

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

America attacked

No I'm not referring to the recent attacks from within by those who hate us all. I'm not even referencing 9/11/2001. Not well known, America was attacked during WW II, some very interesting history, of which a fine Towns County native, U.S. Army Veteran and a good friend to everyone, asked me about several weeks ago. J.C. Berrong, after another of his long hard days of volunteering at our VFW Thrift Store, was wanted to know if I had ever heard of the attacks by the Japanese in Oregon. My bad! I was unaware of this history.

The Veterans' Corner

Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



Ellwood Oil Field outside Santa Barbara was attacked by Japanese submarine I-17 that had sneaked into a channel near the oil storage facility on 3 February 1942. Their shelling did only minor damage but the psychological impact of America being attacked within our homeland resulted in the "Battle of Los Angeles" and artillery barrages against a Japanese "invasion" which never came to be.

However the singular attack on a mainland military base during WW II was on the Oregon coastline. Fort Stevens was an old Army base left over from our Civil War, located near the Columbia River. Japanese submarine I-25 followed our fishing boats up the river, surfaced and shelled our Fort on 21 June 1942 at about midnight. The Fort's savvy CO, realizing the ineffectiveness of the Japanese attack which only destroyed a close by baseball field, ordered our men to stand down, do not return fire with our artillery, as he was fully aware of our muzzle flashes which would enable the Japs to zero in on our Fort more accurately. The Japs then slinked away, the same way they came in. Not for long as I-25 surfaced again in September 1942 and launched a Yokosuka E14Y floatplane armed with firebombs intending on starting a massive forest fire near Brookings, Oregon. But due to very light winds and our excellent response by firefighters, that attempt was also a failure. There was a second failed attempt that September, using the same tactics.

Japanese fire balloons called "Fugos", over 9,000 of them were launched from Japan, each loaded with 50 pounds of anti-personal and incendiary bombs. Unmanned and "flying" at 30,000 feet, about 350 of the bombs made it across the Pacific with only one which killed a pregnant lady and her five children in Oregon. Their deaths are officially classified as the only combat deaths occurring on U.S. soil during WW II. Our valiant young men in their flying machines shot down many of these floating bombs as they spotted them over the Pacific or on our West Coast. From 1944-1945 these devices were spotted in more than fifteen states including Michigan and Iowa.

Typical of American love and spirit, after Nobuo Fujita, the pilot of the floatplane made several goodwill visits to Brookings during the 1960s, he was made an honorary citizen of Brookings upon his death in 1997.

Thanks to J.C.! We love you!
Semper Paratus

USDA Farming Forecasts being Realized across the U.S.

The following is an article on the current state of farmers and our food supply. We're already halfway through 2016 now, and unfortunately the predictions for a tough farm income year are being realized.

RC&D
Frank Riley
Executive Director



In the first quarter of 2016, the Kansas City Fed surveyed bankers and found that 86% of the bankers reported lower farm income than a year ago. In addition, farmers with carryover debt increased from 18% of loans to 29% of loans in the first quarter of 2016. "Even though agriculture and energy commodity prices have increased recently, they remain well below last year's prices and from their peak levels in 2011.

Over the past 12 months, farm prices are down by 9.5%, grain prices are off by 4% and livestock are down by 15% percent". Also while the farmland and ranchland-price index for June climbed to 32.3 from April's 28.4, it is still below "growth neutral" range and has been for the last 31 months.

Predictions about a decline surfaced late last year, with USDA warning farmers in the Corn Belt to "brace for a rough 2016" as farm incomes were forecast to drop for the third straight year. The agency also predicted a "prolonged downturn in corn and soybean prices" which has been realized and has deeply affected farm income in the Midwest. In Kansas, for example, KSNW news reported that, "the average income dropped from a 5-year average of \$120,000 to just over \$4,500—levels that haven't been seen since the 1980s."

Countrywide, when the figures are finally tallied for 2016, net cash farm income is expected to fall by 2.5 percent in 2016, while net farm income is forecast to decline by 3 percent. Translated into dollars and cents, USDA projected the average household farm income this year to be \$17,769—up slightly from \$17,279 last year—but still down sharply from \$28,687 just two years ago. KSN Ag experts say that, "If this situation were to continue for many years, it would remove more and more farmers from the business who would not be able to stay in the business and we would see food prices increase because that food would have to be imported to other countries."

One bright piece of news—for 2016, USDA forecasted a decline in the cost of expenses and anticipated that the decrease will outweigh expected increases in spending on hired labor, interest, and property taxes/fees. USDA believes that will help "alleviate, but not completely offset, the drop in cash receipts, and ultimately lead to tighter margins."

Michael Hein, vice president of Liberty Trust and Savings in Durant, Iowa, hopes USDA's predictions are correct. From his vantage point, the trajectory of 2016 crop receipts says otherwise. Hein worries that many producers simply "won't have the cash that once came from higher corn and soybean prices to pay for seed, fertilizer, land rents and other inputs that have not fallen at the same rate compared to commodities." As for land rents, a June 15, 2016 broadcast on AgDay reported that while increased trade is expected to help boost net farm income, "today, farmers who expanded production by renting more ground are having a hard time repaying loans." AgDay cites a Bloomberg report, which detailed how on-farm profits have sunk to a 14-year low, and rents have barely budged.

