

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Take a Walk with me

I am walking around my neighborhood this morning and breathing air so pure it startles me to take a breath; the cool crisp air is starched with fall. Turning now along the one lane road along the Hiawassee River's edge the sound of the rushing water is in symphony with nature and the dancing sunlight on the water's flow is nothing short of a spectacle. I am so thankful for this beauty and so blessed to be in the United States of America that I want to drop to both knees, not one knee but two, and give thanks to God and all the men and women who have served courageously to make this joy possible.

I am coming around the turn and look down and see the home of Jerry, US Army - just passing Barry's house, US Coast Guard, spotted my friend Renata, US Army leaving her driveway. Looked over to see that Slade and Donna, both US Army, are back in Texas. I am struggling up the mountain now and remembering that Bill and Bradley, both US Army Veterans are watching the top. I am back toward my house now and see that Al, US Army, is leaving for work. As I enter the door I catch my own US Coast Guardsman taking a break and catching up on Gunsmoke. I don't know all the Veterans on this mountain with no name, but those that I do know and those that I don't - I Thank You.

Semper Paratus

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



Arthur Woody - Forest Ranger

The Story of Ranger Arthur Woody continued: The same year he became an official forest ranger, Ranger Woody's first step toward implementing his dream was to stock non-native rainbow and brown trout in the refuge in 1918. During the next 15 years, he also established trout-rearing ponds on Rock Creek Lake inside the refuge. These fish-rearing ponds were eventually taken over and expanded by the Forest Service. In 1937, thanks to Ranger Woody's initial efforts, Blue Ridge WMA became home to the Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery, now run by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Ten years after he released the first trout into Rock Creek, Ranger Woody released five deer into the refuge in 1928 (at his own expense), marking the beginning of the return of whitetails to the north Georgia mountains. During the early 1930s, Charlie Elliott had worked closely with Ranger Woody on many important wildlife and conservation projects in north Georgia, including the planning and building of the Appalachian Trail. Charlie had worked in various capacities for the Georgia Forestry Department, as well as the U.S. Forest Service, and the two men had become very close friends. By the early 1930s, Ranger Woody had been lobbying the Forest Service for many years to make his beloved Rock Creek Refuge into an official wildlife reserve in addition to be a forest preserve. On the state level, Charlie began working behind the scenes with state officials. The fruits of their joint efforts were finally realized in March 1936 when the Georgia Wildlife Division, under the leadership of Zack Cravey, who was then Commissioner of Natural Resources, entered into a historic cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service. The partnership between the federal government and the state of Georgia provided that the state would manage all fish and wildlife resources on Rock Creek Refuge, while the Forest Service continued to manage all forest resources.

With the official name of "Blue Ridge Wildlife Management Area," Ranger Woody's refuge became the first wildlife management area in Georgia and the first of its kind in the nation. It was also the first federal property to be managed by a state agency. By 1936, Blue Ridge WMA had been expanded to almost 39,000 acres. Throughout the 1920s and early '30s, Ranger Woody had reintroduced a number of black bear cubs into the refuge and worked tirelessly to grow and protect the native wild turkey population. Later, when turkeys were restocked in other parts of the mountain region, it was not necessary to stock them in Blue Ridge WMA because the native population was large enough to stand on its own. As a result, the turkeys found at Blue Ridge WMA today are known for having one of the purest native bloodlines of any wild turkeys found in the mountain region, although their once-pure genetics have no doubt been somewhat diluted by other birds coming into the area in recent decades. Turkey experts believe that these native birds have slightly darker feathers and other distinguishing characteristics. Following the success of Ranger Woody's Blue Ridge WMA in 1936, four more wildlife management areas were established in the north Georgia mountains within the Chattahoochee National Forest: the 23,000-acre Chattahoochee WMA, the 19,000-acre Chestatee WMA, the 40,000-acre Cohutta WMA and the 13,000-acre Lake Burton WMA, all managed by the Georgia Wildlife Division. More WMAs were established in later years. Deer from the Pisgah Reserve in North Carolina were stocked in each one of these areas during the 1930s. Because the Georgia partnership worked so well, numerous other states soon followed suit with similar programs. Today, the vast network of wildlife management areas found across the U.S. can trace its roots back to the vision and determination of one man, Arthur Woody. His idea of having a refuge inside the forest preserve eventually evolved into the modern wildlife management area system in Georgia as we know it today. This may well have been his single greatest contribution to the conservation movement.

