

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Long Overdue Appreciation

This past Monday, March 29 how many of us failed to recognize that 48 years ago on this day in 1973, the Vietnam War was officially halted? Our nation's sacrifice and suffering in order to stop the influx of Communism into Vietnam was tremendous and our great men and women of our military forces who served America honorably as well as serving the world for freedom were never treated with the respect and honor they deserve! That statement never fails to bring tears to my eyes. My brothers and sisters of ALL branches of our military during that era, no matter what their jobs were; no matter what rank; no matter where they served are deserving of honor, pride, respect, and adoration by each and every citizen of our United States of America. Don't ever forget those 58, 272+ who never again sat foot on our homeland's soil. Many of them never wanted any part of this politically inept war. However unlike those who ran away they did their duty for their country. Honor! Honor that many politicians who often create wars and then abandon those who serve do not deserve!



The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran

In this effort, on December 26, 2016 the Vietnam Veterans Day Coalition of States Council presented a letter to President elect Donald Trump, (a very much needed non-politician) describing and outlining the Vietnam War, it's timeline and requesting that he and our 115th Congress to sign into law the Vietnam War Veterans Day as March 29. On March 28, 2017, President Trump signed the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 into law. This day, decades overdue to honor our Honorably Discharged Veterans who served during those tumultuous years was chosen because March 29, 1973 Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) was officially disbanded and our last combat troops came home. That war effort era official termination date is 1975. For the record, our combat troops in country won each and every battle in Vietnam, another fact that is sorely ignored. Our hardworking friend and Marine Vietnam combatant, Tom Arline possesses the book, a complete documentation of that historical FACT.

In reality we Americans ought to honor our Veterans of all ages and services every day of our lives. Most all Vietnam era Veterans are of the 70 PLUS age bracket. And as fate would have it, those who served in country and were exposed to Agent Orange may very well have serious health problems due to exposure to that toxin. As such they may be leaving us and their families at a faster rate than our WWII brothers and sisters.

Take that into account and never miss a chance to give them a smile, helping hand, or even a hug and a hearty "THANK YOU"! God never forgets them and neither should we. -Semper Paratus

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Letters to The Editor

Yes, Virginia, there is a climate hoax

Dear Editor,
The letter writer of March 17th claims that he has been studying data for the past 40 years and offers some observations with respect to climate change—that it is real. However, he never reveals any data sources to support his conclusion, while accusing a previous writer of neglecting to include his sources. But we are told to follow the science, right? So let's follow the science, shall we. In a 2019 scientific study, researchers at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research demonstrated that "current CO2 levels of 410 parts per million (ppm) were last seen on earth three million years ago." This study was conducted according to the most detailed reconstruction of the earth's climate.

So let me get this straight, three million years ago, CO2 levels on earth were the same as they are today—409.8 ppm. And guess what? Three million years ago people were not driving cars, heating and air-conditioning their homes, building coal-fired power stations, etc. And for decades now we have been told by the "scientists" that we were contributing to the warming of the earth—we were the problem. Au contraire. That's the "big lie" we have been fed ever since Al Gore changed climate alarmism from global cooling to global warming, and then to climate change.

So even if the scientific studies debunk the man-made global warming theory, the alarmists are still sticking with their hoax. Remember the words of wisdom from Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez when she told us in 2019 that "the world is going to end in 12 years if we don't address climate change." What a hoot.
Tim Groza

Get U.S. Troops Out

Dear Editor,
When U.S. President George W. Bush ordered the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan nearly two decades ago, he said, "The oppressed people of Afghanistan will know the generosity of America and our allies."
Since then, over 50,000 bombs have been dropped on this small country. Over 100,000 Afghans have died. Millions more have been injured, many permanently disabled. At least 26,000 children are dead or maimed. Is this American generosity?
Every president since Bush has promised peace, yet they have continued to drop thousands of bombs—bombs manufactured in Garland, Texas in a General Dynamics factory for multi-billion \$ profits to the weapons company paid for by our tax dollars. Meanwhile, thousands of U.S. troops remain in Afghanistan and six costly U.S. bases occupy the Afghan people's land causing death and destruction.
U.S. foreign policy has been beholden to Wall Street and Western corporations.
U.S. President Joe Biden promised an end to the "forever wars" during his campaign. The peace deal signed by the Trump administration with the Taliban calling for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan by May 1, 2021, is an important first step. In his first news conference, Biden said "it would be hard to meet the May 1, deadline." We in the United States need to demand Biden hold to this agreement and take this first step. We need to demand an end to the U.S. government's wars on oppressed people in Afghanistan and around the world.
Lance Jobson

It is Christ that died, ...that is risen again,
who is even at the right hand of God,
who also makes intercession for us.