As reported by Growing America recently, though, more and more producers are applying for direct operating loans from Farm Services Agency (FSA); available funds will likely run out almost three months ahead of the scheduled October 1st fiscal year replenishment. Estimates point to 39 percent of U.S. farm renting ground, which could signal more consolidation to come as farms struggle to repay loans.

All these factors are tending to make life especially difficult for young farmers seeking loans to support their new enterprises. From 2014 to 2015, loans to beginning farmers increased seven points. But with the till close to empty, that money may not be available much longer for this fiscal year.

KSN's Jenkinson said that farmers know they can face tough times, and that things work in a cyclical manner. He points to two factors for causing this year's downturn in Kansas and other ag-centric states. "Number one is a big surplus of grain which we have, we've had good crops, number 2 is this very strong dollar, we are not competitive in the global market," said Jenkinson. "We've been through tough times before, and we will go through tough times again. How soon we will recover from this is still very uncertain."

"If we can break even, pay our bills and make our payments, I'd say we're going to be lucky," said one farmer, who has been farming full time since 1999. "We've never seen a downturn like this."

When the final numbers are in at the end of 2016, we will see if USDA forecasts really came to pass. Here's hoping they don't and everyone reading this article survives to farm another year.

For more information on Ag forecasts, contact Frank Riley, Executive Director Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council: info.ccred@gmail.com.

Ticks!

Though finding insects on your ornamental plants and vegetables is certainly frustrating, there are few things more unsettling than finding a tick feeding on your body! Because they feed on animals multiple times throughout their lives, they are also dangerous vectors of disease as they transfer parasites from one animal to another. In these hot and humid summer months, it is important to protect yourself and your animals against tick bites and prevent the spread of disease.

UGA extension
From the Ground Up
Melissa Mattee



Each stage during a tick's development needs to have a blood meal in order to mature. Adult males mate with female ticks while the females engorge on a blood meal. Shortly after, females drop off the host, and then they will lay a clutch of about 6000 eggs a week later. Depending on the weather, the eggs will hatch within several weeks, releasing six legged larvae known as "seed ticks." Seed ticks will climb up a blade of grass and wait for their first host to walk through the area. They can sense the presence of animals they feed on by smelling the carbon dioxide the animals exhale. Once a host passes through, the tick will latch on and begin gorging itself on the animal's blood. When its stomach is fully extended, the tick will drop off, digest its meal, and shed its skin to become an eight legged nymph that more closely resembles the adults. Seed ticks typically prefer to feed on small hosts such as rodents, but adult ticks will feed on larger animals such as deer and humans.

The three main ticks in Georgia have distinctive appearances that can help distinguish them from each other. The Lone Star tick got its name from the white spot found on the back of the females. Their mouthparts are also much longer than those of other ticks. Lone Stars feed on a wide variety of animals such as humans, horses, deer, dogs, birds and rodents. The American dog tick has short mouthparts that are barely visible. Both males and females have a white mottled pattern on their backs. Though they prefer to feed on dogs, dog ticks will feed on larger animals. However, the ticks only feed on humans once they become adults. The black-legged tick is smaller than the other ticks and has no white markings. Like the Lone Star tick, the black-legged takes a wide variety of hosts as it develops.

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) and Lyme Disease are the two most dangerous diseases transmitted by ticks in Georgia. RMSF is caused by infectious bacteria and the symptoms include sudden chills, fever, headache, and blood-shot eyes. This disease gets its name from the spotted rash it causes, which starts at the hands and feet and spreads throughout the body. Lyme Disease is also caused by bacteria the tick transfers from host to host through its mouthparts. This disease sometimes causes a rash made up of several rings that looks like a target. Other symptoms include joint pain and flu like symptoms. Both RMSF and Lyme disease can be effectively managed using antibiotics.

The best way to prevent tick bites and tick-borne diseases is to avoid the places they live: tall, grassy areas with plenty of humidity. However, if you need to enter these areas, make sure to tuck your pants into your socks and cover as much skin as possible. Also, spray yourself with DEET and your clothes with permethrin. Finally, check yourself for ticks as often as possible and remove any that have attached immediately, because the longer the tick stays attached, the greater the chance of disease transmission.

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:

We need animal control and we need it bad! Union County has an awesome one, but they can't come over here in Towns County to do any thing. And believe me there are issues that need to be resolved regarding loose and stray animals as well as unmanageable dogs and their owners as well.

I don't know what issues or steps it would take to establish this in our county, but some thing needs to be done and done quickly! Thank you,

Have a blessed day!

Delores Barnes

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.

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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
Free GED prep.	Old Rec. Center	4 pm
Bridge Players	Village Condos Clubhouse	12:30 pm
Alcoholics Anon.	Red Cross Building	7 pm
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Hospital Auxiliary	Cafeteria	1:30 pm
Water Board	Water Office	6 pm
YH Plan Comm.	YH City Hall	5 pm
Quilting Bee	McConnell Church	10 am
MOAA	Call Jack @ 828-321-2896	
Co. Comm. Mtg	Courthouse	5:30 pm
Friendship Comm.	Clubhouse	6 pm
Goldwing Riders	Daniel's Restaurant	11 am
Red Cross DAT	1298 Jack Dayton Cir.	5:30 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

Towns County Herald

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