

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Pursue your opportunities!

Those words are the synopsis of visiting with a very kind, happy gentleman, member American Legion post 23, who at age 18 volunteered to serve in one of our Navy's most deadly jobs. I asked him why, and he said that he wanted to serve, wanted to learn to fly, and "It seemed like fun to me." Born on 7/1/1926 in Trenton, NJ, Bob Cole, Jr. soon moved to North Dakota with his father, Professor Cole's assignment at the University of North Dakota. Unfortunately Professor Cole passed away in a VA hospital when Bob was 6 years old. With fond early memories of North Dakota, Bob moved to Vermont, from whence his mother's family came. After primary school, Bob's opportunity for Prep school in Lawrenceville, NJ where his father used to teach opened. He "ventured through the doorway". Upon graduation, Bob pursued his love of aviation by enlisting in the Navy in 1944, to replace pilots who were being shot down by Nazis at a horrific rate. Fortunately that attrition rate was dwindling as war was winding down; Bob did his 2 years, but was told "You are no longer needed in aviation."

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



Discharged in 1945, afforded another "doorway" for Bob's pursuit of education by joining the ROTC at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute thus earning an electrical engineering certificate plus an officer's rank of Navy Ensign. He was supposed to go on to Harvard and pursue a business law degree, in order to advance in the Navy, which really didn't suit Bob's "hands on" desire so much as engineering. Soon he was totally out of the Navy and working for Reaction Motors Inc. (an outgrowth of four brilliant young men who formed the "American Rocket Society"). They went on and designed and built the X-1S rocket motors and the famous X-15 jet rocket. Again Bob was associated with our Navy, as a contractual agreement between the private firm and our military need for further advancement in jet powered aviation. After being bought out in part by the Rockefellers, and later in total by other investors, Bob saw this as yet another "doorway" to go to work for Boeing Aircraft in Florida, thus work on solid propellant engines as a part of our space efforts at Cape Canaveral, FL. Another doorway opened for Bob, as a "reunion" of sorts by the "old crew" of Reaction Motors was creating an engineering firm in Massachusetts, needing a program manager. Bob saw this as another opportunity.

Bob's gorgeous wife had a stroke and later in 2014 passed away. Bob's son wanted him in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Having had enough of that, Bob took advantage of the next "open doorway" to move to Towns County, GA, where his son, almost a twin of Bob, also recently found his piece of happiness. Bob's commentary concludes, "Yes, I'd do it all over again; it was lots of fun." Never seeing things he didn't get to do as a wall, instead seeing new doorways and opportunities.

Semper Paratus

Speaking sarcasm fluently

We've taken a much needed break from writing about political things here. It's better for our mental and digestive health that we do so. But today we couldn't resist a brief return to the bread and circuses.

We've been feeling a little better about politics lately. No, politics has not changed, but we have redefined some terms and lowered some expectations. Idealism is a hothouse flower.

When it comes to the American political scene, "feeling better," for those of us who insist on thinking about such things, is perhaps more accurately described as "not feeling sick all the time." In order to achieve this dubious improvement, we needed a new working definition of "president." See if this works for you, too: "A president is a politician chosen from a small group of people selected by corporations. An aspiring president says whatever is necessary to get elected. Once elected, the president can then pursue whatever personal political agenda is necessary for re-election, as long as the corporate agenda is fulfilled."

Let us pause for a moment to reflect on the possibility that those of us who appreciate irony are drawn to politics because irony occurs so often in that realm. Perhaps we're getting a little sick of irony too, but this next case could appear as an example in a Wikipedia definition:

Trump orders a missile attack on Syria during a visit from Chinese President Xi. Did you catch that? The fact that Trump's first "superpower" meeting is with Xi and not, as many would have suspected, with Putin? Of course to accuse the Russians of being a superpower we have to ignore the fact that the Russian economy is smaller than that of Texas, but they do have a lot of nuclear missiles.

Nevertheless, it all makes for great political theater, unless you are one of the unfortunate people killed during the attack. (We might add to our working definition of "president" something about the ability to kill people in foreign lands without being charged with murder.) Trump warns the Russians before the attack, giving Syria time to move their jets from the air base about to be destroyed. The Russians appear to be outraged. Trump appears to dispel the notion that he is actually a Russian agent. The Syrian jets continue their own attacks. Defense stocks soar.

