

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

American Legion Post #23

National Poppy Day, May 26, 2017: Wear a poppy on National Poppy Day to honor those who have worn our nation's uniform. And wear it again on Memorial Day! Friday, May 26, 2017 you may notice our many volunteers located in various public venues in and around Hiawassee, with baskets of poppies. Feel free to take one, wear it or make a voluntary donation for one of the greatest causes in America.

The Veterans' Corner
 Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



All donations received will be used by The American Legion Family for their programs that support veterans, the military community and their families. One hundred percent of these funds are used and not one taken for profit. We even absorb the overhead, i.e. all volunteers. It isn't unusual for our members to dig into their own pockets in order to "help" with these missions. The visual image of the poppy represents the sacrifice of service made by our veterans and has been an important goal of the American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program since its inception in 1921. On Memorial Day and Veterans Day, millions of red crepe paper poppies—all handmade by veterans as part of their therapeutic rehabilitation—are distributed across the country in exchange for donations that go directly to assist disabled and hospitalized veterans in our communities.

May 26, 2017 will be the inaugural of National Poppy Day, always to be the Friday before Memorial Day henceforth, as petitioned for and accepted by our Congress, by our American Legion Family. Our American Legion Auxiliary volunteers are spearheading this momentous event in Towns County and we invite you to please support all our Veteran's organizations. What would we do without these fantastic ladies of our several organizations? What would America do without our servicemen and women?

Memorial Day, Monday May 29, 2017 at 11 AM. Location: our beautiful Towns County Veterans Memorial Park in the corner of our Towns County School property Please note! If rainy weather prevails we'll have the event indoors at the new Recreation and Conference Center auditorium, 150 Foster Park Road, Young Harris, GA 30582 Phone: 706-896-2600 same time.

This annual event is planned and sponsored by former members of our United States Army; United States Air Force; United States Marine Corps; United States Navy; and United States Coast Guard. These fine men and women are now under the umbrella of VFW Post 7807 as members of either/or VFW; American Legion; VFW Auxiliary; American Legion Auxiliary; American Legion Riders; Sons of American Legion; and Marine Corps League.

At this time we Veterans would like to offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to the many that support us and our efforts to continue serving America. Often forgotten is the venue through which the public is made aware of these events, our newspaper, *The Towns County Herald* which has an unblemished record for community and Veteran activities support. Thank you!

Semper Paratus

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

I have said it before and will say it again, and will continue to say it until something is done!

I don't mean to be rude or ugly about this, but farm machinery and equipment, and road work machinery and equipment do not belong on the highways!

They travel at don't speed, and hold up traffic and the people driving them don't seem to care one bit and won't try to pull over to the shoulder of the road if it is wide enough, or even in a place sufficient enough to pull off to let people by.

And if you get behind them, the people behind you go on around and there you are stuck for miles waiting for the chance to pass because every one else is going around.

And suppose you go around a curve at a decent and reasonable speed and there they are. Even with the speed limit you aren't going to have time enough to put on your brakes and that could be an accident in the making and perhaps a terrible one at that.

If people are going to work in some one's field or garden they just need to try to get something to haul the equipment on, and not have it on the main highway to disrupt the flow of traffic, and cause a major accident.

Thank You,
 Have a blessed day
 Delores Barnes

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.

Ahhh, the Bliss of Ignorance

Faced with a choice between being ignorant or being depressed, the bliss of ignorance begins to look more attractive. Being informed is hard work, and since fact can also lead to cognitive dissonance, it doesn't always make us feel good.

Being entertained is much easier. Nevertheless, some of us still prefer knowledge. Peddlers of media realize this, and they are also very aware of our tendency to rubberneck at the scene of an accident. So the facts they present are often dire, urgent, and breaking. Their facts have shock value to get our attention, but we can only stand to be shocked for so long. This is a win-win for the peddlers, as we are soon driven to consume entertainment to assuage the pain of being shocked.

Those of us who still want to be informed consume action-scene-live-breaking commentary in an effort to seek knowledge, and we consume entertainment to ease the pain of the harsh reality of broken news. Every year that passes finds more of us skipping right over being informed and going straight to entertainment.

Network ratings are high this year on the heels of a very painful (though not very factual) presidential election. Many people simply refuse to discuss politics now. This is unfortunate, but understandable. However, the disdain for knowledge is expanding to include world events and scientific advancement. We can all remember the last conversation we had about "Dancing with the Stars" or the latest sports scores, but when was the last time we discussed a documentary?

The largest single group of people eligible to vote last year – did not. Those of us who did vote have done little to entice non-voters into our camp. We, the fact seeking voters of the United States of America, are partisans. We suffer in various degrees from confirmation bias, allowing only those facts which agree with our preconceived notions to penetrate momentarily into our consciousness. We are so partisan, in fact, that we make value judgments about world events and decisions by our elected officials based, not on merit, but on political affiliation.

So we gather here this week in yet another attempt to overcome partisanship and transcend confirmation bias while we seek the truth. To aid in this quest, we offer you something to rubberneck at the scene of an accident of historic proportions in a long and ongoing emergency. It is shocking in its own right, but doubly so because of the fact that so many people have overlooked it. If it does not shock, we hope that it will at least offend. Offense also increases the flow of blood to the brain.

