

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Will my brother ever come home?

Sent to me by Zadi Cunningham, Blairsville, a very dedicated, determined sister and a sweet lady:

A recent message on my telephone filled me with surprise, wonder, and thoughts of the past. The man identified himself as being from the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, VA. He said he had called concerning my brother Grover Cunningham, who was in WWII.

My half-brother, Grover Clyde Cunningham, volunteered, summer, 1941 for the Marines, was assigned to the 2nd Marine Division. November of 1943, he was in the Battle of Tarawa on tiny Betio Island, Tarawa Atoll, Pacific. In this bloody battle it seems that everything that could go wrong, did go wrong. 1049 Marines and Navy servicemen were killed. Grover was among over 500 who are still MIA.

Even though I thought it may be a hoax, I returned the call. I spoke to retired Marine, a Mr. Williams, who told me that in June 2015, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting agency was notified by History Flight, Inc. that they had unearthed a burial trench on Betio Island and recovered the remains of approximately 35 Marines. (Betio is now thickly populated for such a small island, and from time to time, remains have been uncovered by workmen.) It is Mr. Williams' job to try and locate relatives and obtain their DNA for purposes of seeking to identify these remains. I am Grover's only living sibling and was not quite three years old when he enlisted. There are nieces and nephews, but all born after he enlisted.

Mr. Williams said that few of the remains have, indeed, been identified. Some have been brought home (or wherever their next-of-kin desires) and funeral services conducted. One family wanted their Loved One buried in Arlington Cemetery. The last found remains has been identified as 1st LT Alexander J. Bonnyman, Jr. a combat engineer, who had been posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery at Tarawa. He came home after 72 years.

Grover Clyde Cunningham had one brother, Glover, a half brother, Von, and two half-sisters, Loueve (Ingram) and me, Zadi (McCall). Since Grover's mother, Ida Ingram Cunningham, died when he was only a few weeks old, Grover was raised by his paternal grandparents, Charlie and Mollie Smith Cunningham, in the Woods Grove Community of Towns County.

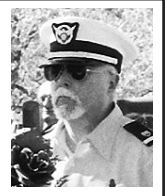
Mr. Williams said that my DNA kit should arrive by the following week, which it did. The test consisted of a series of swabs, used inside my mouth. I lost no time in mailing the DNA test back.

My nieces, nephews and I have discussed these happenings and have agreed that we should not get our hearts set on one of the remains being Grover. After all, he is just one of over 500 not accounted for. However it would be wonderful if he could come home after 73+ years!

We are trying to not get our hopes too high, but the very nature of hope is to rise. And so we wait some more.

*Semper Paratus*

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



## Discarding the Alpha Male

For more than forty thousand years humans lived in a matriarchal society. Women led the tribes and extended families that organized human life. God was seen as female, or the feminine aspect of deity was considered to be at least as important as the male. The time we have spent under patriarchal rule has been brief when compared to our time on this Earth.

This brief span of recorded history saw the rise of the city states, soon to be followed by the great empires. Organized religion became the glue that bonded the people to their masters. Warfare was institutionalized, and in that process, or perhaps because of it, God became exclusively male. Keep in mind that we are discussing anthropology today, not Faith.

We often refer to history as a wheel that turns. This is a useful metaphor, especially when we think of the millions of people who have been crushed under that wheel since the history of humanity became almost synonymous with the history of warfare. But history never actually repeats itself, though it often rhymes. A better metaphor might be a history that spirals, like our own DNA, and whether we are moving "up" or "down" is open to interpretation.

Within our own living memory, that spiral has tightened, especially here in the United States. The Vintage News website has an interesting archive of early 20th century ads that warned against the dangers of "giving" women the right to vote. Some of those ads describe a slippery slope leading to the total disintegration of American society that would result from empowering women. A few short decades later and at least half the country is ready to elect a female president.

If you have read this column at all, you probably know my opinion of that candidate (and her main competitor), but it is ironic that some of the negative qualities attributed to her – arrogant, stubborn, manipulative – in a male candidate would probably be seen as decisive, persevering and resourceful.

