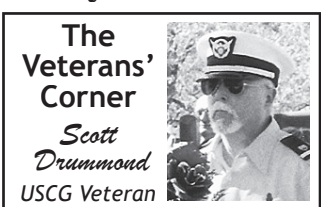


DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Solant Amity

Leave it to our USMC to do as they are ordered, no matter what. A great guy, humble but outgoing, one of "Uncle Sam's Misguided Children", told me about Solant Amity, one of his first adventures with the USMC. Art went on later to sacrifice and suffer the rigors of Vietnam, and today he'd give you the shirt off his back.



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

The 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment at Camp Lejeune's 2nd Marine Division was key to this mission. Half of them were asked to volunteer for a six month goodwill cruise to South America and Africa. Fully aware that there would be no promotions as long as they were a part of this unit they were soon underway, beginning in the fall of 1960, and visited such places as Vieques, Puerto Rico; Trinidad, British West Indies; Recife; Brazil [for Christmas vacation]; Monrovia, Liberia; Bathurst, Gambia; Lome, Togo; Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Recife, Brazil, Point Noire, the western areas of the Congo River basin as well as Matadi some eighty miles inland via the Congo River, all part of what is known today as the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Conakry, Guinea; Accra, Ghana; Freetown, Sierra Leone; Capetown, South Africa. Of course our US Navy provided transportation for this goodwill cruise aboard our USS Graham County - LST 1176, however in January 1961 the 3rd Platoon was required to leave the USS Graham County and board the USS Gearing DD-710 for nearly six weeks of what was called "destroyer duty," and from my reading of first hand USMC history most of this was for "show" to demonstrate our willingness to assist our so-called friends in Capetown, Africa and other exotic locales in case of attacks by pirates, terrorists or other wannabee dictators. In the course of this mission our Marines and sailors of our US Navy were trained in all manner of assault landings, rubber rafts, parachute assaults, and AMTRACS. In one operation, a landing at Capetown, Africa in 1961 the "assault team" landed 300 yards off target, but nevertheless were very impressive to the array of onlookers, including high profile representatives of the UN, USA, and African leaders. The back story for all this was that the Congo River basin was under a full fledged rebellion, overthrowing French rule. How well has this and other politically designed goodwill missions worked within the context of world history? That'll have to be up to each individual to answer. For any readers who desire to learn more, and in detail the exploits of our Marines who followed America's orders during the Solant Amity, please go here: [solantamity.com/index.htm](http://solantamity.com/index.htm), as did I to learn from first hand Marine accounts of what actually occurred there.

Thanks to my friend "Art" known as Pfc. A. J. Sikora of "G" Company - 2nd Platoon Personnel 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines 2nd Marine Division, back then. Without his suggestion I'd have never known of this event.

*Semper Paratus*

## National Wildfire Preparedness Day

March and April are our spring wildfire months here in North Georgia. Most of my articles are about wildfire preparedness in our communities and are intended to make you aware of the wildfire risks all around us and the small things that you can do to prevent one of these life changing events in your backyard. When conditions are right, it only takes one match or a small spark to start an out-of-control fire that can't be stopped before it destroys things that can't be replaced!

Even though we have not had a major wildfire since 2008 or 2009 in our area and no loss of life or homes, history is not on our side and sooner or later a wildfire will strike and it won't be pretty. Imagine what this area would look like with all of these scenic mountains charred and the views turned black.

Who would want to visit or live here after that? Our wildfire education program is working because it was reported recently that a couple of our adjacent north Georgia counties had 57 and 33 wildfires each in 2014, and 11 and 11 each in 2015 and Towns has had only 7 in 2014 and 1 in 2015 and the trend is holding true this year also! Might be luck, but we'll let our Firewise programs take the credit for educating you as to the dangers all around us and you have taken measures to lessen your risks.

The wildfire that we can have one day might not be as spectacular as the destructive fires out west, but if it is just your house or my house it is a tragedy just the same. The most dangerous month for wildfires up here in the mountains historically are November, March, and April, but we can't let our guard down the rest of the year because wildfires don't know which month it is and can happen at any time when the conditions are right.

Wildfire education is a never ending, year round process. Join communities throughout the U.S. on Saturday, May 7, 2016 as the National Fire Protection Association launches its second national Wildfire Community Preparedness Day! Commit a couple of hours, or the entire day, and watch as your actions positively contribute to reducing your community's wildfire risk. Challenge your friends, your family, relatives, or youth organization to develop a project and join others throughout the nation in making big changes for community safety. Your efforts will help raise wildfire awareness, promote collaboration and bring neighbors together to work on projects that can help protect homes, neighborhoods and entire communities from future wildfire risk or current post-fire impacts.

