than downhill. Standing like an over-fertilized tomato plant in not so silent accusation of our government's ability to respond to our needs, is our twice yearly ritual of "changing" the time.

That ritual is a problem. Science has debunked just about all of the alleged benefits of the practice. Changing the time disrupts sleep patterns, decreases productivity and for many people, it becomes a health hazard. The problem grows every year, and it's a problem that bears fruit: The incidence of accidents and mistakes spike each time we alter our observance of time. Our dislike of the practice is one of the few things we all agree on, and it is an issue that no one has managed to twist into a political advantage. Maybe that's why Congress, with its phenomenal cosmic power to tell us what time it is, independent of the movement of the planet around the sun and the evidence of our own bodies, seems incapable of acting for our mutual benefit.

It's time for a change, and not just in the way we observe the passage of time.

The Middle Path
By: Don Perry
onthemiddlepath.com

White Pines

White pines are a common tree in the mountains. They have a couple of interesting features and are a native tree so let's talk about white pines, some of their benefits and drawbacks.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



The scientific name for white pines is *Pinus strobus* L. They can be found from northern Canada, down along the Appalachian Mountains to North Georgia and Alabama. They are the biggest native conifer in Eastern North America. They can grow up to 150 feet tall and have a trunk that is 40 inches in diameter. The canopy can grow to 40 feet wide. They're capable of growing 2 feet in a year. They are able to tolerate a variety of soil textures. Pines like soils that have a low pH. That's one of the reasons why we have many pines. It also means that if you clear an area that had lots of pines in it, you'll most likely need to add lime to that soil before most things will grow well.

They are suited to USDA zones 3-8. They used to be used for ships' masts, and were a major export from Colonial America.

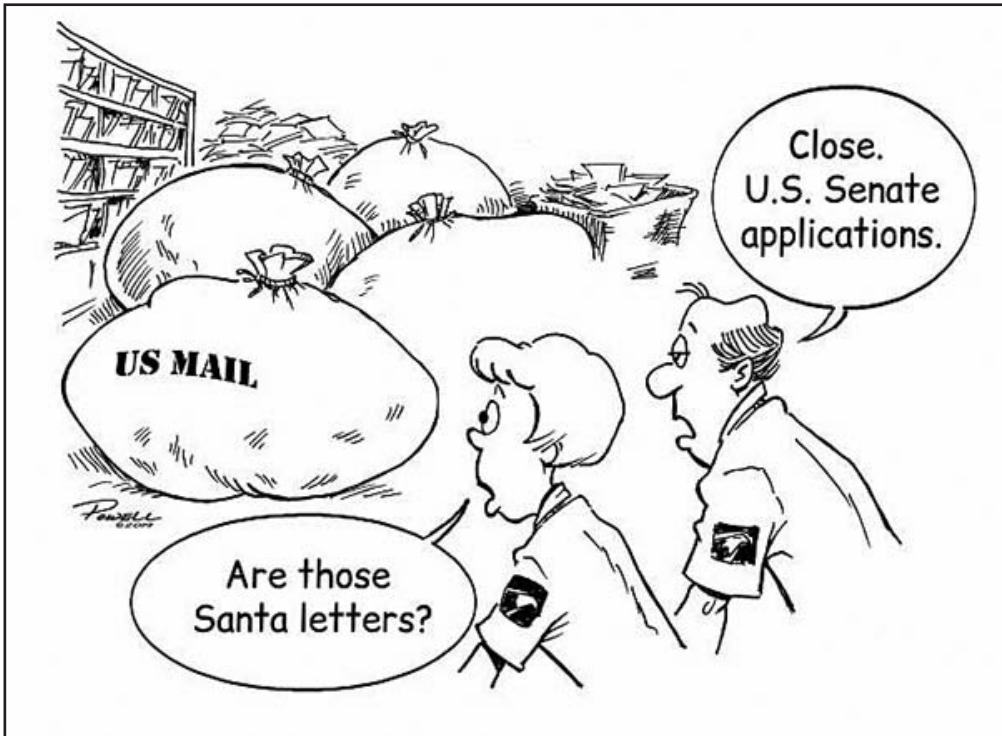
The cones from white pines are 4 to 8 inches long. The needles come in clusters of five. The needles are 2.5 to 5 inches long, making them medium sized for pines. The easiest way to tell what is a white pine that I've found is from the color of the needles. They have a greenish, white color to them.

White pines have a very nice Christmas tree shape to them. Some people grow them for this purpose. I suppose you could grow one in your front yard and have a giant Christmas tree in 20 years. They also have ornamental use. If they are planted densely, you can shear them and turn them into a hedge. There is a number of wildlife species that eat the seeds including squirrels, deer, mice, and songbirds. White pines are commonly used as windbreaks and screens. I have seen some old stands of white pines planted along property lines or along a bank for erosion control.

Large white pines can be problematic during the winter. The needles can hold a lot of precipitation that can freeze. This can lead to limbs breaking off. Therefore, it's best to plant them in places where there is no threat of them falling onto structures or vehicles.

The white pine weevil is a major pest of white pines. They will usually feed on trees that are 20 feet tall or less. They will chew on the current year's terminal leader, killing the current year's growth. Usually the tree is able to keep growing by sending up another branch to become the terminal leader. However, this will result in a forked tree. Dying terminal leaders will have a shepherd's crook shape to them. Trees grown in partial shade are less affected by the white pine weevil.

White pines can be a great addition to a landscape. If you have questions about white pines contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.



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
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	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
	Second Thursday of each month:	
Hiaw Writers	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
	Third Monday of each month:	
Hospital Auxiliary	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	6 pm
MOAA	Michael email mva62sgn@brmemc.net	
	Third Tuesday of each month:	
YH Plan Comm.	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
	Third Wednesday of each month:	
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
Book Bunch & Lunch	Daniels Steakhouse	11:30 am
	Third Thursday of each month:	
Friendship Comm.	Clubhouse	6 pm
Republican Party	Civic Center	5:30 pm
	Third Saturday of each month:	
Goldwing Riders	Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
	Fourth Monday of each month:	
Red Cross DAT	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
	Fourth Tuesday of each month:	
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
	Fourth Thursday	
Hiaw. Writers	Hiaw. Pk. Comm. Rm.	10:30
Hiaw. Garden Club	Clubhouse	12:45 pm
	Last Thursday of each month:	
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

Towns County Herald

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