

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Independent Sovereign Republic

Be it widely known and accepted that Thomas Jefferson was the principle author of The Declaration of Independence,

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
 USCG Veteran



we need to know that there were four other brilliant Founders on the drafting committee. Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Stanley Livingston also became "criminals to be changed". IF CAPTURED by the British for their heroic participation in the birth of our unique nation. John Hancock was the first to sign the document, most likely because he was the President of Congress at that time. He signed boldly, large and right in the center. Ergo, the phrase "Put your John Hancock here..."

The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4th, but voted on by Congress on July 2nd to lay claim to independence from Great Britain. John Adams penned a letter to his wife Abigail about how memorable that day was and should be celebrated with parades, bonfires, and fireworks. A true visionary for Phantom Fireworks, I'm guessing. The very first 4th of July fireworks show took place in Philadelphia in 1777. Today of course Macy's has the most extravagant fireworks show. Let it be known that our own Hiawassee Fairground show is no slouch in this respect. Americans spend over one billion dollars annually on fireworks. Personally I safely fire off a volley of rounds, into the ground, from my very politically incorrect, high capacity, semi-automatic side-arm. After all our nation was founded in defiance of overbearing, dictatorial governance, hence our Second Amendment!

An estimated 2.5 million folks lived in our nation in July 1776. Today it is estimated to be 332,403,650 million... BOOM!

Our American soldiers got a special treat on the 4th in 1778...George Washington allowed the troops a double ration of rum!

The Liberty Bell rings 13 times every Independence Day to honor the 13 original states. Descendants of the signers of that sacred document tap the bell at 2 PM EST every 4th of July.

There are 33 places in our USA that carry the word "Liberty" in their names within the states of Georgia, Florida, Montana, and Texas, typically conservative states all have a "Liberty County".

Calvin Coolidge was the only President born on the 4th of July. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died on the 4th of July 1826, the 50th anniversary of our nation's independence. James Monroe died five years later on July 4, 1831.

The 4th of July became a federal holiday in 1870, and is ranked very high amongst us Freedom loving Americans.

According to the National Hot Dog and Sausage council, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, called "peak hot dog season", Americans consume around 7 billion hot dogs, equaling 818 consumed every second (you do the math, I'm not good at math). July is designated as National Hot Dog Month and over 10% of hot dog sales occur. Doggone that's A LOT of hot dogs! Matlock and I both eat our share!

Here's wishing ALL a Blessed 4th of July, a truly incredible day in our American history. It is the day we celebrate our nation's birthday. And we MUST honor and thank those that have gone before us in our military forces, and those who currently serve, as without them there would be NO, ZERO, NADA Independence Day. -Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Changes

Dear Editor,

We might not like certain changes in our lifestyle. Our job which we have had for many years is now changing over to technology, and workers will have to adjust or be left behind or even let go if they can't make the grade. Changes are occurring more and more in our world, and there is nothing we can do but to pray for faith and courage to stay true to God's word and know in our heart that the Almighty God of Creation is in complete control, though all around us is spiraling out of control. We serve a God who does not change. He is the same yesterday, today and evermore in the future.

Many changes in churches have been made, and some have not been accepted by folks since COVID arrived about two years ago. Changes can be good if we look at them with an attitude of gratitude. Yes, we all love being able to go to early service or others to a later service, but this doesn't bring all of God's people together. I personally believe being in the same location has given me a chance to meet folks from both services in one building. A building or a sanctuary should not stop us from worshipping God but should bring us all under the same roof to bring honor and glory to God. Remember that the Holy Spirit is leading us into all truth, and if the Holy Spirit is telling you to move to another church, then by all means go. We must be obedient to the Holy Spirit, but if you are calling the shots about leaving, then please take time to really pray about it.

We all have to make decisions that are based on Scripture, not on our own thinking of what is best for ourselves, but what the Holy Spirit is telling you to do. I take full responsibility for this article. It is not intended to change anyone's mind, but to fervently pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit in the right choice to make, not to put ourselves first, but what God would have us do so He gets all of the glory for the great things He has done. Amen.

Frank F. Combs

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.



Playing Chicken

Travel with me back in time to a little house built by hand at the edge of a cornfield on a hill overlooking a valley. The house still stands, empty but for the memories of four generations which somehow keep it from falling down, all but invisible to the infrequent motorist who passes by on the paved road. When the house was younger, children walked barefoot on the dirt and gravel lane, climbed the apple trees, explored the old barn, played hide and seek in the cornfield and fished in the creek.

