DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY ODINIONS & COMMENTARY

Vaughn Barrett

Our Supreme Commander Called Vaughn Barrett Home T o w n s

T o w n s County lost our oldest living WWII Veteran at

der der aghn ome w n s st our ving USCG Veteran

101 years of age. Called Home to his eternal rest in Heaven on March 29, 2023. We lost a great man, a lifelong resident of Towns County. A very humble man, and never, ever boasting of his many awards, he was just quietly proud of his service to America. Vaughn was awarded: Good Conduct Ribbon; Bronze Arrowhead; American Theater Ribbon;WWII Victory Ribbon; Luzon Campaign Bronze Star; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; New Guinea Campaign Bronze Star; Northern Solomons Campaign Bronze Star; Philippine

Liberation Ribbon Bronze Star; Four overseas bars. His Certificate of Meritorious Service plainly states He was of excellent character and efficiency as a soldier. And applied himself diligently and with integrity. His CO stated that he was a credit to his organization that made it possible for the Regiment to successfully complete its war mission. We are losing those of our Greatest Generation at a fast pace. Thank you, Mitzi for your gracious biographical information you gave to me on your Dad to me, back in 2021. I'll never forget him.

March,1945 Vaughn went by motor convoy to Manila assigned to operations of Port of Manila. As well as supporting ground troops and ridding the area of the Japanese he was an expert with heavy equipment and rebuilding damaged roads and infrastructure for the Philippians. Later on he was moved to Aringay, the Northern port of Luzon for preparations of a full scale invasion of Japan. His 544th then then went ashore at Waykayama, Japan, September 25th, 1945. In spite of what naysayers allude to, Vaughn and millions of other Allied lives were saved by President Truman's orders to finish that war with atomic bombs dropped into the heartland of Japan, resulting in the surrender of the fanatical Japanese government and end of WWII.

May I add, after meeting this wonderful man and spending time with him at his 100th birthday celebration, the description of Vaughn Barrett as a humble man applies to his entire 101 years of blessing his family and America with his presence. His large family and scale of friends are amongst the very best of the best Americans. Plus like many of my mentors of the Greatest Generation, they are endowed by humility, and calm common sense honesty with no strings attached, no doubt influenced by Vaughn Barrett, an exemplary, outstanding icon for Americanism. Vaughn has a great sense of humor also. In my humble opinion it is virtually impossible to not love and respect this man, Vaughn Barrett, and all others like him, all across our great Blessing, our United States of America. And there are lots of others, who may or may not have accomplished what Vaughn did, doing their duty Honorably, coming home and continuing their lives as good, decent, humble, productive Americans, never seeing or promoting themselves as heroes All of them serving something far greater than self. I look for ward to meeting and spending time with Vaughn when our Supreme Commander decides my time on His earth is done.

-Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Trust, but Verify

Dear Editor,

A word to the wise about hiring contractors to do work on and around your home: Verify before hiring!

On referral from a gardener we'd hired, we hired a local handyman to install driveway lights.

The handyman did a good job on the lights, and over many chats, we discussed plans to add a very large deck on the back of our house. He jumped at the chance and, citing his "decades of building decks," offered to do the entire job, taking two weeks, for a flat rate, and the weather would not be an issue. It was our first time hiring someone for something so large, and we were pleased with his work on the lighting. So, we hired him. Long story short; he couldn't build a proper deck if his life depended on it. Ridiculous shortcuts, sloppy "craftsmanship," chronic absences or lateness, and a remarkable ability to never make the same wood cut twice. After seven weeks, three of which were fixing major structural and safety problems we identified, and MANY discussions about the quality of his work, the deck still wasn't even half-framed. The man put a 65' x 10' deck that's 12 feet off the ground together with literally NOTHING but 4" general purpose screws. He was fired, of course, and a new, licensed and insured crew tore his mess down entirely and started over. We're attempting to collect a refund of the money we paid up front (half, and then half upon completion). But, as you can guess, he has ghosted us. We have more documentation, receipts, and photos than we need, as well as videos verifying the whole fiasco. So this story isn't over, not by a long shot. But the message is clear: Don't hire based on promises Check their work history. Get references, and photos, and all their contact information. Don't learn the hard way, like we did. Cover your you-know-what. After all, a bucket of promises is just a bucket.



Georgia Agriculture Facts

Georgia Is one of the leading states for agriculture and when we are enjoying a delicious meal, we can thank a farmer and many times it will be a Georgia Farmer that produced the food we eat.

