

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Iwo Jima Today

After our Towns County 73rd anniversary event of Iwo Jima last week, a humble gathering of Iwo Jima Veterans, WW II, all other Veterans and citizens alike, our special speaker Martha Warth, USN

**The Veterans' Corner**  
**Scott Drummond**  
 USCG Veteran



WWII, reminded me of this little known history. As of Monday, June 18, 2007 the Japanese Geographical Survey "renamed" Iwo Jima as to its original name, "Iwo To" or Ioto. Both names mean "sulphur island". The official map was released on September 1, 2007. Disgruntled former residents of the island had requested this change. As to be expected our Veterans and military leaders remain unflinching in addressing this island as Iwo Jima.

In 1944 there were only about 1000 residents of this barren island and were evacuated by Japanese forces, leaving only a few very unfortunate younger males behind to help them fight American forces. Civilians were not allowed to return, post war as our military forces had exclusive domain, command and control. However in 1968 Iwo Jima was returned to the Japanese and today is a base for about 400 Japanese soldiers and visiting US Navy airmen.

This Ogasawara island is still littered with ruined remnants of one of the bloodiest battles ever fought. The reinforced tunnels and foxholes built by the Japanese prior to our invasion still exist. And Iwo Jima is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Tokyo metropolitan government. Visitation is almost impossible, being open to a once a year visit from an organized tour company. Also as it is recorded, the Japanese navy officers who first came to "sulfur island" are the very ones who misinterpreted the name into "Iwo Jima" instead of "Iwo To". Further addressing the decades long disapproval of "Iwo Jima", the island's original civilian residents got their island's name back in 2007, only after petitioning the Japanese government.

Call this faraway destitute island whichever name you prefer, but never ever forget that without our men and women in uniform who were willing to sacrifice anything and everything up to and including their very lives are the heroes responsible for Japan being one of our strongest allies today, much needed in a world with many hostile ideologies, not dissimilar to the Japanese government in that era. Had Americans not had the expertise, wherewithal and courage to produce and implement the use of a horrible nuclear weapon of war, the loss of lives on both sides, as well as the threat to world stability would have been multiplied immensely. Please remember those Marines, soldiers, sailors, airmen and Coast Guardsmen who gave their lives, not just on "Iwo To" but all across the globe and from the very beginning of America's history.

Today our world survives those almost identical threats, little different from the tyrannical threat of "Tojo", as well as the NAZIs back then, for the same reason. The almost singular reason we continue to survive is because of our superb men and women in uniform, with God's helping hand, not because of politicians, philosophers or any other entity.

*Semper Paratus*

## Letters to The Editor

### Free Market Solution to Climate Change

Dear Editor,  
 It is time for us to put aside our differences. Climate change is not a political issue. It is an issue that goes beyond political values and has the potential to do irreparable damage to our whole world.

Many people fear that it is too expensive to act or that it will destroy our free market economy. We do not need to, nor should we try to, destroy our free market economy, for it has propelled us to greatness. We need to use it to conquer climate change.

Simply put a price on the production of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to account for their external damages that you and I pay for now, return the money to all of us taxpayers, and let the free market take over.

A study from the Harvard Medical School put a price tag of \$350 billion to 500 billion every year just from inhaling the particulate matter produced by burning fossil fuels. The well respected Regional Economic Modeling Inc. study shows that putting a progressively escalating price on the production of greenhouse gases actually helps to grow the economy and will propel America to even greater horizons.

Putting a price on carbon is simple, fair, effective and free market driven. Now let's do it.

Vernon Dixon, MD

### A Radical Change

Dear Editor,  
 Want to hear a true story of a friend of mine who thought he had the world by the tail. This dude was all about himself and could have cared less about anyone else, for life was his playground and the devil was his idol. The folks around him who hung out with my friend were of the same mindset, out for all the gusto that life had to offer at any price and others in the way were warned to watch their step, least they get hurt along the way. The devil had my friend just where he wanted him, right under his thumb doing his dirty work as the devil's demons laughed with glee. My friend's attitude was one of greed, lust and immorality all wrapped up in himself and no time for others in need. My friend was heading down a destructive avenue of no return and only a miracle from above could save him from a fiery hell of damnation. Was there any hope for him or would the devil have his soul for all of eternity?

Then one bright day the Lord God stepped out of eternity and put a void in my friend's heart, a void that he had never experienced before, one that drew him, like a magnet to steel and my friend knew that there was more to life, than himself. My friend started seeking out a church where the gospel of Christ was being proclaimed from the pulpit and the truth of God's word spoke volumes to his heart and he longed for more of God's word as the days lingered on, but the devil tried as hard as he could to tell my friend that all of this was just a big fat lie and if my friend continued down this path he would be disappointed in the end, another lie that the devil plays in our mindsets; but my friend had decided to follow Jesus Christ for he knew in his heart it was the right thing to do. It's been 26 years since my friend became a believer in Christ. He lost all his so called friends of the past, but found a whole boatload of folks who love the Lord with all of their heart, soul and mind.

Folks, it is a choice we have to make whether we are young at heart or feeble and old. The devil is very cunning and crafty with words of lies that will swallow you up into an eternal fire of hell, or like my friend when he felt the love of God tug at his heart, he opted to choose eternal life over death and this is my story of my friend, Frank F. Combs. Amen.