By 1940, in the span of just 13 short years, the 60 to 80 deer stocked during the late 1920s that had been the foundation for the Ranger's fledgling deer herd at Rock Creek Refuge had increased their numbers substantially. The herd in and around the refuge had now grown to an estimated 2,000 animals. Ranger Woody's health failed rapidly in the mid-1940s due to heart and kidney disease. He was forced to retire prematurely, and he died in 1946 at the relatively young age of 62. However, his achievements during his 33-year career with the Forest Service were extraordinary. He had introduced rainbow and brown trout to the mountain region, protected native brook trout, reintroduced deer, turkey, and bear and pioneered many innovative forestry practices that are still in use today. But one of his crowning achievements in the realm of conservation has to be his vision for a game refuge inside the national forest that eventually became Georgia's first WMA.

For more information on Georgia's WMA's contact Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest or Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D at info.ccrd@gmail.com.

RC&D
Frank Riley
 Executive Director



Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs

The cooler weather is going to send insects scrambling for warm, safe places to spend the winter. Unfortunately for us, our houses are exactly what these bugs are looking for. One of the peskiest invaders is the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB). This bug was introduced from Asia most likely in shipping crates. The first recorded sighting was in Allentown, PA in 1998, but it probably arrived even before that. It has subsequently spread throughout much of the east coast, feeding on crops and becoming a nuisance in winter.

The adult BMSB is about 17 mm long and has a mottled brown pattern. It has light colored bands on its antenna and alternating light and dark brown bands on the edge of its body. Like many other stink bugs, it is shaped like a shield and as its name suggests, it has glands that produce an unpleasant odor when it is agitated. There are usually only one or two generations in Georgia, depending on how warm the weather is and the location. Adults emerge in May, mate and deposit eggs throughout the summer. The nymphs emerge from the eggs and go through five growth stages before finally developing wings and becoming adults. By this time, temperatures start to cool off, and the bugs search for places to overwinter until October.

In its native range in Asia, the BMSB feeds on a wide variety of fruit including apples, pears, peaches, figs, citrus, and many others. It can also be a pest of ornamental plants and important crops such as soybeans. In the Northeastern United States, this bug has caused massive damage to apple and berry orchards. In the Southeast, it can be a major pest of cotton and blueberries, two very important crops to Georgia.

Though you may find several of these insects in your house over the winter, they do not infest houses like cockroaches. You will typically find them squeezing through door jams and window frames as they follow the light they see coming from your house, and then sense the warm temperatures. The best way to make sure these smelly pests don't completely take over in the winter is to take action before they look for warm spaces. This means making sure all outdoor vents are covered with a fine mesh, adding weather stripping to door and window frames, and sealing up any other points of entry. Though you may still see some bugs in late fall and winter, having your house sealed up well will decrease the number of BMSB that make it in.

You may be tempted to spray insecticide if you see BSMB in your home, but once they make it inside, your best bet would be to try to locate where they came in. If you have a lot of bugs in walls or attic spaces, spraying insecticides will indeed kill many of them, but it won't prevent more from moving in. Also, having a large amount of dead stink bugs in your home will promote carpet beetle infestations, as they feed on dead insects. Carpet beetles also feed on wool clothing and other animal products, so it is best to try to prevent stink bugs from entering in the first place.

Though these pesky critters can be annoying and give off a bad smell, they are not harmful. They may startle you as they fly around your house, but they won't bite, sting, or infest your home, so don't worry too much. Just seal up your house to try to avoid the problem next year!

UGA extension
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



Letters to The Editor

Thankful in Hard Times

Dear Editor,
 We just want to thank a few angels who helped when Irma came to town. Trish Chapin, BRMEMC, Pat & Jeannette Kern and Frontier. They were all so helpful in our time of need. A huge tree limb fell taking out our power and phone. We can't get cell phone service where we live and with so many calls to make, Trish opened up her home to us to use her phone anytime, night or day. We had a freezer full of food and Pat & Jeannette came to let us use their generator. To our surprise, I called to the sweet lady at BRMEMC got a work order put in and a great crew showed up. We had live wires in our yard. The crew was pleasant, knowledgeable and they carefully restored our power. The next day Matt Green from Frontier came out. Our phone box was totally destroyed and he got us up and running. There really are a lot of good things that can happen in the midst of bad times. Close friends and reliable businesses can ease the burden. We are truly thankful and blessed.
Chris & Debbie Graham