The left accuses Trump of starting World War 3, although Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer praise the attack. Hillary Clinton agrees and reminds us that she had already suggested such an attack long before Trump ordered it. In Stockholm, discussion begins on nominating Trump for a Nobel Peace Prize, although he has much more bombing to do to catch up with Obama. Defense stocks soar.

"Disgraced" talking head, Brian Williams, refers to pictures of the attacks as "beautiful," and quotes a line from a Leonard Cohen song: "I am guided by the beauty of our weapons." (Add "The ability to lie to the public without disgrace" to our working definition of "president.") Defense stocks soar.

Meanwhile, ever the gracious host, Trump tells Xi that an American aircraft carrier is headed toward Korean waters. Xi appears to be concerned, but not overly concerned. The planes on board that carrier were probably built with components manufactured in China. You guessed it. Defense stocks soar.

Did we offend anyone today? If we did, let us hope that the offense taken is from a concern for humanity rather than any political grievance. As always, letters to the editor are encouraged, and you are invited to comment on our blog at onthemiddlepath.com. If you do, a note of caution: you might want to brush up on your sarcasm, as it seems to be a second language for many of us who spend too much time thinking about politics and politicians.

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The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Serviceberry tree

If you've been taking advantage of the beautiful weather like I have, you may have seen the striking clumps of white, star-shaped flowers dotting the mountainsides. These flowers belong to the serviceberry tree, a native shrub commonly found in forest ecosystems. It is always one of the first woody plants to bloom in spring, however it can provide benefits to your landscape year round.

Though the showy flower clusters of the serviceberry are an attractive feature in any landscape, they are short lived. The blooms appear from mid-March until early April. The leaves are a medium green with an overall rounded shape and pointed at the tip. The bright white flowers you see in March and April eventually mature into sweet, blue-black berries that are absolutely irresistible to surrounding wildlife. In the fall, the show continues with the foliage turning a variety of shades, from a yellow-orange to a rust red. The bark itself is also somewhat attractive, with a light gray color and vertical ridges. New growth and young twigs have an olive green hue. While its natural growth tendency is as a multi-stemmed shrub or short tree, much like crape myrtle, it can tolerate pruning into a single-stemmed plant.

Serviceberry trees have multiple uses in the landscape. They can be used as a screening plant, blended into shrub borders, in group plantings and a food source for wild birds and other animals. It grows well in full sun to partial shade and transplants readily whether burlapped or container grown. Moist yet well-drained soils are preferred, and the soil pH should range between 5.5 and 7.0. However, it is a highly adaptable and drought resistant plant once matured. These trees do not need much pruning as they grow in a naturally upright and rounded shape.

Because serviceberry is in the Rosaceae (rose, apple, pear) family, it is susceptible to many of the same diseases and problems. Rainy weather can promote Entomosporium infection, causing partial defoliation and leaf spotting. Rust, powdery mildew, and fire blight can also affect serviceberry, but proper selection of resistant varieties can usually prevent these issues. Some pests such as Japanese beetles, spider mites, aphids, leaf miners and scales can feed on serviceberry, but incidences of these infestations are typically low. Keeping the plant watered and maintaining adequate soil nutrition will keep the plant healthy and allow it to fight off most pests and diseases.

Several species of serviceberry are recommended for landscaping. Amelanchier laevis is closely related to the native and often wild Amelanchier arborea, but it has bronze leaves with no hair. A. laevis blooms from mid-March to early April and the fruit is a dark purple-black. It is native to our zone and the foliage turns a brick red in the fall. Recommended varieties include "Cumulus," "Prince Charles," and "Snowcloud." Amelanchier canadensis is different from A. laevis and A. arborea because it has an upright habit, with stems growing closely together. It is native to bogs, swamps and wetlands from Maine to South Carolina and usually bloom a week later than A. arborea. The fruit is jet black and the fall color is typically yellow and gold, but depending on the summer weather may be a deep rust color. Recommended cultivars are "Rainbow Pillar," "Spring Glory," and "Tradition."

Many other varieties of this beautiful tree are available, though too numerous to list here. For more information on additional cultivars and serviceberry care, contact the extension office.

