

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

USCG Legends

I am a Coast Guardsman.
I serve the people of the United States.
I will protect them.
I will defend them.
I will save them.
I am their Shield.
For them I am Semper Paratus.

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



I live the Coast Guard Core Values.
I am proud to be a Coast Guardsman.
We are the United States Coast Guard.
This IS the Coast Guard Ethos.

I will try to present some individuals who lived that ethos, although it's extremely hard to "pick and choose" amongst those who served in our USCG, ordinary men and women who rose to challenges under extraordinary conditions. And most Coasties are ordinary Americans who shun publicity, are quiet types who don't thrive on glitz and glitter. Just give 'em any job and they'll get it done!

1 - Guadalcanal September 17, 1942, Douglas Munro, Signalman First Class coordinated the evacuation of more than 500 Marines under heavy fire using his Higgins boat as a shield to draw fire. He was fatally wounded but his last words were, "Did they get off?"

2 - Lt. Thomas "Jimmy" Crotty, served at the front lines of the Battle of Corregidor when the Japanese overran the Philippines. He went on to be attached to the Navy mine warfare unit, then to the Marine Corps Fourth Regiment, First Battalion when the Japanese attacked our last American stronghold. He was captured and died of diphtheria in Cabanatuan Prison as a POW, the first USCG POW since the War of 1812.

3 - William Flores, gave his life on January 28, 1980 when the USCGC Blackthorn collided with a tanker in Tampa Bay, FL. He stayed aboard the sinking Blackthorn, aiding the injured, giving his own life jacket to those struggling in the water. One year out of boot camp, age 18 and only rated as a seaman, he didn't need orders. He was posthumously awarded the Coast Guard's highest non-combat award, the Coast Guard Medal. I don't believe that I served with any Coast Guardsman, regardless of rank who would have performed any differently if called upon.

4 - Ida Lewis, took over as keeper of Lime Rock Light-house, Rhode Island after her father had a stroke. In her 39 year career she saved 18 lives. She was one of the earliest women in our Lighthouse Service, later combined with four other services to become the Coast Guard. A coastal buoy tender is named in her honor and Lime Rock Light is renamed Ida Lewis Light.

5 - Bernie Webber, Andy Fitzgerald, Ervin Maske, and Richard Livesey in a 36 foot long motor lifeboat saved the lives of 32 crewmembers of the SS Pendleton tanker, split in half off the icy waters of Cape Cod MASS, in February 1952. Impossible conditions didn't stop them. They all received the Gold Lifesaving Medal. Please see the movie "The Finest Hours".

True to form, this is what "Coasties" often do, with little to no recognition, or fanfare. Our nation's smallest, often overlooked; relatively unknown, military service the USCG became 227 years old August 4th. [to be continued]

Semper Paratus

Breaking News

Over the last few weeks while we were buying disaster supplies, worrying about old statues covered with bird droppings or trying to find eclipse glasses, we missed out on some important news. Consider this headline: "Over 300 Million People in the United States Experienced No Violence, Hatred or Tragedy Last Week."

Somewhat less than that number were not offended in any way.

While we were distracted, over 50 million school aged children went back to school without incident. Just last week more than 60 million attended churches (although 120 million said that they did) representing a myriad of beliefs, with no difficulties. Over 300 million Americans of many races, religions, creeds and national origins worked together, played together and broke bread together. After months of attempting to organize a major protest, that group of white nationalists we heard so much about, despite their best efforts, were only able to attract a small handful of the fearful to march in Charlottesville. News flash: Over this past weekend, the overwhelming majority of Americans declined the opportunity to travel to someone else's community to protest or to signal their virtue, and they went about their daily lives without incident.

The vast majority of Americans live out their days on earth without experiencing any of the headlines that constantly chip away at our peace of mind. We rarely hear about those Americans unless a story is considered cute or sentimental enough to bracket the usual half hour of shootings and stabblings and national rumors.

The word "viral" is used frequently these days, and it describes very well how a disease, or an idea, or a diseased idea, can spread rapidly from one host mind to another. Viruses of the body spread more rapidly where population density is highest and where potential hosts come into close contact. Our minds today are crowded into cyberspace where many of us are in constant contact.

