

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Vietnam: Lost Plane Not Recovered

More history, remembrance, honor for those we cannot know who gave their lives for Freedom and Liberty. (Submitted and re-

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



quested by Wayne Mason who Honorably served in our U.S. Army after being drafted and had to sacrifice his young years serving America.

Per the 1954 Geneva Accords Vietnam was virtually cut in half, the Communist North and South Vietnam being western aligned. October 18, 1965 an ICSC (International Commission for Supervision and Control) Boeing 307 Stratoliner called F-BELV, making a regular flight from Saigon to Hanoi with two stops en route never arrived at it's destination. We were left with what happened and why? Did they crash into a mountain or were they shot down by already warring forces? Mr. Stephen Wynn spent man years investigating and researching as to what happened and why no one seemed to have any interest in recovering this flight for peace and staffed with men from several nations with the common interest of trying to prevent a hot war in Vietnam. He wonders if any of the passengers were actually undercover agents from our CIA? However in the big picture it certainly appears that the expansion and prevailing heat of that Southeastern War totally overshadowed the lack of interest in this flight that went missing for 55 years. These folks who lost their lives were ostensibly non-combatants and were there to support the prevailing Geneva Accords, which as we know today the Communist ideologues never intended to do so. An in my humble opinion Communists never will abide by methodologies to provide Freedom and Liberty, no matter how they self-identify!

Mr. Stephen Wynn, a Canadian by birth, penned a book, "MYSTERY OF MISSING FLIGHT F-BELV" spending 43 years in that effort. He was 18 years old when his Mom told him of her half-brother, James Sylvester Byrne who was a Canadian Soldier, a non-combatant aboard F-BELV and lost his life in the name of Freedom and Liberty. Mr. Byrne was designated as a member of the ICSC observation team when they all died on October 18, 1965. Stephen Wynn requested and was sent an official report from Canada's "Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade", dated January 11, 1996 stating that these men died in the Indo-China Conflict. Note: they were NOT militarily involved! Our own U.S. Embassy in Ottawa was also copied with this document. For 30 years the crash sight was never located and basically ignored until January, 2002 when Ottawa became interested in pursuing answers. Thailand and Laos were asked for assistance in searching for whatever remained of the flight and it's location. With our Canadian allies to the north offering financial aid for the search, no one other than Laotians were to search from only December 15, through December 30, 1998. An aircraft crash sight was recovered but officially reported as NOT being F-BELV! A similar request was submitted to the government of Vietnam and we know who and what was controlling them at that time. It is shameful that an unarmed flight for peace was lost with only two plausible explanations. One being that the pilots were in error or the plane was in disrepair. Not likely as the plane was recorded as being in excellent shape, great flying weather had a very experienced flight crew in charge. The most likely explanation is that they were shot down by one of several warring parties who simply did not care.

I would highly recommend obtaining and reading Stephen Wynn's accord, "MYSTERY OF MISSING FLIGHT F-BELV." We'll never know them all, but many gave their lives for us, the entire world and what America stands for.

-Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Where are the apologies?

Dear Editor,

It looks like COVID originated in a lab. Two weeks to find the curve didn't work. Masks did not stop infection. Lockdowns didn't work. The mRNA shots did not stop infection, transmission, hospitalization or death. Mandates were found unconstitutional. Excess deaths are on the rise and the negative consequences of pharma-sponsored approaches will continue to rear their ugly head as substance abuse, suicide, obesity, crime and child neglect continue to skyrocket.

All of this "misinformation" and "conspiracy theory" has slowly become accepted despite an all-out attack on freedom of speech in the guise of protecting the community.

