

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Woolly What? Invasive species destroy native species

Another foreign invader is amongst us and does what most foreign invasive species do; destroy our native species that have no natural defenses against them. Most of our destructive pests have come from overseas, mostly China (Chinese Privet) and Japan (Kudzu) just to name a couple of the most common. The list of invasive species is long and the damage these pests have done and the costs to try to control them are monumental. Some of these invasive were brought here with good intentions for erosion control (Kudzu) or wind screens (Privet) and now that they are here; they won't go home and leave us alone, they just take over the habitat or kill our native plants.

One of the most damaging invasive, the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, is a tiny cotton-like critter that destroys our Hemlocks. The Adelgid now covers almost all of the Hemlock's range. Hemlocks, among other things, protect trout streams by providing shade that keeps temperatures cool for trout to thrive. When the shade is gone, the water temperature rises and the trout will soon move to where the water is cooler or die.

The hemlock woolly adelgid is a small aphid-like insect that feeds on several species of hemlock in Asia, its homeland, and in North America where it was introduced. To date, populations of this pest in eastern North American forests have been unmanageable. A fully grown adult of the hemlock woolly adelgid is only about the size of a period on this printed page. However, this insect is easily recognized during most of the year by the presence of a dry, white woolly substance on the young twigs. This "woolly" egg mass resembles the tip of a cotton swab, although somewhat smaller. Adelges tsugae injures eastern and Carolina hemlock by sucking sap and probably also by injecting a toxic saliva while

Executive Director of RC&D

Frank Riley

feeding. This causes the needles on infested branches to desiccate, turn a grayish-green color, and then drop from the tree usually within a few months. Most buds are also killed, so little new growth is produced on infested branches.

Dieback of major limbs usually occurs within two years and progresses from the bottom of the tree upwards, even though the infestation may be evenly distributed throughout the tree. Trees often die within four years, but some survive longer in a severely weakened condition with only a sparse amount of foliage at the very top of the crown. These trees often fall victim to wood-boring insects and diseases and are readily broken and thrown by wind.

There are chemical treatments available to treat hemlocks on a small scale, but the cost is prohibitive for larger areas. There is also research to produce a small predator beetle that will eat the Adelgids. Young Harris College (Dr. Paul Arnold) has developed a beetle rearing facility that for several years has produced Adelgid eating beetles for release on national Forests. Will our Hemlocks become extinct like the mighty Chestnut, probably, except in small areas where the trees can be economically treated and/or the Adelgid runs out of hemlock food and goes away.

Frank M. Riley, Jr, CF is Executive Director - Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council. For more information on the Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council, visit our web site www.chestchattred.org - Phone 706-894-1591, email susan.crcd@gmail.com.

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Humanity possesses the means to consciously alter the future of our species and the power to destroy it as well. With every increase in the power of our technology, the nature of that consciousness becomes of increasing concern. For some years now it has been strongly influenced by fear.

Humans react strongly to fear; some bravely, some desperately. Governments, being composed of people, are subject to the same concerns as the rest of humanity. People in government are the same as you and I, but with better information and more power. When people in power are afraid, just like you and I, they want more control. Every controlling family member, friend or employer you've ever met was afraid of something. Every member of Congress that crosses the aisle to agree on new covert powers for government, is also afraid.

When our country was attacked in the first year of the new millennium, we were all afraid. Fear is a natural response to danger and sometimes a prudent one, if it leads to proper action. Our fear and our prudence are both now written into law and practiced beyond the scope of the law, where those of us who are not in power can rarely see.

In the first decade of the new millennium, we made a huge leap forward in communications technology. The Internet we use to exchange data began to merge with all our forms of electronic communication. The flow of this staggering amount of data funnels through a small number of very large companies, all with government contacts and/or contracts.

Did we really believe that any government of any party could restrain itself for long from using a gift granted by technology, the virtually omniscient ability to monitor almost anyone at will?

There is no doubt that American lives have been saved by intelligence gathered through electronic eavesdropping. There is

little doubt that much of what has been done has been done without advice or consent.

We have some important choices to make, now that we are all on the same page in observing that much of what we have suspected about government's ability and intent to monitor has been confirmed. Where do we go from here? How much privacy are we willing to yield in order to feel safer? How much power will we allow to concentrate in unseen hands? How much do we trust the unseen hand, or even the hands we can see, the ones we return to office year after year?

Whatever we choose, this is a time for open discussion. Governments must have secrets of national security and we have to trust that those secrets are warranted, but ultimately it is the people who must decide how much trust is also warranted.

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"IT'S ON MY MIND.."
Danny H. Parris