UGA extension
From the Ground Up
 Melissa Mattee



Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

In support of Mr. Carnes:

Mr. Carnes' Letter to the Editor addressed a small part of a much larger problem. Most of the City and County public use facilities lack any monitoring or fee collections in order to prevent vandalism or defray the even minimal maintenance costs involved. As a City/County resident/taxpayer, I do appreciate using them at no cost until I realize we are also footing the bill for all the non-resident visitors that are using the facilities. A good example is the swim beach. Take a look at the license tags on the cars in the parking lot on a hot summer day. There are often school buses from other counties and even neighboring states in the lot. Local residents are often in the minority and are being crowded out by non-resident visitors. Visitors are very pleased to be able to use our nicely designed and well maintained facilities. The same is true of the Bell Mountain Park. That "impossible" road and the park itself was not cheap to build. They will definitely require upkeep and improvement in the future. Unfortunately, all our attractions, if left unattended, are targets for possible vandalism. A possible solution may be: A voluntary nominal day use fee for everyone; A voluntary nominal fee for non-residents (no fee for residents); A mandatory day use fee for everyone; A mandatory day use fee for non-residents. People have a tendency to take better care of things they pay for rather than what they get for free, even if that pay is very little. Staffing our facilities is another whole set of problems, but would be easier to overcome if some money was available through fees collected.

Thank you Mr. Carnes,
 John Holmes; Fellow Hiawassee Taxpayer

**A VACANT CROSS...
 AN EMPTY TOMB...
 A RISEN SAVIOR!**

**HAPPY
 Easter!**

POWELL 2017

From the Desk of:

Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

Avoiding motor vehicle accidents

Aggressive driving, speeding, alcohol, and sleepiness remain primary causes behind automobile fatalities, according to research conducted by an array of federal agencies and consumer groups. Statistics gathered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, for example, show that 32,166 people were killed in automobile accidents during 2015, the most recent complete survey year. Despite a decrease over the last decade, the number remains unacceptably high and reveals the challenges faced by local and regional law enforcement agencies. With that in mind, the Georgia Sheriffs' Association has some practical advice to help keep you and your family safe: 1. Drinking and driving don't mix. Accord-

ing to the NHTSA study, three in every ten. Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some point. Have a designated driver or refrain from drinking. 2. Always travel with a first-aid kit. It can offer a quick bandage, tweezers, anti-septic wipes and other first aid supplies. 3. Children 12 years or younger should ride in the back seat of the vehicle in age appropriate restraints. 4. A cell phone can save a life, but it can also cause a collision. It is best for you to pull off the road when you need to dial a number or converse with someone. 5. Use the three-second rule - the suggested time interval that keeps you from tailgating another vehicle too closely and causing an accident. 6. Keep a vehicle safety kit in the trunk. It should include jumper cables, reflective triangles, a blanket, nonperishable food, flashlight, and other important tools. Even if you do not use many of the items, it will provide you peace of mind. 7. Don't fall asleep at the wheel. According to NHTSA studies, most crashes happen when people are alone. Drowsy drivers cause tens of thousands of crashes annually. 8. Be prepared for law enforcement road checks with driver and vehicle information.

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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Towns County Community Calendar

Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Every Monday:		
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Every Tuesday:		
Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Every Wednesday:		
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Every Thursday:		
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Every Friday:		
Chamber Board	1411 Jack Dayton Cir.	8 am
Historical Society	Old Rec. Center	5:30 pm
Mtn. Comp. Users	www.mcug.org	6 pm
Planning Comm.	Civic Center	7 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Every Saturday:		
Second Monday of each month:		
Caregiver support	Brasstown Manor	3 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Mtn. Regional Library	4 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
Second Tuesday of each month:		
Basket Weavers	SC Fire Hall	10 am
Board of Elections	67 Lakeview Cir., Ste. A	4 pm
Second Wednesday of each month:		
CVB Board	Rec Center	9 am
Mtn. Comm. Srs.	Senior Center	1 pm
Democratic Party	Civic Center	5 pm
Second Thursday of each month:		
Square Dance Club	Rec. Center	7 pm
Second Friday of each month:		
Third Monday of each month:		
Hospital Auxiliary	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 pm

Towns County Herald
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Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee
Phone: (706) 896-4454 **Fax:** (706) 896-1745 **Email:** tcherald@windstream.net
Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546