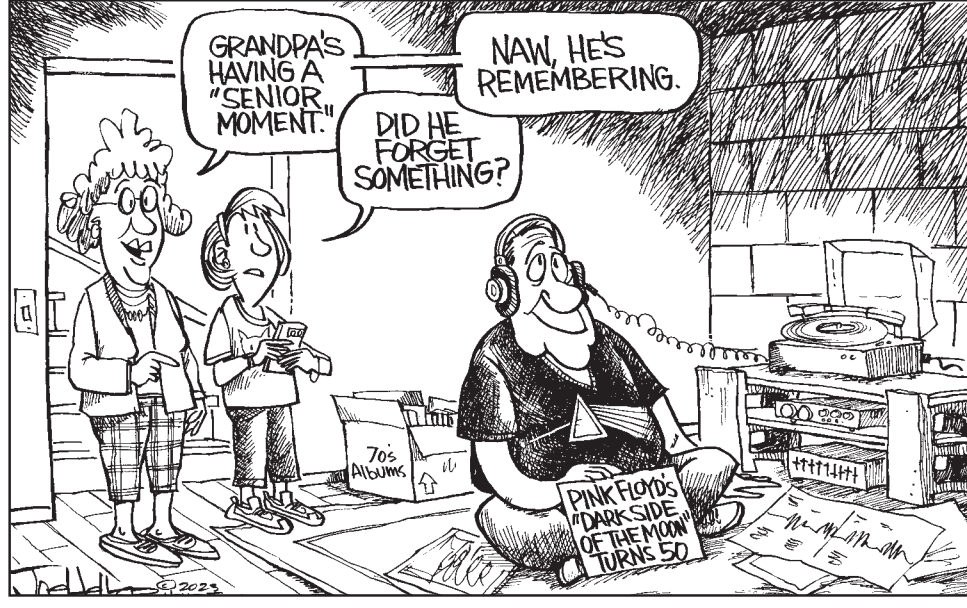
Meanwhile we minted more billionaires than ever, on top of hundreds (thousands?) of multimillionaire "public servants" that brought us to \$32 trillion in debt. Privatize the gains and socialize the losses.

When will they apologize to my children, my family and my small business?

Josh Murauskas and Family

Towns County Community Calendar

First Monday of each month: School Board... HS/MS Media Center	6:45 pm
Every Tuesday: Storytime for Children... TC Library	10:30 am
First Tuesday of each month: Hiaw. City Council... City Hall YH City Council... YH City Hall	6 pm 7 pm
Second Tuesday of each month: Conventions & Visitors Board... Civic Center	8 am
Second Wednesday of each month: Board of Elections... Elections Office	4 pm
Third Monday of each month: Planning Commission... Temporary Courthouse	6 pm
Third Tuesday of each month: Commissioner's Mtg... Courthouse City of Young Harris Planning Commission... Meeting Room in City Hall Water Board... Water Office	5:30 pm 5 pm 6 pm



Between Hiraeth and vgatehohv

"Hiraeth" is a difficult word to say unless you speak Welsh, and there is no direct translation. Lily Crossley-Baxter described it as "A blend of homesickness, nostalgia and longing... a pull on the heart that conveys a distinct feeling of missing something irretrievably lost."

I can't say the word properly, but there are times when it resonates with some fragment of my DNA that remembers hearing it. The Cherokee word, "vgatehohv," may be a good approximation of the sentiment, though no single word can describe the longing and loss that must surely be epigenetic for Native Americans.

It's in the stories our elders told us, like the memory I carry from my father of a spring deep in the woods when he was a child. The trees are old and their massive canopies darken the moist and loamy duff of the forest floor. Filtered sunlight reflects from the pool, and something else. The water glistens and shimmers. The pool is lined with amethysts, so many that the entire bottom is covered, tiled with lavender, violet and purple.

The decoration serves no practical purpose. It is seen only by a rare traveler on foot or horseback. This thing of beauty is a random act of kindness, of caring, contributed anonymously. The pool has been respected by the community for years, maintained by passing travelers. When my uncle comes home one day with an amethyst in his pocket, it becomes an object lesson. He is vigorously encouraged to hike back to the pool and return the stone to exactly where he found it, and a stinging sensation beneath the seat of his pants reminds him to stay on task.

Slowly, and then all at once, something changes in the characters of the people who live around the pool, and the amethysts disappear. The pool is long gone now. The spring went underground when the old growth trees were logged and silt washed into the cove. It is lost in time with no living memory to reveal it's location or the place where the gems were found.