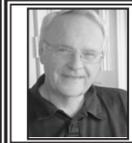
Lock your car doors

This is squash season and it brings back memories of my seminary days. I love squash and I keep my car doors unlocked. Several years ago I had a deacon who would announce to church folks that they had better lock their car doors or someone would put squash in their car. For the most part, squash has gotten a raw deal. There are several kinds, varieties and species of squash and I like it all. Even when I was a young kid, squash was one of my favorite vegetables. No one (especially my wife) would consider me to be a connoisseur of fine food, but I like squash no matter how you prepare it: fried, stewed, boiled or made into bread or prepared as a casserole. My taste for squash almost left me several years ago when I was in seminary pastoring a small rural church between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana. We were invited to eat with a family that was not one of the most blessed families in the church, but we graciously accepted. Their livestock was confined in a small pasture and one end of the fence was connected to the corner of the house where

the kitchen and dining area was located. Of course, they had no air-conditioning and all the windows were opened which allowed the gentle summer breeze that swept over the pasture to flow right across the dinner table. You can imagine the aroma that mixed with the cooked food. I made it fairly well until dessert was served. Lo and behold, the dessert was of all things - squash pudding. My family had never heard of it. With difficulty, I forced my food down, but now I was not sure about squash pudding. Never-the-less, I did not refuse. But the real test came when the host served my squash pudding. It came decorated with a long blond female human hair. Sitting there breathing cow-pasture air, looking at squash pudding garnished with a hair, my teeth welded together, my stomach on the verge of heaving. I thought my seminary days had come to an end. With deep, sincere prayer I did not upchuck but it was a miracle. Here I am now forty plus years later eagerly awaiting my squash harvest. My wife is still a little squeamish about squash and fusses because I plant more seeds than she likes for me too. I look forward to an abundant squash harvest and if you leave your car door unlocked you might find someone has left you a sack of squash.

By the way, I have never tasted squash pudding since my seminary days.

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RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

Dear Dr. Don: At the grocery store the other day I mentioned to my neighbor that my kids are constantly quarreling and I don't know what to do. She told me not to pay any attention, that I can't expect my children to get along because they didn't choose each other for friends. Mom and dad chose each other but the kids just got stuck with their siblings. Somehow that isn't a very satisfying answer. What do you think?

A: I'm with you. I mean, is that a formula that will hold up in the days to come? Is that the unselfish attitude we want to see in our children? Your kids won't usually get to choose their neighbors. Does that give them the right to be rude to the folks next door? They won't generally get to choose their classmates, their cousins, or aunts, or uncles, or teachers, or grandmas, and quite often not even their boss. Would your neighbor suggest that it's ok if her kids are cantankerous with that whole group of people? In fact, given the logic of her statement, the only people they will ever need to be nice to will be the spouse they choose when they themselves are old enough to marry and the few friends they'll pick up along

the way. What a lonely world it would be if we were licensed to be rude to everybody except our spouse. What's the Disney song, "It's a Small, Small World"?

Fact is, of course, it is essential that our kids learn to get along with each other - blood siblings, blended-family siblings, half-siblings, or adopted siblings. The family is our lab. That's where we practice. That's where we can be selfish and still be forgiven. That's where we learn to accept folks we don't agree with, those that want the toy we're playing with. Family is where we can mess up - and still start over.

The world is full of people who are not quite easy to like, but we like them anyway. We treat them with respect anyway. We make room for the irritating things they do anyway. We learn to treat with respect those we choose and those we don't choose. If we only treat kindly a very select group of people, that seems pretty selfish to me. The Good Book says, "Love one another," and I understand that includes everybody. Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net.

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 EMAILED 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.



"A Father's Day card was nice, but I like our memories better!"

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!
Towns County Water Board Meeting 3rd Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.
Mountain Community Seniors meet the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiawassee at 2 p.m.
Towns County Democratic Party meets the 2nd Thursday of every month at 5 PM at the Senior Center.
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.
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 4 p.m., at City Hall.
Young Harris City Council, 1st Tuesday of month at 7 p.m., Young Harris City Hall.
The Hiawassee River Valley Kennel Club meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st Monday of each month at Brother's Restaurant in Murphy. Call Kit: 706-492-5253 or Peggy: 828-835-1082.
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.
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 Senior Center in Hiawassee at 5:30 p.m. Annual dues \$15, PO Box 1182, Hiawassee, GA. We do oral family histories of residents. 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org

Bridge Players intermediate level meets at 12:30 p.m. on Mondays & Fridays at the Towns County Rec Center.
Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at ArtWorks Artisan Centre, Hiawassee. Refreshments at 6 p.m., meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Call us by 706-896-0932 or mtngarts-craftsguild.org.
Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the Goolsby Center at YHC. Q & A at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.
FPL Retirees Breakfast will meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Hole in the Wall Restaurant on the square in Blairsville at 9 a.m.
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 Monday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call John at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains.
Alcoholics Anonymous: 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.
Mothers of Preschoolers meets the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church at 706-896-2469.
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.
Mountain Magic Table Tennis Club meets 3 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Jerry (828) 837-7658.
Prostate Cancer Support Group meets the 3rd Monday of every month from 5-6 PM in the Cancer Treatment Center Auditorium in Blairsville. For more info call Steve 706-896-1064.
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.
The Appalachian Shrine Club meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Allegheny Lodge in Blairsville. For more info call William 706-994-6177.
Georgia Mountain Writers Club meets at St. Francis of Assisi Church the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 AM.
GMREC Garden Tours every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Shooting Creek Basket Weavers meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For more info www.shootingcreek-basketweavers.com.
Friendship Community Club meets the 3rd Thursday of each 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.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meets every Wednesday evenings at 7 PM at the Red Cross building (up the hill from the chamber office on Jack Dayton Circle).
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 Hiawassee Senior Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch. Call 706-379-2191.
Brasstown Woodturners Guild meets 1st Saturday of month at 9:30 AM in HHS shop. For more info call J. C. at 706-896-5711.
VFW Post #7807 will be hosting a fish fry they 2nd & 4th Fridays of each month April - October. \$9. all you can eat from 4:30 - 7 PM.
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.

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