Without further delay, here is the statement most shocking: President Trump and President Obama are very similar, and in some ways identical.

But you didn't see that one coming. It occurred to me while watching a video of Trump's entourage and Saudi royals in a traditional dance with swords to celebrate "peace after war." This, after the largest single arms deal in history. One could choke on the irony. You see, Obama, the Nobel laureate, was overall the biggest arms dealer in history. Not to be outdone, Trump has already penned the single biggest arms deal in history barely 100 days into his first year.

Obama ran on hope and change for the middle class and the oppressed and spoke of peace in our time. He abruptly

packed his cabinet with Wall Street bankers and war hawks, bombed someone somewhere every day for eight years and instituted a program of global assassination. Trump ran on a platform of "draining the swamp," and then abruptly packed his cabinet with Wall Street bankers and war hawks. Obama talked of a world free from nuclear weapons, and then spent over a trillion dollars upgrading the US arsenal. Trump accused Secretary Clinton of being a warmonger for her suggestion that we bomb Assad, then soon after getting elected, launched a cruise missile attack against Assad. No doubt there are distinct differences between the two presidents. Obama abandoned his campaign promises by redefining terms and violating the spirit if not the letter of those promises. Obama was more sophisticated while Trump is more blunt and abrupt, already flipping positions on NATO, China, Russia, The Federal Reserve, and most recently, Islamic terrorism.

Both presidents ran, or rather "postured" against the establishment, but as Sam Hussein of Vote Pact wrote recently, they simply "rebranded" the establishment.

I saw an economic analysis recently which demonstrated that earning power for Americans peaked with those born in 1942. Washington has been occupied almost exclusively by Democrats and Republicans (and lobbyists) since then, so it would be almost impossible to blame this political philosophy or that for the decline in our fortunes. Yet we still do. We are supposed to. Our blame and our partisanship is essential for business to continue as usual.

In all these years, throughout all the arguments over social justice, fiscal policy, immigration, abortion and gun control, gender studies, wars on drugs and wars on concepts, with the changing tides and shifting sands of party platforms and talking points, we have seen quite a show. Somehow we were so distracted by the theater that we often failed to notice that our pockets were being picked. We failed to notice that the same companies always prospered. The same lobbyists stayed in Washington year after year. We failed to notice that every president, no matter what their party or platform, was always the chief salesman for the biggest arms dealer on the planet.

Are you beginning to notice yet?

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Periodical Cicadas

I recently heard a story from a friend who, just as he was tucking into bed, heard a commotion on his front porch. He looked out his front door to see a big hungry black bear happily munching on his bird seed. Hungry though the bear was, he realized he wasn't welcome as my friend knocked on the windows and let him know that seed was for birds only. Slowly, he lumbered into the night, no doubt plotting to topple a neighbor's trash cans to see what goodies he could scrounge up.

Stories like this are not rare in the mountains. While black bears are the most curious of the three bear species in North America, they are curious and sometimes desperate for food just as the weather warms up and when it starts to cool down. Unfortunately, short of fortifying your entire property, there isn't much that can be done about wildlife presence in your yard. However, you can take steps to make your home less appealing to bears and prevent property damage.

Black bears are known as "opportunistic feeders," meaning they eat whatever is convenient. They are also intelligent and remember places that are reliable food sources. If you or your neighbor has particularly smelly trash with lots of food scraps sitting out, they will not only tear through the bags but also return to the area again in hopes of another feast. Bears have an excellent sense of smell and are especially enticed by outdoor barbecues, cat or dog food, and trash. If you have a cookout, always make sure to clean up completely and in a timely manner so bears aren't likely to follow the smell. Also, it is a good idea to either invest in bear proof trash containers, or wait until trash pickup day to place your garbage bags outside. To protect your porches, keep bird feeders away from your house while bears are active. As my friend's story showed, they have an affinity for sunflower seeds.

As fruit starts to ripen, many of us have the thought "I'll let it go just one more day, then it will be perfect." Well, bears aren't that picky and the thought that most likely goes through their mind is "If no one else is going to eat this, I will!" Bears love peaches, apples, blueberries and many other fruits, so be sure to pick those as they ripen. Though it's not necessarily a big deal if you lose a few fruits, bears tend to grab onto and try to climb branches. This can seriously wound or break branches, which can lead to fruit trees contracting diseases later in the season. Black bears also love vegetables, so an electric fence is the best way to keep them out of your garden. This also works well for deer and other nuisance wildlife.

Bears are known to occasionally trespass onto farmland. To discourage this, keep well mowed buffer zones around crops, beehives and livestock. Black bears hate to be out in the open with no cover, so without tall grass and weeds, they often feel vulnerable. Guard dogs are also recommended for livestock to keep away predators, and their barking almost always scares away even large black bears.

If you have followed all these suggestions and still have bear problems, it would be worthwhile to look into aversive conditioning. This includes motion-activated startle devices such as noise makers and sprinklers, air horns, emergency whistles and water guns. By making your house a stressful environment to bears, you can make sure they won't come back to visit.



Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
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Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
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Mtn. Amat. Radio	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	6:30 pm
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
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Red Cross DAT	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Republican Party	New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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Towns County Herald

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