Hiraeth rises from more recent memories. There was a rock outcropping in a valley where I would hike with my telescope. An almost 360 degree circle of sky revealed the rings of Saturn and the moons of Jupiter on many a chilly night with a heavy coat and something warm in the thermos. The planets are obscured now by the glare of a streetlight which guards a gate where no one lives.

In a hidden cove nearby there was an ancient maple tree that sheltered a springhead. The tree was deeply rooted on its north side where the ground rose to a form a hillock. On the south side, sturdy arms and legs embraced an opening where the sweetest water gushed out, seemingly from the bottom of the tree itself, even in dry years. The flow was so strong that you could hear the water long before you saw it, and when you did see it, it was as if the tree was pulling water from the blue sky and gifting it to the thirsty ground, or a thirsty lad who happened by hunting rabbits.

One day a big man acquired the property. He was small of stature but large of vision and self esteem. He didn't see a rare gift of clean water, the roots that held the ground, or the salamanders that lived in the pool. He saw a lot drawn on a plat and a need to pay the bank, which would one day have his money and his land. He cut the trees, buried the springs, flattened the hillocks and raped the ground with culverts. The dozers spread the clay and smoothed the ground flat, because people move to the mountains to mow grass rather than rake leaves.

Yes, there are laws against such as this, and the State of Georgia took some more of his money, but it was probably more of an annoyance than a penalty, just another cost of doing business. Too late for the trout stream fed by the buried springs, some silt fence was installed like a band aid on a compound fracture. It's been fifteen years, and mud still seeps into the creek like the purulent from an infected wound. Nature is doing all it can to heal it, and will manage just fine if left alone to do the job.

We are doing a better job of taking care of our lands than we did before. The county is proactive now in managing violations, and the state is keen to enforce the common sense regulations that are in place, though woefully understaffed to follow up on complaints. While builders don't seem to mind paying the fines, no one wants a trip to Cartersville to be recertified for land disturbing activities.

Hiraeth visited me the other day when another piece of earth moving equipment rumbled over the mountain nearby. This will be the fourth house to be built on ground that held onto its secrets since arrowheads were the cutting edge of technology. Three different builders came and went in recent years, and all three violated regulations. Some were caught and corrected; some were not. One builder piled debris on a neighbors land. One tore up another neighbors driveway loading and unloading equipment. One builder allowed mud to run into a springhead and had to interrupt his schedule for a trip to Cartersville to be recertified.

I personally know builders who go out of their way to avoid damaging land or disrespecting neighbors. I know others who resent to the core of their being any interference, especially from the government, in their right to make a living, as that, and their personal wisdom, outweighs environmental science. When it comes right down to it, we're all big men, or we want to be.

"Try not to scowl," Tracey said to me when we we passed a future neighbor on the road. She was right, of course. We've been blessed with good neighbors. If they don't come here already drawn by something precious, fragile and irreplaceable, they are soon charmed by it, changed by it. I know that gratitude is the cure for my scowl, and that will return soon enough. Outside my window raindrops are clinging to budding trees, each one as precious as any amethyst. Jonquils are blooming, and the old maple tree is red in anticipation of the spring. Spring reminds me that somewhere between hiraeth and vgatehohv, there is hope.

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry
worldoutsidethebox.com

Raised Beds

This week I would like to talk about raised beds. There are many different ways to make raised beds. So I'll go through different types of materials that you can use and some basic principles to use when building your raised beds. I'll also talk about situations where I like raised beds over growing in the soil and vice versa.

UGA extension
 Watching and Working
 Jacob Williams



Raised beds are a great tool to use if you have don't have a lot of sunlight in your yard. Plants grown in raised beds will still need full sun, but if you only have a small area of your yard that has full sun, a raised bed is a good way to maximize that. If you have slopes that are too steep to plant, leveling out a small area and putting in a raised bed in that spot is another good idea. Oftentimes, the best soil in Towns and Union is found in river bottoms. If you don't the good fortune of putting your garden in one of those places, growing in raised bed will be much easier than fighting with heavy clay soils. Raised beds are also going to have fewer weed issues, and less soil compaction. You can build elevated raised beds to that you don't need to do as much bending down.

