

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Long Overdue Recognition

National Vietnam War Veterans Day is now an official commemorative holiday in the United States.

This is a day to honor and give recognition to those who served in Vietnam, returned home and didn't receive proper recognition.

"No proper recognition" is putting it very lightly and politely. Ask any Veteran who traveled through our major cities and airports during that tumultuous era.

If any one group of folks needed to be frowned upon it was the politicians that mucked that up, not our men and women in uniform!

I digressed just a little, much needed, however from 1973 forward either March 29 or 30th was recognized as such by various states resolutions.

Then in 2017 U.S. President Donald Trump set aside "National Vietnam War Veterans Day" to be recognized annually henceforth every March 29th. Thank you Sir!

The Vietnam War also known as the First Indochina War began with the French who had been occupying Vietnam since 1883. Vietnam declared independence and rebellion turned into a war against the French starting September 2, 1945 under Ho Chi Minh and total warfare began in December 1946.

May 7, 1954 ended with the French being defeated. Huge problem was Vietnam was being taken over by the Communists. South Vietnam wanted no part of Communism!

They just wanted independence which is what Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh ostensibly announced when they overthrew French rule. Was not to be!

The "Second Indochina War" was when the U.S. and other members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) allied with South Vietnam forces to defeat the Communists of North Vietnam who had rolled in after the French were defeated, some would say to "fill a vacuum".

This was primarily our U.S. war and our men and women paid the price dearly, over there, as well as after returning home here, due to unrest, the unpopularity of that war and misplaced public sentiment blaming our military.

South Vietnam collapsed in 1975 and on July 2, 1976 the entire country became the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, in spite of our earnest efforts and sacrifices of our military folks.

U.S. Department of Defense tells us that over 8 million U.S. troops served world wide during Vietnam. And of those 8 million soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen over 58,000 died in theater.

And it needs to be noted that our valiant, scared but determined men and women in combat won every major battle. That certainly has been ignored!

All our men and women who have ever served deserve honor and recognition. Thank them for their service and buy them a meal! Fly your flag!

Members of all our VSOs under the roof of VFW Post 7807 will hold a small ceremony at the post flagpole, around back, 4 PM. It will be short and heartfelt.

I believe this to be the first official one in Towns County.

We will close and toast our fallen brothers and sisters of all five branches of our military who served in their best efforts in Vietnam.

Semper Paratus

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Hitting the Sweet Spot

We're finding enjoyment in politics again, at least for the moment. It may be a defense mechanism, a form of nervous mental laughter, or a "laugh or go crazy" response to institutionalized idiocy, but if you squint your eyes and look at it kind of sideways, politics can be funny.

For the longest time we thought we were repulsed by politics. It does smell funny quite often, but we've had a kind of epiphany recently. It's not actually politics, itself, that we find so repulsive. Politics is just a means to an end, a natural consequence of human nature. In other words, politics is unavoidable. No, what bothers us today, though we are trying to learn to laugh at it as well, is partisanship, the kind that makes us prejudiced in favor of one thing over another; the kind that becomes a filter through which we perceive reality.

So, are you a conservative or a liberal? Have you stopped beating your horse, yes or no? I don't have a horse! Answer the question! And what is your view on global warming? On immigration? Gun control? Abortion? Your answers should be consistent with your political party, and the future of civilization is at stake. If you can't answer quickly enough, you may have been hacked by a Russian.

Let's approach this from a different angle. Tell us what you believe needs to be banned and we will guess your political affiliation. Do you want guns to be banned, or abortions? Cigarettes or jumbo-sized soft drinks? Do conservatives or liberals do a better job of telling other people what to do with their lives? Do drone strikes or cruise missiles do a better job of killing civilians in oil-rich countries?

Partisanship in oil-rich countries? People think differently, and not just because of how they were educated (or not), or how they choose to think, but because our brains are wired differently. The brains of partisan conservatives are different than those of partisan liberals.

Curiously, we all seemed to get along much better in the past, despite our partisan brains. We still disagreed on some things, like Vietnam and Prohibition, but we agreed on a lot more. We had a sense of self, as a nation, and we generally agreed on the direction we thought the country was moving.

This was before the Internet, that great enabler of confirmation bias, and the age of constant connectivity. Information is a powerful tool, and when it is properly wielded by a practiced hand, it can cleave us at our natural divisions like a maul hitting the sweet spot on a round of seasoned firewood.

So some of this hyper-partisanship is natural, but most of it is manipulated, and our hearts and minds are collateral damage in the neverending struggle for power that plays out through our constant connectivity in a campaign that never ends. (If you're new to this conversation, we have long ago abandoned the notion that corporate news and infotainment entities are unbiased observers of the human condition.)

Nevertheless, we have grown weary of political partisans. We are prejudiced against them. We stereotype them and tell jokes about them behind their backs. "How many partisans does it take to screw in a light bulb?" (Nobody knows because neither side has the votes and the candle lobby has started a filibuster.)

If you have read this column long enough you already know that we're referring mainly to democrats and republicans or, if you prefer, conservatives and liberals, but it's easier to say "partisan," and the word goes directly to the root of the problem.