This was the home of my grandparents, where I spent the weekends and summers that made it the home of my favorite memories. I can hear our rooster crowing as I write this, and the sound of it invites the image of my grandmother on the way to her henhouse with a pan of scraps. The sun is casting long shadows and a cool breeze is gently rolling down from the same mountain that watched over her labors, bringing with it more memories...

We didn't live on the farm back then, but in the big town some of us like to call "Chicken City." It wasn't the place closest to our hearts, but it was the closest town where my folks could find the jobs they needed and still be close enough to support the grandparents as they needed. It was a good life, and we tried to live as much of the country in the city as we could.

Grade school during those years was magical. High school was something to be endured on the way to what came next. I played football, then baseball, but my folks knew me better than I knew myself and encouraged martial arts over team sports to tame the lone wolf.

Karate class was held in a small dojo in the industrial section of town across the railroad tracks. I took to it like a chicken after a June bug, as Dad used to say. I practiced in our basement, read every magazine I could find, and watched every Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris movie I could watch. One of the core lessons in any quality martial arts program is humility, but teenage boys don't start there. "Kung Fu" sounds a lot like "Young Fool." I learned to repair plaster when Dad made me fix the hole I knocked in the wall practicing punches.

One night on the way back from class we were bumping across the railroad tracks in the family station wagon and saw a white bird standing in the middle of the road. A broiler had fallen off one of the many trucks which passed over those tracks. Much to our mother's chagrin, we caught that bird and took him home.

"Foghorn Leghorn" was soon given a home under the rock table in our back yard. With a diet of scratch feed and chicken scraps, and with nothing much to do except eat, he grew rapidly. We soon discovered that he was, indeed, a rooster. One morning he confirmed that suspicion when, right at the break of dawn, an awful croaking warble emitted from under FL's table.

Apparently roosters raised in isolation don't learn how to crow properly. He never in his life managed a proper "cock a doodle doo." The sound he did make is difficult to describe. Suffice it to say that one morning at 6 AM our neighbor called, very upset, thinking that someone was being violently strangled in our back yard. Luckily, or so we thought at the time, the grandparents were missing a rooster for their flock, so FL was boxed up for a trip to the mountains post haste.

It's funny now, looking back, to realize that Foghorn and I were on similar learning curves. When we delivered him to my grandmother's hens, he had a similar experience to mine when I, invincible in my role as "Young Fu," sparred with a girl half my size but possessed of a much higher belt. I escaped with a welt on the side of my head, but FL was bloodied, battered and missing quite a few feathers after the hens finished expressing their opinion of him.

He was a tough bird, old Foghorn, and he survived to become cock of the roost. He grew into a magnificent creature, healthy, virile, handsome, just don't ask him to sing. Unfortunately, like many roosters raised by hand, he was missing any fear of humans - and he had three inch spurs.

"I wouldn't go near that old rooster," my grandmother said. "He's bad to flog, but if you're going down to the barn take this bundle of sticks to protect yourself." She handed me a tightly bound little bundle of alder branches with her warning.

You can already guess where Young Fu went straight away - right down the hill to where the chickens were scratching around. I never made it to the barn. When Foghorn saw me it seemed to bring back memories of riding in a cramped cage on the way to the executioner. He came at me faster than I would have thought possible, and in slow motion time compressed by adrenaline, I saw those deadly spurs airborne and headed for my leg.

That front snap kick I had been practicing was useless. He was too fast, and his kung fu was stronger than mine. In the end, it was baseball, not martial arts, that saved me. I swung that bundle of sticks like Reggie Jackson. I hit him hard, again and again, but he just kept on coming. Exhaustion was approaching rapidly, but fear mustered enough force for one mighty swing that cleared the bleachers and laid old Foghorn out flat on the ground.

Triumphant, but with a mantle of humility beginning to form, I headed back to the house to tell my tale of playing chicken with a dangerous rooster. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Foghorn get up and shake himself off before running into the weeds. He who flogs and runs away lives to flog another day.

Foghorn lived, but he didn't learn. Not long after that, he flogged my grandmother on her way to feed the hens. The next Sunday we had chicken for dinner, and no one said a word about the rooster from across the tracks.

