

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,
This is in response to Lance Jobson's recent diatribe aimed at the *Towns County Herald's* "obsession with all things military, and by your blind support to all recent U.S. wars." It seems that Mr. Jobson is living in the Land of Oz. It has become fashionable these days among progressives to preach peace and tolerance and at the same time bash the military and its values when our country is in the midst of fighting Islamic terrorism on all fronts. Also coming under their indictment is anyone who celebrates military service or holidays like Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

Mr. Jobson seems to be chafed at the idea that American soldiers defend freedom. By the way, this includes freedom of the press. The objection by Mr. Jobson seems to be that because some wars that the United States has fought have been unnecessary, or did not advance liberty, therefore, our modern soldiers cannot be deemed protectors of freedom. The United States is safe because of our professional military and I see no problem with our local newspaper honoring those who fought and died for this country. The recent newspaper's reporting on the memorial of the Iwo Jima monument at Foster Park is a case in point. If this is seen as "cheerleading" by the Herald, then so be it. We should be grateful to those in our military who continue to guard our liberties.

Tim Groza

Dear Editor:
Regarding: TCH editor's note to my letter of March 2, 2016. Conflating the unnecessary sacrifice of U.S. servicemen in illegal wars of aggression based on lies, with protecting my free speech rights, is a false comparison and deceitful journalism. In the first place, all our rights are guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution and if anything, illegal wars of aggression based on lies is the greatest threat to all our freedoms. Including freedom of the press, which is obligated to inform the public against what former Army General and President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned in his Farewell Address, is the "undue influence, whether sought or unsought, of the military-industrial complex."

Lance G. Jobson

Letter to The Editor:

Response to Mr. Lance G. Jobson
Why are you such a dedicated reader if you are so steadfastly opposed, by your own description, of what the *Towns County Herald* stands for? As a dedicated reader, you surely are in agreement with all of the editorial policies or content of the Herald. They do publish my letters, after both sides agree we are accurate, whether or not they are in agreement to the Herald's editorial policies.

Those of us who have served in uniform did so in part to defend that newspaper's right to freedom of the press. It is a just reward that the Herald returns the favor by way of supporting and honoring our military.

If you want a true picture of real Americans just go to the military. They are not war mongers or war lovers. They are peace keepers. The cause of war can usually be found with politicians wanting to rule under their own ideology and not that of "we the people". That we must defend.

If we don't... more correctly, if we had not done so since Columbus, we may be speaking Spanish, French, German, Japanese, Chinese or Russian rather than various versions of good old American English.

You also listed "all recent US wars no matter how unjust or illegal". I agree with unjust part, but what good does that do? Illegal? Now that really is a show stopper. Where can we all go to get that done? Why hasn't some one thought of that before? That is just so profound and simple. We just declare it illegal and the world will be at peace.

You mention religion. Most religions trace their roots back to the Middle East. The home of all those religions has not been at peace for more than a few short years since time began. Does that mean the Middle East is also the birthplace of war? What is the root cause of war? It is not The Herald or its policies.

Someone of fame once said "Walk softly and carry a big stick". I will paraphrase that based on my military training and say Walk tall, carry a big whooping club and yell in a loud voice "We the people."

Despite our personal differences, which we are entitled to under the Constitution, thank you *Towns County Herald*.

John L. Holmes

Taxpayer, Property Owner, Hiawassee Resident
Former US Army Intelligence Special Agent VERY proud of it

Dos and Don'ts of Blueberry Pruning

With spring just around the corner (or at least so says our famous groundhog friend Punxsutawney Phil), it's time to start thinking about our blueberry bushes. Whether it's the joy of eating freshly picked blueberries right off the bush, or the smell of cobbler filling the kitchen, I think it's safe to say that we all look forward to these tasty little treats coming into our lives every year. Even though blueberry bushes are very hardy, it's important not to forget them during the months that they are not blooming and fruiting. Though the plants may be bare, we're coming up on the perfect time to prune, and nothing makes a blueberry bush happier than a good trim!

When selecting which canes to remove, first completely cut away any branches with disease or damage. This will protect the rest of the plant from becoming infected with pathogens. Next, look for canes that are rubbing against each other and remove the older of the two. If both canes are newly sprouted, then it would be best to remove the smaller one and leave the more dominant to continue growing.

If you have a young blueberry bush (1-3 years), not much pruning is required. Different varieties will produce different numbers of canes each year and

therefore have different pruning requirements. However, a good practice for all young blueberry bushes is to prune off the flower buds, which forces the plant to put more effort into vegetative growth. If your blueberry bush is mature, remove one to three of the oldest canes (this should be about 20% of the canopy). Prune the bush down to about 6 feet if it is overgrown, and remove any extra little sprouts that have popped up at the base.

Before you place mulch around your blueberries, rake out an area surrounding the base of the plant that is at least the size of the canopy. This ensures removal of any extra plant matter from the previous season such as leaves and overlooked berries that could be potential sources of fungus and other diseases. Once you are done raking and the area is cleared, it's the perfect time to take a soil test. Blueberries do best in an acidic environment, so it's important to keep an eye on the pH of the soil they are planted in. Once you know what fertilizer is needed, if any, apply the required amount and water thoroughly. Then lay down a 2-3 inch layer of your chosen mulch material. This will help to prevent fungal infections and minimize weed growth.