The Towns County Citizens Firewise Coalition has plans for several events on May 7th so come out and participate and see what these dedicated citizens are planning to help make all of safer from an out of control wildfire. On May 14, in White County the White County Fire Rescue Department along with the US Forest Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, White County Citizen's Coalition, White County EMS, White County Sheriff's Department, Red Cross, and Chest/Chatt RC&D will have a live, full scale wildfire/evacuation exercise in Sky Lake Community like the very successful one we had in Towns County on Wildfire Preparedness Day in 2015. These emergency agencies are the ones that stand between you and the danger all around us every day and they will be training under real conditions (no fire) for what could happen in your neighborhood one day. The exercise will be directed and monitored by professional coaches and monitors who have experience in real life wildfire events and will help guide and coach the first responders through the disaster exercise. The exercise will train and test the multi-agency Incident Command System where all of the emergency agencies that serve the citizens must work together to plan and control an emergency situation so when a real event occurs they will know what to do and how to work together.

When people see all sorts of emergency vehicles descending on Sky Lake on that Saturday morning, they need not worry, they can rest assured that when a real emergency happens in their neighborhood the emergency responders will be ready and prepared to protect their life and property.

Once again Towns County has raised the bar high and set an example for others to follow with their most successful live exercise in Lake Forest last May.

Help the local Firewise Citizens Coalition help you by becoming Firewise. Are you Firewise? For more information on Firewise or any of our wildfire education programs, call your local fire station, Georgia Forestry Commission, US Forest Service, or The Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Council.

For more information on Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council and the programs we provide email [www.frank.ccred@gmail.com](mailto:www.frank.ccred@gmail.com).



**RC&D**  
Frank Riley  
Executive Director

## Tent Caterpillars and other pests

Many of you may have noticed large webs forming on tree branches in your yard and along roads. These are not the work of some enormous mystery spider, but a type of insect called tent caterpillars. These critters are the larvae of a type of moth and hatch in early spring. Tent caterpillars produce silk from their salivary glands in their mouths, and they use this silk to create the protective "tents" we see in the trees right now. While these insects typically do not kill the trees in which they live, many people find the nests unsightly and the caterpillars can strip branches of their leaves.

There are two main varieties of tent caterpillars that we will find in our area: the forest tent caterpillar and the eastern tent caterpillar. The nests of these two larvae are very difficult to tell apart as they both tend to inhabit the crotches of trees, but their markings make it easy to distinguish them from each other. The eastern tent caterpillar has a broad white stripe bordered by two thin yellow stripes extending down the length of its back. The forest tent caterpillar looks similar but instead of a stripe, it has white and black spots along its back. Both caterpillars are mostly blue-gray and covered with thin hairs. There is only one generation of these pests every year, so you will only see their nests form in the early spring.

Another common tent-forming pest is the fall webworm which is typically a problem later in the summer. These caterpillars create their silken nests at the ends of branches instead of at branch unions, often killing all of the leaves and new growth within the nest. The larvae have long, thin hairs and have two rows of black spots extending down their backs. Unlike tent caterpillars, webworms have multiple generations throughout the year and can do much more damage.

If you have a tree that has become home to some of these pests, the first course of action is to remove the affected branches. This is much easier to do with fall webworms since their nests are located at the ends of branches. Tent caterpillars can be more difficult as they are sometimes found at major branch unions. Manual removal should always be your first course of action, but if the nest is out of reach or on a major branch that cannot be removed, pesticides may be required. If possible, damage the nest and crush what caterpillars you can before spraying to make the nest as vulnerable as possible to the insecticide. The silk of these tents is so tightly woven that it can be difficult for sprays to penetrate, so opening the webs will help ensure the pesticide comes into contact with the caterpillars. Apply the insecticide after the nest has been compromised. Carbaryl and acephate are two solutions that have been proven effective not only against both varieties of tent caterpillars, but also fall webworm and other pests such as bagworm moths.

Though tent caterpillars and webworms seldom cause enough damage to completely kill a tree, they do feed on the leaves and cause a significant loss of foliage. This can greatly stress a tree and when coupled with adverse conditions, such as drought, can contribute to a tree's decline. By diligently removing and treating nests before these caterpillars mature and repopulate, you can save your trees from unneeded stress and unsightly damage.

If you'd like to learn more about these pests and how to control them, contact our office for a comprehensive publication.

## Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor,

Lake Chatuge is not dead. I have been informed by Towns County residents that one of the candidates for county commission has been saying that Lake Chatuge is dead and insinuating that somehow Sole Commissioner, Bill Kendall has not been doing enough to protect it. I'm not sure what data or information this person is using to back-up his statements, but the data that I have from Tennessee Valley Authority, the NC Department of Environmental Quality (two locations near the dam), and the Coalition's own water quality monitoring program shows improvement in the ecological condition of the lake since the watershed coalition began working toward that goal in 2005. Commissioner Kendall has supported and funded a lengthy list of projects and initiatives to improve the quality of the lake, not the least of which is to provide \$150,000 in SPLOST funds for nutrient reduction technology at the Hiwassee wastewater treatment plant. The City of Hiwassee has also done good work in partnership with the Coalition over the past five years. To sum up the situation: Lake Chatuge is not dead! The lake is perfectly safe for swimming at every location we've ever tested. There are very happy bass fishermen following the many tournaments hosted on the lake and we have not seen any large-scale algae blooms, even in the shallow coves. Is there work left to do for the next commissioner? Absolutely, but Commissioner Kendall has given the lake his full attention. Together with the City, corporate partners like Boundary Waters Marina and The Ridges, members of the watershed coalition and a host of volunteers, we are making a positive difference for water quality in our lake!