The feminist movement has grown out of the needs created by a great imbalance in our patriarchal world. Western civilization has come a long way toward restoring balance. We have a ways yet to go to see a true equality of the sexes. But being human, every worthwhile endeavor that we embark upon is prone to being thwarted by our own stupidity, as we fall prey again and again to the false dilemmas inherent in seeing the world always in terms of dichotomy – yes or no, black or white, good or evil – when the world is almost always more complicated than that.

American society, at least that part of it which is led by the nose, tethered to the popular culture presented by mainstream media, is challenged by what it means to be "equal." Equal opportunity is not enough for some of us. What seems to be manifesting now, especially in the younger generations, is a desire for an almost androgynous human being.

Strong, physically fit women and men that are sensitive and comfortable expressing their emotions are a benefit to society, even though these respective traits have been traditionally assigned to the opposite sexes. Unfortunately, whether by some combination of political correctness or the desire to occupy some mythical "safe space," a defacto war has been declared on the alpha male.

My use of the term "war" to frame the struggle for masculinity is intentional, though it is certainly a relic of a patriarchal society. But to deny or to suppress the masculine goes against Nature...herself. The archaeological record tells us that men

from the long years before civilization were considerably stronger than the "metrosexual" man of today. Even in the brief span of time from 1985 to 2016, the grip strength of college men included in the study has declined from 117 pounds of force to 98, which now matches the strength of older Millennial women. As we have done with education, we seem to be doing with equality of the sexes. Rather than elevating a disadvantage, we achieve "equality" by suppressing an advantage. Stupidity.

The alpha male long ago thrived in matriarchal society. In our own time he has fought for and defended every freedom and every advantage we now enjoy. We discard him at our peril.

## The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

## Well water testing

The first thing most of us do after a long day of working outside is pour ourselves a nice glass of water. For many of us, that water comes from a well on our property. While you may not have had well problems, it's important to not take well maintenance for granted. Though water may smell fine and taste fine, if the well has not been properly maintained, contaminants may have slipped through, especially after a heavy rain. Because of this, it's important to occasionally test your water and check on your well to make sure everything is in the best condition possible.

The water in our wells comes from rainfall that filters down through the soil and rock layers beneath it. Movement through these layers removes large contaminants such as insects, plant material, and other particles. However, it does not remove metals and bacteria. Though most wells and filters that are adequately maintained seldom have any issues filtering these out, certain conditions can cause a higher risk of contamination than others. Shallow wells are more likely than deep wells to become contaminated after a heavy rain. Also, wells that are located within 50 feet of a septic tank or within 100 feet of petroleum, manure, pesticide or chemical storage areas are much more likely to have problems.

Sometimes, a contaminated well does not show any external signs that anything is wrong. However, some common indications are water that stains clothes or sinks and tubs, has a strong odor, has particles floating in it, or a metallic, sour taste. Also, if the pH of the water is too high, it could eat away at your pipes, which doesn't contaminate the well but still affects household water. High levels of certain metals, such as copper, can even cause adverse health effects. If you do suspect your water is contaminated or are not sure about the status of your well, you can have your water tested by a variety of organizations, including the extension office.

Water can be submitted for several different tests, but the most common are a basic water test and a bacterial test. The basic water test looks for several metal and mineral contaminants, as well as hardness and pH of the water. The bacterial test shows the presence or absence of any harmful germs possibly contaminating your well. For a basic well test, it is important to do what is called a "first draw." This means that you need to take the sample before any other faucets in the house have been used. It is recommended to test a kitchen faucet early in the morning, as those are usually the most active faucets in a household. For a bacterial test, all faucet attachments, such as nozzles and aerators, must be removed and the neck of the faucet itself must be sterilized using a very specific procedure.

For more information on water testing, please contact your extension office to receive our "Testing for Water Quality" publication.

Don't forget about our SeptIMBER Forestry Ag Day on September 28th at GMREC in Blairsville from 9:00am to 1:45. Admission is \$5 and includes lunch and a chance to win door prizes. Topics covered include native tree identification, nuisance wildlife management, invasive species control, tree disease, pest management, and fire prevention. This program will offer three hours of commercial pesticide credit in categories 23, 24, and 27, and one hour of private applicator credit. To RSVP, please contact GMREC at 706-745-2655 by September 14th to ensure your spot.