So where is the humor in the current continuous 24 hour cycle of broken news and political crisis? Get ready to feast on a course of delicious irony.

Remember a few short years ago when Bill Clinton, accused of rape and sexual misconduct by multiple women, lied to a grand jury about his affair with Monica Lewinsky and was impeached, but not removed from office? (Ancient history to some.) Conservatives, in a firestorm of righteous indignation, condemned the moral turpitude of the president. Liberals defended him. The job is demanding and he was just letting off steam. It had no effect on his ability to govern. His policies and the important mission of the Democrat party were more important than the moral character of the president.

Now the current president, accused of rape and sexual misconduct by multiple women, has publicly denied (as adamantly, though perhaps not as eloquently as Bill Clinton did) any wrongdoing. Liberals, smelling blood and hoping to accelerate their return to power, are attacking the president in a firestorm of righteous indignation, condemning his alleged moral turpitude. Conservatives, now on the defensive, point out that Trump's character has no bearing on his ability to govern. They insist that the policies and the important mission of the Republican party are more important than the moral character of the president.

Howls of derisive laughter. You can't make this stuff up. This is seriously funny material. It's funny because we laugh at other people's discomfort, especially people we don't like. It's funny because the situation, the reversal of roles and the hypocrisy, are rich in irony. It's serious because it is one more swing at the sweet spot where we are prone to divide.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

He Lives!

Two guys walking, talking about the day's stunning turn of events. A mysterious stranger falls in with them. He probes. They report. He then owns the conversation, holding them spellbound. They invite him to continue over supper. Suddenly they realize who He is.

It was the resurrected Jesus that made their hearts burn within them along the road to Emmaus. I wish I had heard His explanation from Scripture of why he had to "suffer these things and to enter into His glory" (Luke 24). Perhaps He explained that He had to be crushed as a guilt offering in order that "He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied" (Isa. 53).

Jesus' first followers went to jail for proclaiming His Resurrection (Acts 4:2). Revisionist theologians today would explain it away as symbolic, but the first disciples experienced it as a startling, historical, bodily return from the dead. That is central to the gospel: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain" (1 Cor. 15:14). "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

What does Jesus' Resurrection mean for you? It authenticates His claim of deity, such as "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). Only God could accomplish this one-off feat, which means He can also keep His promises to intercede for you at the right hand of the Father (Rom. 8:34) and to come again for you (John 14:3).

If you visit George Washington's tomb, you will see this inscription: "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25-26). When someone approached Jesus with a question about dead people, He made them refocus. "He is not the God of the dead but of the living" (Matt. 22:32). As John Newton lay on his deathbed someone nudged him. He said, "I am still in the land of the dying, but soon, I shall be in the land of the living." The Resurrection means that there is more to your life than the human body.

Presbyterian hymnist Alfred Ackley wrote, "I serve a living Savior, He's in the world today! I know that He is living, whatever men may say. He lives, He lives, salvation to impart! You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart." This Sunday, join with believers in celebrating the greatest miracle in history, He Lives!

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Letters to The Editor

Why?

Dear Editor,
Why is it that we are told to pray FOR our schools, but we are also told that we cannot pray IN our schools?
Claude Spears

Hitting the Bullseye

Dear Editor,
Re: *Middle Path* 2/28/18
This column, "Staying on Target", really hit the bullseye. We must not take guns away from American citizens, but there must be some changes put into effect by our legislators that will protect the American citizen from a person who has a mental problem, is too young to consider the outcome of their "spirit of the moment" decisions and from weapons of war designed to viciously murder multitudes of victims.

Our elected law makers must put their heads (and their hearts) together to come up with reasonable controls to make their constituents more safe in our schools, our churches and our group gatherings. Please, elected leaders, do something!

Sincerely,
Joann Dedmon

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, assigned, 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.

ZELL MILLER
A LIFE WELL LIVED
1932 - 2018

MOUNTAIN BOY - MARINE -
GOVERNOR - US SENATOR -
LT. GOVERNOR - HISTORIAN
- MAYOR - YHC PROFESSOR
- NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER
- RADIO STATION OWNER -
BASEBALL FAN - MUSIC BUFF
- BEST SELLING AUTHOR -
SPEAKER - FATHER - HUSBAND
- NEIGHBOR - FRIEND -
FAITHFUL PUBLIC SERVANT...

A MOUNTAIN OF A MAN



Towns County Community Calendar

	Every Monday:	
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
	Every Tuesday:	
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
	Every Wednesday	
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:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	Every Sunday:	
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
	First Monday of each month:	
Mtn. Amat. Radio	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
	First Tuesday of each month:	
Alzheimer's Supp.	McConnell Church	1:30 pm
American Legion	VFW Post 7807	4 pm
Hiaw. City Council	City Hall	6 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
	First Wednesday of each month:	
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
	First Thursday of each month:	
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
	Third Monday of each month:	
Hospital Auxiliary	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
	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
MOAA	Call Jack @ 828-321-2896	
	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

Have something to sell?
Let the Herald work for you!

Deadline for the Towns County Herald is Friday by 5 PM
706-896-4454

Towns County Herald

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