

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

The Final Flush

The Southern way, when introduced to a newbie, is to coyly ask, you know, sort of work it into the conversation, "what church do you attend?" followed by, "and what do you do?" It may be necessary, if speaking to a numbskull with a blank stare, to add "for a living". The fine art of the Southern Inquisition, for the most part honed by Southern women, could put that infamous Spanish one in the rank amateur category, and with nary a drop of blood drawn. Some rapiers are stored in mouths, not arsenals.

Around Towns Dale Harmon



When asked and learned by some that one of the things I do is the latrine cleaning for Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge, comments ranged from, "I'm glad I don't have to do that" "Why" and the very versatile, "Bless your heart". First, for those who are glad that they don't have to do that, I'm glad for you. I'm glad, too, that I don't have to do it but I'm glad and grateful that I am able to physically perform the tasks and that others are benefited. The privilege of aiding, when needed, one of the people dearest to me on earth, is the why. I chose it as an obligation when the time came. To all the Bless your Hearters, thank you. I take all the offers for blessings when and wherever they are offered.

The now-glistening water eddies around the now-white porcelain as I perform my final flush duty. The name John Crap-corn comes to mind. He is credited with inventing and manufacturing the 1st widely popular flush toilet in the late 1800s. I can't prove it but I suspect relics from his prototypes may have been installed in the first Hamilton Garden bathrooms. Untimely gey-sers and mournful screams emanated for decades from the rust stained ladies' and gents' toilets. I'll not expound on back-ups, stop-ups and overflows. Perseverance, hard work and replacement parts (thanks to the stewardship of Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge), has quelled the haunts.

With rubber gloves, chlorine bleach, scouring brushes and buckets of sanitisers, I worked my way up through the ranks from pot scrubber, to permanent latrine orderly (PLO) all the way to Latrine Queen. It is with that proud title, I retire.

To the Board, the staff, the volunteers and visitors of Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge, it has always been an honor and many times a hoot, to serve with you. Hold heads high. There were no half-ass efforts on our watch.

I must confess. There was a bit of salt water in those 5 porcelain bowls and that silly urinal when I closed and locked the door for my last time.

See You Around Towns!



Moles and Voles

Moles and voles can be very damaging to your yard. Moles can dig up long tunnels through your yard, and voles make a meal out of the plant roots. This can leave your yard with a lumpy look and wilted dying plants. The key to treating these issues is figuring out whether you have moles or voles in your yard. Understanding some of the differences between moles and voles is important to decide how to treat them. Technically speaking voles are rodents, but moles are not. Moles are carnivorous animals that eat insects and grubs that they find underground. If you look at a picture of a mole they have very large front feet. They're able to use these big, meaty claws to 'swim' through the soil creating the tunnels in your yard. They are looking for insects to eat in the soil. They won't eat the roots of plants, as those aren't in their diet.

UGA extension Watching and Working Jacob Williams



Habitat to select new Homeowner

Welcome to November! Time flies. Where did summer go? Before you know it, the Holidays will be upon us.

There are many exciting things happening at Habitat for Humanity, Towns/Union Counties, Inc. In last week's column, I told you that Habitat is in the process of selecting our next homeowner, for the house that we will soon be building on Gumlog Road.

Just as a reminder, anyone who might like information on becoming a Habitat Homeowner needs to come to one of four orientation sessions, to learn all about what it takes to be selected for a Habitat Home.

Those orientations are on November 11 at 7 p.m. or November 13 at 10 a.m. at the First Baptist Church in Blairsville. The other two orientations are on November 6 at 10 a.m., or November 9 at 7 p.m. at the Hiwassee Civic Center. We need to know how many people will be coming, so if you are interested, please call 706-745-7101 to register for one of those free informational meetings.

Here at Habitat, we are very connected with our local communities. The Holiday Season can be especially hard for many in our area. During the entire month of November, everyone can bring canned goods and other non-perishable foods to our ReStore, and we will make sure all of it gets taken to the food pantries in both Union and Towns Counties. Your donations will help families in our area get enough food so that they don't have to worry about being hungry.

One of the things our ReStore does every year is hold an appreciation breakfast for our local Veterans, on Veteran's Day (November 11). On that Thursday, from 9 a.m.-noon, we will have coffee and goodies here at our ReStore, to honor those who have served.

We also like to do something nice for some of our active-duty servicemen and women, who are stationed overseas, and won't be home for the Holidays. We will be collecting Christmas cards to send to them! So, if you have a few extra cards laying around, please consider writing a nice note inside, thanking a service-person for their sacrifice, and dropping those cards off at the Habitat ReStore by November 19, in order to give us time to box up all the cards, and mail them overseas. Your participation in this project is very much appreciated by the servicemen and women who receive these cards.

By the time you are reading this, all the scarecrows that were on the square will be in the process of being taken down. However, the winners aren't chosen yet! Go to Facebook and go to the page called scarecrowville, to see the pictures of all the scarecrows, and "like" your favorites. The businesses who put up the scarecrows with the most "likes" will be awarded some great prizes!

Have a great week!