From the Ground Up  
Melissa Mattee

## Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

"Joan Crothers is my mother." Most of the time when introducing myself to someone in our town or the surrounding counties, I use this sentence to quickly gain a positive connection to the new acquaintance, for though I am not known by everybody, everybody knows Joan, occasionally referred to as "Ms. Hiawassee." Although of dear importance to me, she also has great significance to the citizens of Towns County, who rely on her to rally behind vital causes and lead by example in our civic duty. She would never call attention to her mind-boggling "can-do" attitude while volunteering for various local causes, but during this September, Joan's birthday month, please let me list just some of the diverse organizations she has given so much of her time to undergirding: founding member of TC Chamber of Commerce; 4-H and Girl Scout leader; Hiawassee City Councilwoman; local paper reporter and editor, member/officer/coordinator of dozens of organizations, including local square dancing team, Sheriff's Auxiliary, Chatuge Cloggers, Coast Guard Auxiliary, PUP, Firewise, Hiawassee Garden Club, Saturday Farmer's Market, Towns County Historical Arts Society, Towns County Homeowners, Chatuge Lake Clean-Up, Hiawassee Methodist Church. I would be remiss not to mention her ongoing recycling efforts, as well as her dedication to the Hiawassee Square and county flower beds and flower barrels, weeding and watering them throughout the year.

So from me and all of Towns County, for all you do and have done for our family and our community, happy birthday Joanie girl!

Linda Crothers Barrett

To the Editor:

When the driver ahead turned on emergency flashers and steered to the shoulder of the road, I instinctively followed thinking it was a mechanical failure. The young woman smiled at my offer of help and told me that she had stopped to rescue a little turtle that was very slowly crawling across a busy road. From her act of human kindness I decided to start rescuing turtles also. I learned that our subject is a dry-land turtle known as the Eastern Box Turtle and they are especially plentiful in certain locations. They are very attractive and harmless little reptiles. Adults are about the size of a softball. I find them in tall weeds and grass when mowing near a wood line and must take care to avoid injuring them. Once when picking up roadside litter along Gumlog Road, I saw a turtle crossing 400 yards away. Knowing that a vehicle would be coming any minute I ran as fast as I could to rescue the little critter, but was too late. A big red pickup approached from the opposite direction and the turtle was in its lane. At the last minute the truck stopped, the driver got out and moved the turtle to the other side of the road. When I arrived to thank him, the driver responded with a comment that I will never forget, "I'm a Navy man and there were times in the past when someone picked me up and moved me to safety." Last Saturday while again picking up roadside litter I saw in the distance something foreign on the road surface. At closer range it proved to be the crushed body of a turtle. At a glance I could tell that its injuries were mortal and even if I had been a skilled and experienced doctor, I could not have saved it. Some reptiles, especially turtles, die slowly and this one was clinging tenaciously to life. Its head was out and the feet were feebly trying to upright the shell that had been its lifelong shelter and defense. Sadly, the driver who took this life steered more than a foot out of his lane to destroy an innocent and harmless creature. Would that same driver deliberately strike your dog if it ran into the road or sideswipe you if you were mowing along the shoulder? I hope that driver was not you and that you will join others of us who drive with care and take precautions to avoid harming anything that ventures into the road ahead of us. Please spare the turtles!

Wm. Ronald Gibson

## 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.*

## Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!

Contact us at 706-896-4454

Deadline for the T.C. Herald is

Friday by 5 PM



## Towns County Community Calendar

Bingo	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Bridge Players	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
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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Quilting Bee	McCormell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
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.	Courthouse	7 pm
School Board	Auditorium	7 pm
Unicoy Masonic	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Caregiver support	Brasstown Manor	3 pm
Arts & Crafts Guild	Calvary Alliance Chapel	6 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Mtn. Coin Club	N. GA Tech	6 pm
Basket Weavers	SC Fire Hall	10 am
Board of Elections	Old Rock Jail	4 pm
Mtn. Comm. Seniors	Senior Center	1 pm
Democratic Party	Civic Center	5 pm
Square Dance Club	Rec. Center	7 pm

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$20. Out of County (1 Year) \$30. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. Postmaster: Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

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## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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