Frank F. Combs



## A Day in the Life of an RC&D ED

Frank Riley, Executive Director of the Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Council, runs this non-profit community service organization located in the green foothills and Blue Ridge mountains of Northeast Georgia. Working in these mountains with the residents here is the most rewarding career anywhere and my daily goal is to help the mountain folks keep their property by making it safe from wildfire.

I want to do my part to help preserve these mountains where my grandfather was born in 1889 and was the first county agent in Towns county. We live on his old farm with the scenic Hiwassee River running thru the woodlands and fields exactly like it has been since he lived here. I look forward to mornings, so I can walk out of my house on the Hiwassee River and take on the daily challenge of trying to make a difference in someone's life. For 41 years prior to working with the RC&D, I worked as a professional forester in all areas including lumber production, forest management, software development and Interim Executive Director of the Georgia Forestry Association. I work closely with county commissioners in Northeast Georgia, Georgia Forestry Commission, US Forest Service, federal, state, and local elected officials, fire departments, schools, and many community organizations. Every day finds me meeting with one of these people to discuss potential or ongoing projects. Our RC&D administers 4 wildfire, prescribed burning, and fuel reduction contracts so I am never bored or without something to do.

In 2016 and 2017, my assistant Kim and I, facilitated 39 field days and events with partners across Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia. Each day leads to something different which makes my life as the RC&D Executive Director very interesting, challenging, and rewarding. One of my most satisfying projects is installing seasonal high tunnels at middle schools giving the students the opportunity to grow food that they can eat which teaches them where food comes from and makes them appreciate how farmers feed the world. My prized accomplishment is the development of the Appalachian RC&D FAC Coalition, which is a group of 6 RC&D councils spreading the FAC message in northeast Georgia, western North Carolina, and Southwestern Virginia.

After a presentation in one of our North Georgia communities, I was asked by Tony Tooke, who was then USFS Region 8 Forester (now USFS Chief) to spread our successful FAC work from Towns County along the Appalachian Mountains into Virginia. The USFS provided the funds for us to begin in 2017 and in the first 10 months, the Coalition organized 311 events and presented the FAC message to 6,500 people.

At one presentation in North Carolina, a resident said, "I never thought about the risk of fire up here, but your group has opened my eyes and now we will take measures to be prepared, thank you!" My satisfaction comes when communities and authorities come together to find solutions for wildfire risks in their communities. My job is 100% working with

people developing partnerships and directing their efforts to achieve mutual goals. We must use many partners to facilitate our programs and events at Chest-Chat because there are only 2 of us.

I have always considered myself good at bringing people together to achieve a common goal, and I make sure that all partners can contribute what they bring to the table and take away what they want out of it, which makes for good feelings and successful outcomes. Running the RC&D is a lot like riding a bicycle, the faster you pedal, the faster you go, and you will encounter bumps, curves, up hills and down, but one thing is for sure if you stop pedaling you will come to a stop and starting over is not easy. The trick is to enlist enough partners to pedal and keep the momentum going and growing. When the RC&D light is turned off at the end of the day I go back to our Mountain Scene Farm on the Hiwassee River, my other world where I can transform into the farmer that I always wanted to be. We grow sweet corn, sunflowers, pumpkins, honey, and tomatoes for our roadside market and we operate two Seasonal High tunnels where we grow vegetables and cut flowers for the local farmers markets. I am also a farm equipment collector with 7 tractors, all family heirlooms, from 1943 to 2012, plus the implements



needed to plant and harvest the crops. I also have a mowing and road maintenance business. Farming to me has been in my blood for my 68 years and is very rewarding from preparing the soil, planting the seeds, and then watching as the crops grow thru their life cycle. After the growing season comes harvest time which is my favorite. There is no better feeling than a cold Fall evening watching the sun setting, the stars twinkling, while watching the final hopper of corn dumping into the wagon. When the equipment shuts down there is quiet with the cold wind blowing thru the trees and a Whip-O-Will singing somewhere in the distance. It doesn't get any better than that.

My goal is to keep building our RC&D, so we can add staff to handle more programs and events. My goal is to train my replacement who will be someone who thinks like I do, believes like I do, and works like I do, steps in and keeps the RC&D going and growing so I can go be a real farmer. Then I can look back and say, "We did it!"

## Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	<b>Every Monday:</b> All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Free GED prep.	<b>Every Tuesday:</b> Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	<b>Every Wednesday:</b> Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	<b>Every Thursday:</b> All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	<b>Every Friday:</b> Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	<b>Every Sunday:</b> Red Cross Building	7 pm
Mtn. Amat. Radio	<b>First Monday of each month:</b> 1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
Alzheimer's Supp.	<b>First Tuesday of each month:</b> McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Young City Council	City Hall	6 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	<b>First Wednesday of each month:</b> McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	<b>First Thursday of each month:</b> Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Chamber Board	<b>Second Monday of each month:</b> 1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
Historical Society	Old Rec. Center	5:30 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	7 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Gem & Mineral Club	<b>Second Tuesday of each month:</b> Senior Center	1:30 pm
Caregiver support	Brasstown Manor	3 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Church	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
Basket Weavers	<b>Second Wednesday of each month:</b> SC Fire Hall	10 am
Board of Elections	67 Lakeview Cir., Ste. A	4 pm
CVB Board	<b>Second Thursday of each month:</b> Rec Center	9 am
Awake America Prayer	Civic Center	Noon
Mtn. Comm. Seniors	Senior Center	1 pm
Democratic Party	Civic Center	6 pm

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor,  
 PO Box 365, Hiwassee, 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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