We need to buy Georgia Grown food to support the local farmers and the supporting industry around the state. By buying Georgia Grown products, we are pretty sure it will be produced safely and will be fresher than food imported from South America, Mexico, or other country around the world. Think about how long it takes for food to get to your table when it starts outside the United States, with the processing, storage, shipping, storage again when it reaches the US, transport to warehouses, to stores near you, and then finally to your refrigerator.

Georgia Grown food will be much fresher, more nutritious, and usually more tasty that that grown where the standards are not as strict as here in Georgia. The Georgia Department of Agriculture has a very good food inspection program that helps ensure that we get the best and safest food in the world Here are some interesting facts about Georgia and Georgia Agriculture. Georgia's humid subtropical climate with mild winters and hot moist summers is characteristic of most of Georgia. This, combined with a variety of soil types from the coast to the mountains, makes it an ideal place to produce a diverse variety of crops and livestock.

* Monthly average temperatures range from a high of 92.2°F to a low of 32.6°F. The average annual rainfall varies from 40" in central Georgia to more than 75" in northeast Georgia. Geographically, Georgia can be divided into eight soil provinces or major land resource areas. They are Southern Appalachian, Sand Mountain, Blue Ridge, Southern Coastal Plain, Black Lands, Southern Piedmont, Sand Hill, and Atlantic Coast Flatwoods. Georgia is the leading kaolin clay-producing state in the U.S. Georgia is also a leader in the production of marble, barite, and bauxite. Georgia produces almost half of the peanuts produced in the U.S. each year. Their value was more than \$721 million in 2021, number 1 in the US Georgia was the first colony to produce cotton commercially. first planting it near Savannah in 1734. Georgia ranks second nationally in cotton production. Its value was more than \$944 million in 2021. Although Georgia is called the Peach State, it actually ranks third in United States peach production behind California and South Carolina. In 2021, the Georgia peach crop sales totaled \$35.6 million. Vegetable production has increased significantly in Georgia. Georgia's top five vegetables are onions, watermelon, tomatoes, sweet corn, blue berries, and bell peppers. In 2021, broilers were valued at \$4.2 billion dollars no 2 nationally and eggs at more than \$635 million dollars, no 3 nationally. Beef cattle are raised in all of the counties in Georgia, 29th nationally. One of out of seven Georgians works in agriculture, forestry or a related sector. Agriculture cash receipts were \$9.45 billion in 2021, ranking 16th in the US. More than 65% of Georgia is in forestland. Forestry is a \$16.7 billion per year industry. Georgia's top ten commodities in order of their rank are broilers, cotton, eggs, timber, peanuts, horses, beef, greenhouse products for ornamental horticulture, dairy, and container plants from nurseries. Georgia ranks first in the U.S. in the production of peanuts, pecans, and broilers. Georgia was the first state to charter a state university, The University of Georgia, was founded in 1785. In 1986, Georgia passed legislation giving Vidalia onions, known by many as the sweetest onion in the world, legal status and defining the 20-county production area. The Vidalia onion was named Georgia's official state vegetable in 1990. Other crops produced in Georgia include apples, berries cabbage, corn, cottonseed, cucumbers, grapes, hay, oats, onions, peaches, rye, sorghum grain, soybeans, tobacco, tomatoes, vegetables, and wheat, as well as ornamentals, turf grass, and other nursery and greenhouse commodities. Miscellaneous livestock such as meat goats and sheep, catfish, trout (aquaculture), and honeybees are also produced. Georgia is host to over 42,000 farms encompassing more than 9 million acres spread throughout the state. Though sometimes overlooked as part of Georgia's thriving small business community, 88 percent of these farms are considered to be small businesses in terms of annual sales (2021 Agricultural Census, USDA). The Bureau of Economic Analysis reports nearly 35,000 farm proprietors, consisting of both sole proprietors and non-corporate partners as owners. These facts demonstrate that the robust Agriculture and related sectors not only contribute to our state and national and worldwide prominence but comprise a critical part of the small business sector as well. On a local level, the economic contribution of these food and fiber industries - including landscape services - ranges from a few million to a few billion dollars of county output and often boasts thousands of jobs for the local agriculture and related sectors. Georgia has it all when it comes to agriculture so remember when you are shopping for food, buy Georgia Grown to support the Georgia farmers and the many businesses that support our Agriculture industry which is the driving force behind Georgia's robust economy.

Freeze Damage

A couple of months ago I wrote an article on the possibility of damage due to the very cold temperatures that we experienced

Watching and Working Jacob Williams

over Christmas. I would like to revisit this topic, because now we are seeing more and more plants starting to try and grow that have freeze damage. Let's talk about what to look for and how to treat plants that have freeze damage.