Some varieties of blueberries, such as Southern High-

The Five Stages of Grief

The five stages of grief are anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. I would be hard pressed to identify just where I am in the process of grieving over our current political situation, but I do know that "acceptance" is not that place. Not yet.

Could it be possible that we will actually be faced with a choice between Trump and Clinton in November? Denial. How could we, as a nation, be so... you may insert an adjective of your choice here. Stupid? Lackadaisical? Cursed? Surely we are better than that.

Anger. Is this the just rewards for a generation of sofa-sitting, Big Mac-eating, TV-watching, self-absorbed vampire thralls who were too distracted by bread and circuses to think, act and vote responsibly? Or maybe we were just too tired from the commute, the overtime, the work and worry of wage slavery. And how many of us stopped voting years ago because we felt that it did not matter? Was there really anything we could have done when most of the sources of information we depend on are owned by the same people who decide who our choices will be to act out the nation's leadership roles? How could we expect enlightened leadership when the institutionalized corruption of

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@brmcc.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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From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee

bush, have more specific pruning requirements. If you have any questions about these, feel free to contact me and I can provide you more information. By tending to your blueberry bushes now, you can rest assured that you will have happy, healthy bushes that will give you tasty rewards to enjoy later in the season!

Upcoming events: UGA Extension High Tunnel Workshop will be on Monday, March 21st from 1 - 3:30 p.m. at the Union County Extension Office (165 Wellborn St, Blairsville). Topics will include best crops to grow in high tunnels, how to apply for one, how to manage insect pests within the tunnel, and a demonstration. Please RSVP by Friday, March 18th to the Union County Extension Office (706) 439-6030. This event counts for 1 hr of credit for applicator license renewal.

Union County Ag Day will be Saturday, March 12th. Events include sprayer calibration workshops (1hr of applicator license renewal credit), livestock exhibits, vendors, and many others.

The Middle Path

By: Don Perry

Washington offers temptations to anyone joining government that Job himself would be hard pressed to resist?

Bargaining. Maybe there is still time for some dark horse candidate to emerge before November. I don't have much to go on in the "bargaining" department.

Depression. With a Trump or another Clinton in the White House I can envision four years of not being able to watch the news and avoiding most websites. Perhaps I can share recipes here in this space instead of trying to make sense of national events.

Acceptance? Not yet, but when and if it is necessary, maybe disconnecting from national events, watching less television and avoiding more websites - maybe that would not be such a bad thing. Maybe the stink of more Clinton scandal or the embarrassment of a White House reality show will be the final straw that motivates a new generation of voters to get involved.

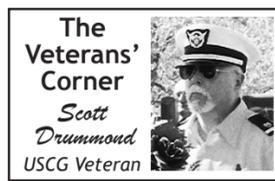
Come to think of it, the success of the Sanders' and even the Trump campaigns is a clear sign that we are angry, and for a while, at least, we are paying attention. Perhaps it will take the election of yet another evil clown to shock us into full awareness.

Mike and Ann Brown

Mike and Ann Brown of the Woodbine and Kirkwood area of Atlanta, GA have known each other since their pre-teen years at Whiteford Ave. Elementary school. Mike and his HS buddy decided to enlist in the USMC after Murphy HS graduation in 1960, "for lack of anything better to do." He went from basic training at Parris Island, SC, and then ITR advanced training and sea school for 6 weeks. From there he was assigned to the "Shangri-La," CVA - 38, an Essex class Carrier out of Mayport. Mike never been living right; as he was soon assigned the job of orderly for the Navy's XO and went on two med cruises. Later he was promoted to Lance Corporal. While still assigned to seagoing duty in 1962, Mike and his lifelong friend, Ann were married. In 1963 Mike was re-assigned to 2nd Marine DIV, 2nd BAT, 6th Marines H and S Company (flamethrowers). The Haitian crisis in 1963 led Mike to the USS Boxer, to Vieques, Puerto Rico, then Port au Prince and finally to R&R in Gitmo. Our Marines also provided security for the nuclear weapons aboard ship.

Meanwhile Ann quit her job with the phone company and in May 27, 1963 their son David was born. August 1963 finds Ann, David and Mike living in a trailer at Camp Geiger, back at Lejeune, where Mike was assigned to MP duty and was discharged in July of 1964.

Moving back to Atlanta, Mike worked a stint at Irvindale Dairy as a retailer prior to beginning a successful career as a debit agent, at Life of Georgia Insurance Company, in 1965 that



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran

lasted for 36.5 years. Ann also worked at the home office and as an agent, while they maintained a home in Douglasville, GA. Ann's family connections in Hiawassee, GA combined with her "burnout" of urban life, traffic, congestion and crime led them here where their adventurous spirit put them in a cold camper on the side of a mountain while they built their home. They are both very proud to be here. Mike and Ann are consummate American souls, quiet spoken, humble, but very strong of character and beliefs.