When I was a child my parents warned me that if I watched too many scary movies I would have nightmares. When I didn't heed their advice, I had nightmares. The subconscious mind has a powerful influence, and that mind is programmed by our experiences and by the information to which we are exposed, consciously or unconsciously.

When we allow ourselves to be exposed to a continuous stream of negativity, no matter how positive our outlook or optimistic our natures, over time we respond to the negativity. It changes us. We become angry or more fearful, especially if we are struggling or our lives do not align to our expectations.

Does hatred exist in this country? Most assuredly. Are people suffering? Indeed they are, and we should certainly be mindful and compassionate, qualities that are intrinsic to our national character when we are left to our own devices.

We must continue to remind ourselves that the picture presented to us of our country and the world we live in, a picture of violence and hatred and ever impending doom - is not an accurate depiction. It is a deception, driven in part by the simple need to capture our attention for profit, but there is also intent behind that picture which is at best, Machiavellian, and at worst, malevolent. Fear of civil unrest distracts us from economic troubles and bad decisions by government. Fear of the enemy allows defense budgets to balloon. Fear of the world we live in allows us to accept increased surveillance and coercion and control over our lives.

Last week the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* published an analysis of the recent North Korean missile launches, the ones that rattled the stock market and sent people scrambling to buy disaster supplies. The detailed technical analysis showed quite clearly that the launches were an elaborate hoax designed to give the impression that North Korea had the ability to strike the American heartland with an ICBM. Even though the facts are now public domain, it is the impression of impending doom that will remain to influence future defense spending.

In Boston, 40,000 people were moved by anger and outrage to confront a tiny contingent of white nationalists which would otherwise

have been ridiculed and forgotten. The majority of protesters on both sides traveled from outside the area to be part of the spectacle.

We are not suggesting that the evils of this world should not be confronted. There is, however, a matter of scale and intelligent response to a problem. We do not dig up the yard to kill one ant. Neither do we attack a hornet's nest with a stick. The "viral" phenomenon applied to the problem of hatred empowers a tiny minority of fringe believers, confirms their bias and adds to their ranks.

Martin Luther said, "The best way to drive out the devil, if he will not yield to texts of Scripture, is to jeer and flout him, for he cannot bear scorn." The comedian is a better antidote for hatred than the politician or the pundit.

Historian, Will Durant, said, "A great civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself from within." Be skeptical of the viral, and beware the piercing shards of broken news.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Composting

If you have a garden that you spend a lot of time in, you may want to think twice about throwing away coffee grounds or banana peels. Soil amendments and fertilizers can be costly, but you can condition your own organic matter to boost the nutrients in your garden for little to no cost at all by composting. Composting is a great way to recycle used materials that would otherwise be thrown away into a valuable, nutrient rich resource to be added to your vegetable gardens or flowerbeds.

To compost efficiently, you need to follow four main steps:

1. Maintain good aeration. Composting relies on the activity of tiny organisms called microbes, and in order to do their job effectively, they need air. If there is no air penetrating to the inner portions of your pile, this leads to foul smelling anaerobic activity. This should only be allowed if you have your compost in a closed container. Otherwise, make sure to turn your pile once or twice a month to aerate it. If the pile is not mixed, it can take up to three or four times longer to decompose!

2. Make sure there is enough moisture. If your compost pile becomes too dry, it will take longer to decompose. A dry compost pile can also be a fire hazard. When you make your pile, dampen every layer, but make sure it is not too soggy. If heavy rainfall completely saturates your compost pile, turn it more frequently than you normally would to let it dry out.

3. Add small particles. The bigger the things you add, the longer the microbes will take to break it down. If you add leaves to your pile, go over them with a lawnmower or rent a chopper for your branches and woody plant scraps.

4. Appropriate temperature maintenance. Your compost pile should stay between 110 and 160 degrees Fahrenheit because microbes can break down organic matter much quicker at higher temperatures. This high temperature also kills most pathogens and weed seeds so it does not spread to other plants when you add it to the soil. Despite this, it is best to avoid adding weeds or diseased plants to your pile if possible.