Callie D. Moore,  
Executive Director  
Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition

Letter to the Editor,

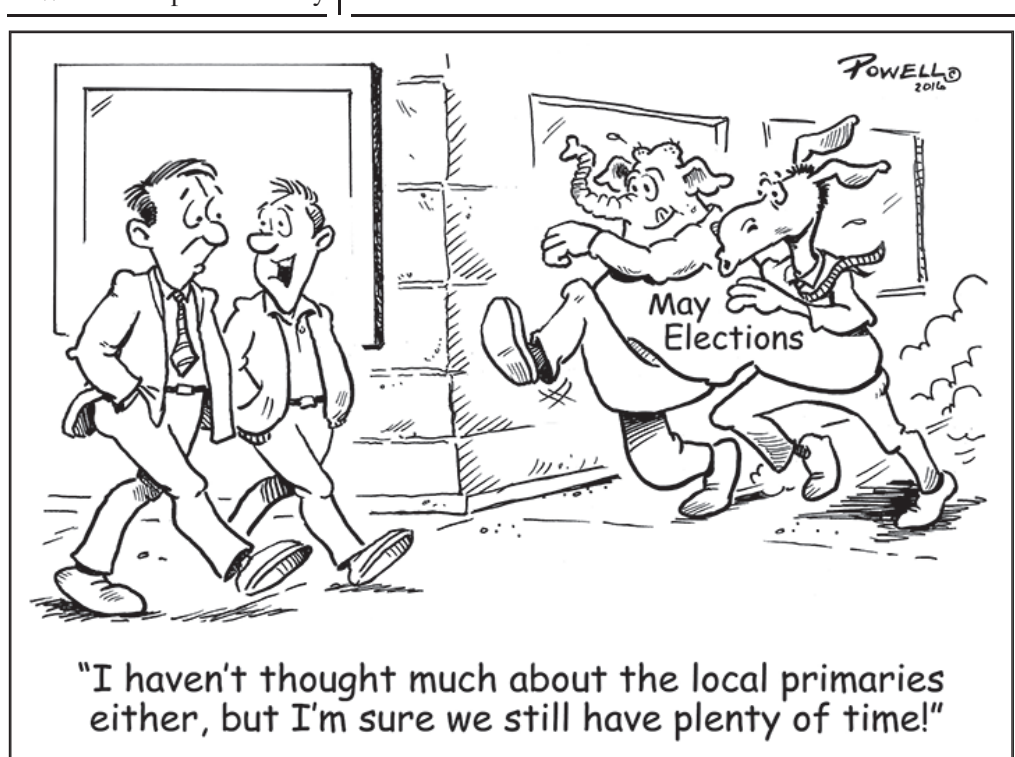
Our group was on Denton Straight on Hwy. 76W, picking up trash for Towns County Clean Sweep Week this past Saturday, April 23, 2016. We started at the old Rec. Center just before Anderson Bridge, the pickup people were in bright colors or orange vests and I trailed them with my flashers on in a white car. I was sitting just off the highway and could not believe the number of people who did not move into the left hand lane when it was clear of traffic and they could see me far in advance. This is just common courtesy, folks, and helps people doing a service for their community feel just a little safer. The speed limit at that end of town is 45 mph until well after the bridge, I would estimate most cars were doing at least 60 before the bridge and made no attempt to slow down when they got close to my car. Denton Straight is not a race track run and we've had enough serious accidents there already, we don't need more.

By the way, there is a Move-Over Law in Georgia that you might not be aware of: The Georgia Move-Over Law requires drivers to move-over one lane when possible if an emergency vehicle with flashing lights is parked on the shoulder of the highway. And if traffic is too heavy to move-over safely, the law requires drivers to slow down below the posted speed limit instead and to be prepared to stop. The Move-Over fine in Georgia is an "attention-getting" five-hundred-dollars. - See more at: [move-over-law](http://move-over-law) on Google.

Joan Crothers

## Have something to sell?

Let the Herald work for you!  
Contact us at 706-896-4454  
Deadline for  
the Towns County Herald  
is Friday by 5 PM



"I haven't thought much about the local primaries either, but I'm sure we still have plenty of time!"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO: Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiwassee, GA 30546. Our email address: [tcherald@windstream.net](mailto: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

Bridge Players Bingo	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
	Brasstown Manor	9:30 am
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
SMART Recovery	Red Cross Building	7 pm
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Bridge Players	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
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	5:30 pm
Young Harris Coun.	YH City Hall	7 pm
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
Stephens Lodge	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm
Lions Club	Daniel's Restaurant	6 pm
Republican Party	New Senior Ctr.	6:30 pm
Square Dance Club	Rec. Center	7 pm
Humane Shelter Bd.	Cadence Bank	5:30 pm

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## Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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