Rom 8:34



Prepare Your Home for Wildfire

I know it is raining again and we think there is no chance of anything burning, but events in a short dry spell a couple of weeks ago should have been a wake-up call of how quick our woods can go from too wet to burn to "OH My Goodness call 911, my little leaf pile fire that I left unattended for a few minutes is racing toward my shed!" It can happen before you can turn around and by then it is too late to try to stop it.

We had a couple of wildfires in Towns County a few weeks ago both caused by debris burning at the wrong time and without proper equipment and NO PERMIT. This in not rocket science, you just do not burn when the conditions are unsafe, (wind high, humidity low, moisture low) and you do not burn without plenty of water, proper tools, a wide cleared area, and plenty of help, even for a small pile of leaves.

The burn permit is free, and it can get you out of a lot of trouble and expense if your fire burns something it is not supposed to. Helicopters and bulldozers are terribly expensive and can cost you! It is a get out of jail free card so get one even for a small fire.

I know you think that you have done this for years and never had a problem, but that first one that gets your house, shed, car, neighbors house, and beyond is a real bummer! And do not forget that the fire agencies can charge you for the suppression costs and you do not even want to know what a heavy lift helicopter cost!

So, think before you light that match "Do I really need to burn these leaves now or should I wait until things are right?" That decision can mean the difference between disaster and business as usual. Here are some tips from NFPA Firewise on how to prepare your home for Wildfires. Most are common sense, but we need to be reminded sometimes to check our common sense before we take on something that might lead to disaster.

Home Ignition Zones: To increase your home's chance of surviving a wildfire, choose fire-resistant building materials and limit the amount of flammable vegetation in the three home ignition zones. The zones include the Immediate Zone: (0 to 5 feet around the house), the Intermediate Zone (5 to 30 feet), and the Extended Zone (30 to 100 feet).

Landscaping and maintenance: To reduce ember ignitions and fire spread, trim branches that overhang the home, porch, and deck and prune branches of large trees up to 6 to 10 feet (depending on their height) from the ground. Remove plants containing resins, oils, and waxes. Use crushed stone or gravel instead of flammable mulches in the Immediate Zone (0 to 5 feet around the house). Keep your landscape in good condition.

Roofing and vents: Class A fire-rated roofing products, such as composite shingles, metal, concrete, and clay tiles, offer the best protection. Inspect shingles or roof tiles and replace or repair those that are loose or missing to prevent ember penetration. Box in eaves but provide ventilation to prevent condensation and mildew. Roof and attic vents should be screened to prevent ember entry.

Decks and porches: Never store flammable materials underneath decks or porches. Remove dead vegetation and debris from under decks and porches and between deck board joints.

Siding and windows: Embers can collect in small nooks and crannies and ignite combustible materials; radiant heat from flames can crack windows. Use fire-resistant siding such as brick, fiber, cement, plaster, or stucco, and use dual pane tempered glass windows.

Emergency responder access: Ensure your home and neighborhood have legible and clearly marked street names and numbers. Driveways should be at least 12 feet wide with a vertical clearance of 15 feet for emergency vehicle access.

Develop, discuss, and practice an emergency action plan with everyone in your home. Include details for handling pets, large animals, and livestock. No two ways out of your neighborhood and have a predesignated meeting place. Always evacuate if you feel it is unsafe to stay—do not wait to receive an emergency notification if you feel threatened from the fire.

Conduct an annual insurance policy checkup to adjust for local building costs, codes, and new renovations. Get the Reducing Wildfire Risks in the Home Ignition Zone checklist/poster at Firewise.org. Talk to your local forestry agency, Firewise Coalition, Chest-Chatt RC&D, or fire department to learn more about the specific risk where you are live. Visit Firewise.org for more details.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

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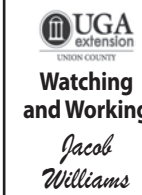
Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should 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.