When preparing your compost pile, it is always important to layer your material appropriately. Always make an initial layer with coarser material that cannot be manually broken down into smaller pieces. This helps introduce oxygen into the pile and makes the process more efficient. The next layer should be ten inches deep with organic wastes such as leaves, plant trimmings, and old grass cuttings. Next, add about an inch of soil to make sure your pile has enough microbes to break down what you add to the pile. Finally, add a nitrogen source. This can be fertilizer such as ammonium sulfate (1/3 cup per 25 square feet) or a standard 10-10-10 (1 cup per square foot. Organic options include an inch or two of fresh grass clippings, blood meal and lake plants.

Another important factor to keep in mind is the carbon to nitrogen ratio. The C:N ratio is 30:1, and if you layer your material appropriately, you should have no problems. If the compost starts to smell foul, turn it a few extra times for a month or two to make sure there is enough air. A damp, sweet smelling heap that is still not decomposing can indicate a lack of nitrogen, and if the pile is warm only in the middle, you need to add more material.

For more information on composting, visit the extension office.

UGA extension
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Wow! What a difference a few months have made in the City of Hiawassee. Former Mayor Pro tem Liz Ordiales and the new City Council members have been diligently at work making things happen around town. Projects that languished for years on the back burner have been completed and the lengthy list of proposed projects is getting shorter by the month. Plus, the entire downtown area, bridge to bridge, has a fresh look, less clutter, fewer signs. And let's don't forget the new sidewalks.

Having watched the lack of progress in the city for several years, it is refreshing to see positive actions taking place. And the meetings, both the short session and the regular city council meeting have taken on a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. They are packed with citizens who share in this new enthusiasm. Hats off to all of you for accepting the challenge to make Hiawassee the city it deserves to be. Ms. Ordiales' competent leadership has created an energetic and an enlightened sense of community, which demonstrates the potential for the future.

Since tourism is the economic driver for Towns County, these noticeable improvements to our county seat are to be applauded. Thank you, former Mayor Pro tem Ordiales and City Council members for your responsible and responsive actions.

Grace Howard

Dear Editor,

Former Georgia House Minority Democratic Leader and Democratic candidate for governor of the state, Stacey Abrams is calling for the Confederate carvings on Stone Mountain to be removed. The Confederate Memorial Carving has images of Confederacy President Jefferson Davis and Generals Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson.

After the clashes in Charlottesville, it seems as if a mania exists against Confederate monuments. Activists are urging for the removal of Confederate statues on the grounds that these leaders were racist. Since those are the criteria, why stop with the Confederacy?

Let's recall that Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) supported segregation and opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The University of Arkansas has a statue of the late Senator. In 1996, The George Washington University even named a residence hall in his honor. Those fighting for social justice should demand the removal of the statue, and rename the George Washington University residence hall.

In the early 1940s, Robert Byrd recruited his friends to create a chapter of the Ku Klux Klan in West Virginia. He became a leader of his chapter, and won election as the top officer. Byrd later became a member of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate. He rose to become one of the Senate's most powerful members.

There is currently a statue of the late Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) at the Capitol in Charleston, WV. So if the social justice warriors insist on removing monuments of historical figures, why not include Byrd along with Fulbright?

I could name others such as Woodrow Wilson, our 28th president who implemented racial segregation in the federal government and the military. But one gets the point. Where do we stop?

Tim Groza



"Ouch! Don't pull that one, Doc...it takes my mind off the news."

Towns County Community Calendar

Bridge Players	Every Monday:	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Bingo		Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Free GED prep.	Every Tuesday:	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Every Wednesday:	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Bridge Players	Every Thursday:	All Saints Lutheran	12:30 pm
Free GED prep.		Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Friday:	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Every Sunday:	Red Cross Building	7 pm
Hospital Auxiliary	Third Monday of each month:	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Water Board		Water Office	6 pm
YH Plan Comm.	Third Tuesday of each month:	YH City Hall	5 pm
Co. Comm. Mtg		Courthouse	5:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.		Blairsville store	5:30 pm
Quilting Bee	Third Wednesday of each month:	McConnell Church	10 am
MOAA		Call Jack @ 828-321-2896	
Friendship Comm.	Third Thursday of each month:	Clubhouse	6 pm
Goldwing Riders	Third Saturday of each month:	Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
Red Cross DAT	Fourth Monday of each month:	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 pm
Lions Club	Fourth Tuesday of each month:	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Republican Party	Fourth Thursday of each month:	New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Last Thursday of each month:	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!



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Towns County Herald

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