Dimensions for a raised bed depend on the materials that you are using. Generally, I like raised beds that aren't more than 4 feet across. If you have really long arms you can make them wider. I also like beds that are about 8 feet long. If you make long beds, it's just more difficult to walk around them, especially if you've put a bunch of raised beds next to each other. 10 inches height will be enough depth for most vegetables. Potatoes will need more depth. The deeper you make the raised bed the more material you will need to fill it. Soil to fill raised beds costs money, so don't make them needlessly deep. If you have tall crops planted in your raised beds they can shade out other crops, so orient them in a north-south direction. You want to the raised bed to be completely level. To do this you may need to dig out the place where you're putting it.

Let's move on to materials that you can use. There are several different types of lumber. Cedar is very good, because it does not rot quickly. However, it is very expensive. Cypress is often easier to get than cedar. Oak and other hardwoods are difficult to find in sufficient quantities, and are only a little more rot resistant than pine. Pine is the most readily available and cheapest lumber. It will rot, but I've seen where you can get several years of use out of pine. An alternative to lumber is cement blocks, brick, concrete, or stone. If you are going to build the wall high, you would need some mortar to keep the walls from falling.

The research that is available says that pressure treated wood is safe to use for food production. Arsenic is no longer used to pressure treat wood, and has not been used since 2005. Wood treated with creosote should not be used. Railroad ties and utility poles are treated with creosote.

If you have questions about building your own raised beds contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity began in 1976 on a small community farm in Southern GA. This grassroots organization spread its nonprofit work into now being located in all 50 states and 70 countries internationally. Habitat's primary mission is to create a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Providing stability and self-reliance to better the lives of families and children, the mission is proving difficult.

Habitat Happenings
 Executive Director
 Charlotte Randall



After all, housing is a human right. Children living in stable, affordable home environments are more likely to thrive in school and succeed in greater opportunities in their futures. Cost-burdened families experience greater stress about food security, healthcare, and other environmental impacts on locals.

What is affordable housing, and what does it look like? Affordable housing is considered 30% of a household's total income. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), 70% of extremely low-income families spend 50% of their income on housing.

The US is showing a shortage of 7 million affordable homes for the 10.8 million low-income families in the country. What's more frightening is, according to NLIHC, there is no single state or county where a renter working a full-time minimum wage job can afford a 2-bedroom apartment. Homeownership and affordable housing are officially unattainable.

Many factors have come into play in creating this crisis. The pandemic accelerated our already local housing shortage. With the increased ability to work remotely, and the need to escape crowded cities, our local communities have seen a drastic flight to rural areas such as ours.

Land use regulation and cost key factors through supply and demand have made navigating and creating affordable housing a daunting task for many investors and, therefore, not considered a well-worthy investment. Minimum lot size regulations and home size restrictions also play into this crisis.

What is the solution to the affordable housing crisis? Advocating for higher density units? We certainly don't want a high-rise, market-rate, concrete complex building polluting our beautiful mountain landscape.

More than ever in history, we need to think outside the box. However, banks and local municipalities frown upon the tiny home concept.

Larry Singleton is an architectural designer who has become an admirable figure in affordable housing. His company, Singleton Designs LLC, is working with Habitat for Humanity affiliates across Georgia to help solve this problem.

Larry's designs, which he has coined the term 'Pocket Neighborhoods', are a cluster of 'smart sized homes', centered around a common courtyard. These 350-1000 sq ft cottages are designed as quality, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing homes. Check out his designs at Singleton Designs LLC on Facebook.

Supporting Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties LLC is a crucial and vital way to answer our need to build affordable housing within our local communities. Funds raised through our local Habitat chapter will help create and shape ways to solve our housing crisis locally. After all, housing is a human right, and we owe it to humanity to provide the basic needs for our fellow man.

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