All plants have some level of cold tolerance. Some plants have more than others. In perennial plants the amount of cold tolerance that plant has depends on its level of dormancy. Plants that are 100% dormant can experience some very cold temperatures and not sustain any damage when they start to regrow. There are some things

that can affect the level of dormancy that a plant has. Fluctuations in temperature affect dormancy. Plants do better in winter if it gets cold and stays cold. When the temperature goes up and down plants can get confused and think that spring is on its way. This is a common issue that we have compared to places further north. Plants that are stressed don't go into dormancy as easily either. Not enough water, disease, insect pests, not enough sunlight, and age are some of the things that can cause stress on plants. If you have plants that are experiencing stress their dormancy won't be as deep, leaving them more susceptible to freeze damage. Plants that are not in their correct USDA zone will not handle the cold as well.

Freeze damage occurs when the temperature inside of plants is cold enough for ice crystals to form. This will break plant membranes causing that portion of the plant to dehydrate and die. Because the damage occurs inside the plant it can be difficult to know if your plants have freeze damage, until they start to grow. In perennial plants with large trunk and branches you can start to look for splits in the coming weeks, as evidence of freeze damage. Some plants may look fine, but then as we get into summer have large brown patches in them. These are plants that had some damage to their xylem, and were able to grow until summer when their xylem had to move more water because the plant was transpiring more.

You will need to go through and examine your plants on a case by case basis. Some will have damage and some won't, it depends on how well they were able to handle the cold. Look for dead tissue. If plants were frozen they will have dead leaf buds that just crumble in your fingers. If you find dead tissue the best thing to do is to prune it out. On some plants this might result in you cutting them back pretty far. The dead tissue is an opportunity for disease to enter the plant. Some plants may have died back completely and will need to be removed. If a plant is mature and is completely dead on the top, it may be able to regrow from the roots.

If you have questions about freeze damage contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga. edu.

Trump Indictment: Irreparable Injustice

On March 30, our nation was abruptly submerged into uncharted waters as Donald Trump became the first former President in U.S. history to be indicted. This marks a very dark moment — legally, politically, and historically — for our nation.



The indictment of President Trump by Alvin Bragg, the George Soros-backed Manhattan District Attorney, is purely political persecution — serving as living proof of our corrupt two-tiered system of justice. Trump is facing more than 30 counts related to business fraud, which are presumably connected to an alleged \$130,000 payment by former Trump lawyer, the now-disgraced Michael Cohen, to an adult actress back in 2016. Federal prosecutors and the Federal Election Commission dropped inquiries into this bogus case, yet Bragg is determined to escalate the witch hunt while simultaneously failing to prosecute violent criminals in Manhattan - exemplifying a stunning abuse of prosecutorial authority. Make no mistake — this is all about 2024. The establishment is terrified that they can't legally defeat Trump in the upcoming election, so they're yet again abusing and misapplying the law in a dangerous and desperate attempt to take him down. This brazen political persecution should righteously anger every American, regardless of their political stripes. Our Founders wisely established a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Yet this government is withering away before our very eyes as the political ruling class flagrantly pursues sham charges against their political enemy and opponent.



Gary St. Lawrence

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 6:30 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	5:30 pm 5 pm
Water Board Water Office	6 pm

For more information go to www.agr.georgia.gov.

The Towns County Herald is an independent and non-partisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articlescovering local events, etc. Let me be clear: I stand with President Donald J. Trump, and I will do everything in my ability to prevent these corrupt political crooks from getting away with this abuse of power and irreparable injustice.

As we await additional information, please know that House Committees of jurisdiction are already seeking answers on behalf of the American people. I remain committed to working with my colleagues to hold Alvin Bragg to account and fully investigate this matter — including whether federal funds are being weaponized to advance this political persecution. Rest assured, we resolutely refuse to idly stand by while individuals subvert our democracy and interfere in our elections.

It's time for answers, accountability, and transparency.

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

Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor P.O. 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.

Publication No: 635540

Advertising, News deadlines: Friday at 5 p.m.

Towns County (1 Year) \$30. Out of County (1 Year) \$40. Entered as second-class matter on November 8, 1928, at the post office at Hiawassee, Georgia under Act of March 3, 1879. With additional mailing points. The Towns County Herald is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to: Towns County Herald, P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546.

Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 3 "The Mall", Hiawassee Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Kenneth West Owner/Publisher

Derek Richards Advertising Director Shawn Jarrard General Manager/Editor

Jordan Hyatt Office Manager **Todd Forrest**

Staff Writer Lowell Nicholson Photographer