Outside The Box

By: Don Perry

worldoutsidethebox.com

Ripe Watermelon

This time of year, watermelon is a treat. Everybody has a favorite way to eat watermelon. Mine is to put it in the fridge to get it nice and cold, cut it up in slices, and put a little salt on each bite as you eat it. If you don't have a fridge around a cold creek is a good alternative. But, if you accidentally pick a watermelon that's not all the way ripe, it might be a bummer once you cut it open. With the 4th of July coming I thought I would talk about how to select a ripe watermelon.

Watermelon requires a lot of heat to be able to grow. That means that watermelon grown in the mountains won't be ripe in time for the 4th of July. There are smaller varieties that don't take as long to grow. Typically, watermelon take 70-90 days to be ready to harvest. If you are planting your own watermelon it's typically easier to start them from transplants, but you can start your own seeds. Watermelon plants will need 8 feet of space on each side.

If you are picking watermelon off the vine you want to look at the curly tendrils that is on the stem closest to where it meets the fruit. When you see that curly tendrils dry up and turn brown the watermelon is ripe and ready to harvest.

If you are looking at watermelon that has already been picked there are a couple of tricks that you can use so that you look will a pro and WOW onlookers at the grocery store or market. You can thump a watermelon to gauge its ripeness. A ripe watermelon will have more of hollow thud sound to it. An unripe watermelon will have a higher pitched, less hollow sound to it. It's usually best to thump multiple melons with this approach to really be able to gauge the ripeness. Another approach is the check the ground spot. This is just the spot where the watermelon sat on the ground. If it has a creamy yellow or buttery white color then it is ripe. If the ground spot is plain white then it's not ripe yet.

As watermelon ripen the green color will start to dull. So, if the watermelon still has a sharp green hue, it's probably not ripe. If you are picking a striped watermelon this method is particularly useful. The heavier one is to pick up two watermelons of similar size. The heavier one is riper. Be careful using this tip because if it is too heavy, then it's overripe.

A whole watermelon will stay ripe for about 2 weeks if stored below 60 degrees. At run temperature it will last for about 10 days.

Seedless watermelon is very popular and make up 92% of watermelon sales in the US. Seedless watermelon is not genetically modified, rather it is how they are bred that makes them seedless. Some watermelon is diploid, which means they have 2 sets of chromosomes. Other watermelons are tetraploid, which means they have 4 sets of their chromosomes. When plant breeders cross pollinate a diploid with a tetraploid it creates a watermelon that produces a seed that are triploid. Those triploid seeds are planted to make seedless watermelon. Triploid watermelons are sterile. It's a similar concept breeding a mule, which is a cross between a horse and a donkey. These seedless watermelons might still produce a few seeds, but they won't mature and turn black.

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

Habitat for Humanity

As I have mentioned Habitat for Humanity is always looking for different ways to be involved in our community and making it a better place. Recently Habitat for Humanity partnered with Rotary Club, and Downtown Blairsville to donate picnic tables to a newly created park located near City Hall on Blue Ridge Street.

Between the three organizations we donated 9 picnic tables to the city of Blairsville and its community members. We are excited to see this location be a fun and beautiful spot to take a rest from shopping, or sit and sip on some local coffee, or order take out from your favorite restaurant. We hope this park will be a great location for friends and family to meet and enjoy the fresh air in the heart of Blairsville where all the action is at.

Before we can call this park complete, we are calling all locally acclaimed artists, and visionaries to come together on Saturday July 9th to paint these picnic tables. We are looking for creative family friendly designs for our community to enjoy. Take to Pinterest, sketchbooks, Instagram, wherever you can find inspiration, and then contact myself with your ideas. Save the date and come ready to paint these picnic tables!

On July 9th between 10am - 2pm we hope to see you there ready to jazz up this new park and make it a destination location for all our local shoppers and tourists to enjoy and visit. If you are interested in participating please be sure to contact me at 706-745-7101 or via admin@townsunionhabitat.org I will need your name, and one or two of the design ideas that you would be interested in painting onto a picnic table. Then we can be in contact to reserve a table for you.

We are so excited for this event and hope to see our community come out to watch and help out our local artists in creating excellent pieces to admire for years to come at this newly established Blairsville Park.

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.

The Towns County Herald is an independent and nonpartisan 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 articles covering local events, etc.

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Kenneth West
 Owner/Publisher

Shawn Jarrard
 General Manager/Editor

Todd Forrest
 Staff Writer

Derek Richards
 Advertising Director

Jordan Hyatt
 Office Manager

Lowell Nicholson
 Photographer

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 7 "The Mall", Hiawassee

Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: tcherald@windstream.net

Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546