Making My Election Choices

Dear Editor,
 I have been asked by many of my friends and acquaintances for the past two elections, "Who are you voting for?" It is not my purpose to try and persuade anyone to vote like I do. This communication is only to share with those that have asked, and hopefully offer to those that have not made decisions, to reach out and research candidates before casting a vote.
 This year's City of Hiawassee mayoral and council election is very important to this City's viability for the future. What happens in this election will not only affect the City of Hiawassee, but also Towns County, and some surrounding counties. It is crucial that the Mayors of Hiawassee and Young Harris, and the Commissioners of Towns and Union counties have respect for each other, and be able to work together in sharing ideas. Being able to "share" among local officials is vital to the evolution of our community into the 21st century, while maintaining the "small town" mountains and lake paradise.
 I have been attending Council and Working Sessions in the City for about eight years. I have seen the bad, ugly, and good, develop from citizen input (attendance at meetings and discussions with Council members). Seeing the positive changes in the leadership of this City has been exciting!
 Many of you are well aware that I am involved in the community because I care about the future of this wonderful little town. I know lots of other people who care, and they are also involved to make a difference. I know those that care, and they appreciate my efforts, but can't participate.
 I want a Mayor and City Council that want to be an integral part of the positives of our City. I will vote for those candidates that show me they want to make a difference by their participation in not only their own Council meetings, but also other City and County meetings. I must see how they have been committed in the past, and are still committed in their volunteer efforts in both the City and County. My candidate(s) will represent all citizens of Hiawassee.

All research is done and my selections are ready for this election. I'm hoping that each voter reading this will be confident when making the final choices at the voting booth.

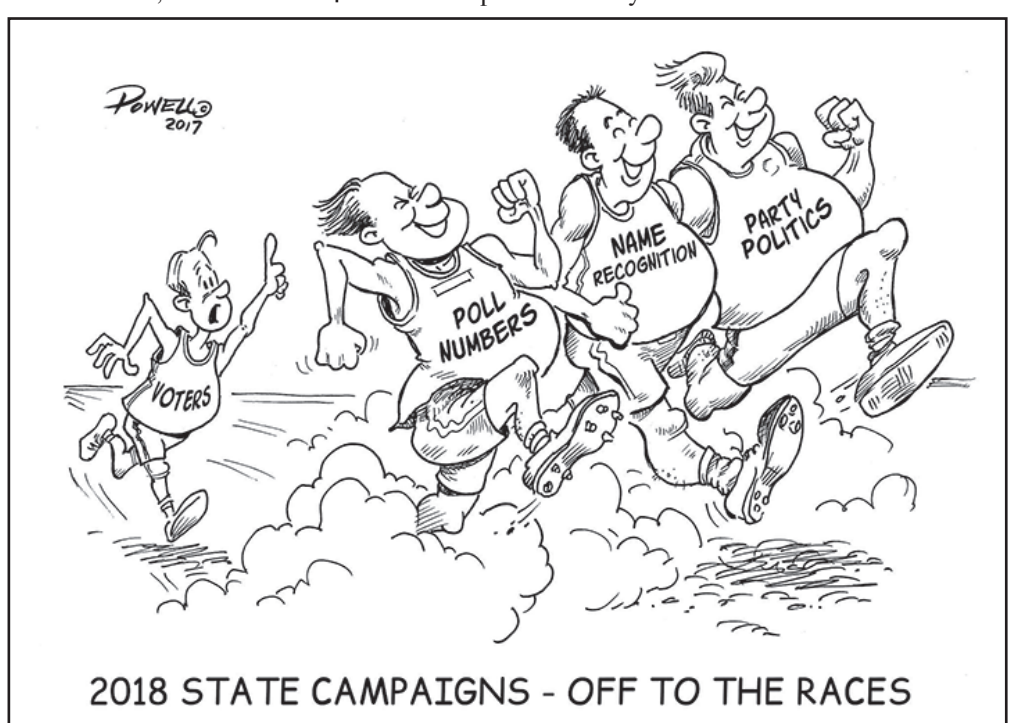
Early voting began October 16 at the Civic Center - 8:30 to 4:30.

LaJean Turner
 City of Hiawassee Resident

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.



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
	Third Monday of each month:	
Hospital Auxiliary	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 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
	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
Democratic Party	Civic Center	6 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
	Fourth Thursday of each month:	
Republican Party	New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
	Last Thursday of each month:	
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 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

Legal Organ of Towns County

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