Their strong beliefs and service to community continues as they both work at our VFW/Legion Thrift store as volunteers. They both also serve as volunteers at our Fairgrounds Concession stands. In addition, Mike is an American Legion member, is a very active member of our North GA Honor Guard, belongs to the Knights of Columbus, and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. Mike and Ann both also volunteer for our bi-weekly VFW "fish-fry" evenings and serve as Eucharist Ministers.

Ann's wishes for Mike to not re-enlist in the Marine Corps, may have been a loss for our USMC, but as they both have proven has become a very positive gain for our North Georgia mountain community. And yes, they'd both do it all over again!

Semper Paratus



Community Calendar

American Legion Post 23 meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 4 PM at VFW Post 7807, Sunnyside Rd., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-8387 for details. We need your support!

VFW Fish Fry April - October on 2nd & 4th Fridays each month from 4:30 - 7. \$10 per plate.

Towns County Water Board Meeting 3rd Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.

Towns County Seniors meet the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 1 p.m.

Towns County Republican Party meets at 6:30 PM the 4th Thursday of each month at the new Senior Center. For more info call 706-994-3919.

Democratic Party of Towns County meets 2nd Thursday of each month at 5 p.m. at the Civic Center. Newcomers welcome. Questions please contact the T.C. Dem's at Townscountydemocrats@gmail.com.

Towns County Planning Commission is held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Courthouse.

Towns County Commissioners meeting is the 3rd Thursday at 5:30 p.m. in the courthouse.

School Board Meeting, 2nd Monday each month at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.

Hiawassee City Council 1st Tuesday of month, 5:30 p.m., at City Hall.

Young Harris City Council, 1st Tuesday of month at 7 p.m., Young Harris City Hall.

The Unicoy Masonic Lodge #259 meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Stephens Lodge #414 F & AM meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in Young Harris. Sat. morning breakfast 2nd Sat. of each month from 8 - 10:30 AM. \$6 adults, \$3 12 & under.

Towns County Board of Elections holds its monthly meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. at the Elections Office (Old Rock Jail).

Towns County Historical Society meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the old Rec Center in Hiawassee at 5:30 p.m.

Bridge Players intermediate level

meets at 12:30 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Village Condos Clubhouse.

Mountain Regional Arts & Crafts Guild meets 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Calvary Chapel on Hwy. 76 in Hiawassee. All local artists and crafters are welcome, for information call 706-896-0932.

Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. Details can be found at www.mcug.org.

Chattahoochee-Nantahala Chapter, Trout Unlimited meets 2nd Thursday of each month at Cadence Bank in Blairsville. 5 p.m. Fly Tying - 7 p.m. General Meeting. Everyone welcome. www.ngatu692.com.

Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call Gary at 706-896-4308 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains.

Alcoholics Anonymous meets every Friday and Sunday evening at 7 at Red Cross Building at 1293 Jack Dayton Circle. 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.

Chatuge Regional Hospital Auxiliary on the 3rd Monday of each month, except the months of July, October and December, in the hospital cafeteria at 1:30 p.m.

The Humane Society Mountain Shelter Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at Cadence Bank in Blairsville.

The Towns County Alzheimer's Support Group meets the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM in the Family Life Center of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church. For more info call Carol at 706-896-6407.

GMREC Garden Tours every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Shooting Creek Basket Weavers meets 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For more info www.shootingcreekbasketweavers.com.

Friendship Community Club meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6 PM at Clubhouse, 1625 Hwy. 76,

706-896-3637.

Goldwing Road Riders meets the 3rd Saturday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse in Hiawassee. We eat at 11 and meeting begins at 12.

Caregiver support group meets 2nd Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m. at Brasstown Manor, located at 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Call 706-896-4285 for more info.

Enchanted Valley Square Dance Club. Dances 2nd & 4th Fridays at Towns Co. Rec. Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch.

Mountain Amateur Radio Club (MARC) meets 6:30 PM the 1st Monday of month at 1298 Jack Dayton Cir. (next to EMS), Hiawassee. For info call Al 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.

The Board of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce meets the second Monday of every month at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office, 1411 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris.

The Quilting Bee at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church in Family Life Center, Room 216. 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10 AM - 3 PM. Bring a sack lunch. For more information call Kathy at 706-835-6721 or Marilyn at 706-897-4367.

Mountain Coin Club meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the North Georgia Tech campus in Blairsville. Guests are welcome. For more info, call 706-379-1488.

Monday morning BINGO at Brasstown Manor every Monday morning at 9:30 a.m. 108 Church St., Hiawassee. Players meet in the Bradford. Questions 706-896-4285.

Towns County Lions Club meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Daniel's Restaurant, 273 Big Sky Drive, Hiawassee.

Free GED and college prep courses offered in Hiawassee via NGTC. Register at Old Recreation Center, 966 Main Street N. 4 - 8 p.m., Tuesday & Thursday. For more info call the local instructor @ 404-428-6758 or NGTC @ 706 754-7717.

Red Cross DAT meets 4th Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Red Cross building at 1298 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris.

Towns County Herald

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