Cedar-Apple Rust

Cedar-apple rust is a common disease in our area. If you have apple trees you have probably seen it before. It is an unusual disease in that it alternates between hosts. Let's talk about this disease so that you can learn how to identify and control it.



Cedar-apple rust (CAR) is from the Pucciniaceae family. Members of this family need more than one host to complete their life cycle. Some other diseases in this family are black stem rust of wheat, soybean rust, and white pine blister rust. Apple trees that are heavily infested with CAR will see reduced yield and blemished fruit. It can also weaken and kill eastern red cedar as the infection is severe enough, but this is rare. Red cedar is the primary alternate host for CAR. On apple trees, the infection creates orange-yellowish spots. On cedar trees, you will see gelatinous masses form that are bright orange. You also see what are called telial horns that grow out of the mass. To me these masses look like they are not from this earth. If the tree is heavily infected it might look like little Christmas decorations hanging from the limbs.

These masses will start to appear on cedar and juniper trees about seven months after infection and turn gelatinous 18 months after infection. The horns begin to appear, but if the weather is dry, they will dry out quickly, and then swell back out after a rain. The horns release spores to infect apple trees. The masses on the cedar tree will dry up and remain on the tree for about another year, but they are dead at that point. The spores released can only infect plants from the rose family, like apple trees, not more cedar trees. The spores released can travel 2 or 3 miles on the wind to infect an apple tree. When they land on an apple tree, they germinate and create the orange spot. These spots release a sticky liquid to attract insects. As the insects pick up the sticky liquid they transport spermata from one infection to the next, which fertilizes the disease. The disease then grows through the leaf and creates new spores on the bottom side that are blown back to a cedar tree to start the cycle all over again.

Spraying to control this disease on cedar trees is not recommended. CAR will rarely kill cedar trees. You can prune out galls to slow its spread. If you see this disease on a cedar tree, it may be best simply to co-exist with the disease, as it does little damage to the cedar. On apple trees there are some other management options. It will cause apple trees to lose their leaves and infects the fruit. Captan and myclobutanol can both be used preventatively against CAR. If you have cedar trees right next to your apple trees you might consider removing them. But keep in mind that the spores can travel a couple of miles from cedar trees, so even if you remove all the cedar trees that you can see, you can still get this disease because we have a lot of cedar trees around.

Cedar-quince rust looks similar to CAR, but it infects pear trees instead of apple. This disease also forms gelatinous masses along its branches instead of balls like CAR.

If you have questions about cedar-apple rust contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Old Souls, Resoles and Only One

Years ago when Big Bro was watching but sometimes slept, my neighbor asked if I would be an emergency contact for school if her child needed one. Both my neighbor and her husband were employed and sometimes traveled for their jobs. Car phones were rare, cell phones unknown, and even pagers weren't available. Electronic leashes were not yet the ties that bind.

I was dating her and so home during the day. Although Kristin, the kid, and I knew each other, we were hardly contemporaries. Decades separated us and we'd never been alone with one another. The call came and Kristin, who was feeling under the weather, and I spent an entire afternoon getting acquainted, she lounging on my sofa and I in a chair with my socked feet propped on a hassock.

Had I not known that Kristin was only six years old, her two missing front teeth surrounded by obvious baby teeth, would have been a tell. She was not just an intelligent child. There are scads of those.

She was wise and intuitive, uneasily so. I'd heard the term "old soul" before but had only an inkling of the meaning. With Kristin, I knew I was in the presence of one. As the eeriness quelled I was left able to openly embrace the qualities of other Old Souls I've since had the privilege to encounter.

Old Souls are not the same thing as old people. If a human lives long enough, it will become an old person. Old Souls are born. Polaris is their star from the get go. They are to themselves true and their compass always pulls them home.

When trends have worn too thin, repair time has come. Complete or half, a resole is in order to prevent tripping, slipping or falls. I did not "grow-up" until I was about age 50. My stars were the shooting ones. Petty jealousy, envy, and grudges plagued my inner peace. Instead of happiness for others' good fortune, I was a why not me gal. The red carpet (my lower lip) was often rolled out in a pout. An Old Soul. (The Golden Rule personified) taught me through example, not words, the joy of sharing toothpick than begrudging. Now when my personal done-ness toothpick is tested, it doesn't always come out clean, but at least it's not batter. I'm still groping for my North Star.

In conclusion, Towns and Union Counties each have only one commissioner.
See you around Towns!



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