Habitat Happenings

Cathy Wheeler



Letters to The Editor

Can't Fix Stupid

Dear Editor, I had a dream the other night. Not really, but I'm calling it a dream to keep the Woke and Cancel Cultures from coming after me. In my dream, I came upon a swimming pool and everyone in the pool was crying out for help. Two people were watching from the other side and were wearing t-shirts that had "Thought Police emblazoned on the front. Everyone in the pool also had on t-shirts with their ethnic identity listed on the front as well. What should I do? I looked at the t-shirts and saw the following: Asian American, Italian American, Chinese American, Hispanic American, Polish American, Native American, African American, trans-gendered American and one elderly Caucasian woman whose t-shirt had nothing on it at all. In my dream, I was totally confused. No matter who I threw the first life preserver to, there would be hell to pay and I would be ostracized forever. I could not possibly pick one ethnic group over the other. "This is stupid," I said to myself as I walked away having done nothing. But then I reminded myself of something my dear old Dad used to say, "Son, you can't fix stupid."

Gene Vickers

Final Reflections from Hamilton Gardens

Dear Editor, During the 2020 pandemic lockdown, we took the time to reflect on the work and challenges at Hamilton Gardens, beginning with our start in 2016. There were six "Reflection" articles published. It seems appropriate to publish the final reflection as a letter to the editor as we prepare to close this chapter of an incredible garden journey of joy and achievement.

From the beginning five years ago, we have worked to bring a sad and neglected garden back from the edge of utter devastation to a place of beauty and significance in the north-east Georgia mountains. It has been an amazing run, and we are proud of our many accomplishments and, most importantly, of being true to our mission "to restore, preserve, and enhance this botanical legacy garden for the education and enjoyment of all who visit." A big part of our strategy has been to build community for the Gardens, not just on the local level, but nationally as well. The statistics we collected in 2021 show that we have been very successful, as we recorded visitors from 37 states and nine countries.

Our five separate groups of volunteers have supported the Gardens from day one and continued to do so until our last work day in October.

We operated our organization as a business, complete with a vision, mission and five-year strategic plan, which drove our efforts. It was not enough. The nonprofit corporation, Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge Inc., was unable to secure a sustainable leasehold agreement; a path to a future which would have allowed us to remain as stewards of the property.

Our efforts were always focused on the Gardens, not building political capitol, and so our story is over and we are dissolving the corporation. A lack of vision and leadership were the determining factors in decisions made regarding the fate of the Gardens.

What will the Gardens look like in a year? They will still be there, but they face an uncertain future as to how will they be managed, and will our work be continued? Promises made are not always promises kept.

Ansel Adams said it best: "Let us leave a splendid legacy for our children ... let us turn to them and say, 'This you inherit: guard it well, for it is far more precious than money ... and once destroyed, nature's beauty cannot be repurchased at any price.'"

Grace Howard Executive Director, Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge, Inc.

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 P.O. Box 365, Hiwassee, 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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Marine Corps turns 246

We are fortunate, and blessed to be able to recognize and celebrate the 246th birthday of our United States Marine Corps this forthcoming November 10, 2021.

Our Marine Corps League Detachment #783 is sponsoring a birthday dinner at Daniel's Steakhouse in Hiwassee beginning at 5:30 PM on this special day. Cost is \$20.00 per person. Be advised a headcount is needed for Commandant Alton Coleman and Adjutant/Paymaster, to aid them in their efforts to properly plan this dinner with Daniel's Steakhouse. This IS an R.S.V.P. Event.

History trivia of our Marines follows: The Corps was born in a small brewer's called Tun Tavern on November 10th, 1775. The first commissioned Marine officer, was Captain Samuel Nicholas, by an act of the Second Continental Congress on November 5th, 1775 but wasn't confirmed until November 28th of that year. Captain Nicholas set up a recruiting station at Tun Tavern shortly thereafter. However, and from my perspective, sinfully lost in history, there is no record of our nation's first enlisted Marine!

Always there is a cake cutting ceremony at Marine Corps birthday dinners. The first three slices are presented to the guest of honor, the oldest Marine present and finally the youngest Marine present. There exists a unique brotherhood in the Marine Corps.

Marine Corps Order 47: Until 1921 Marine Corps birthday was celebrated on July 11th. Major Edwin North McClellan requested that Commandant John A. Lejeune declare the original November 10th be declared as a Marine Corps holiday.

Just as occurred with our U.S. Navy the Corps was disbanded in 1783 after the Revolutionary War for a period of 15 years. Just as our Navy was "reborn" the Corps became the USMC we know today on July 11th, 1798. Thanks, Happy Birthday, and God Bless our Marines!

Veterans Day, as always will be observed here in Towns County on November 11, 2021. time will be 11 AM at our beautiful Towns County Veterans Memorial Park just down the hill from our Towns County Schools.

We will be open to the public and have dignitaries from our county and city government present. Always the crowd there will consist of Veterans of all branches of our military service, friends, families, children and will be a very uplifting positively charged event. Our officers and members of Towns County VFW Post #7803, including VFW Auxiliary, American Legion Post #23, American Legion Auxiliary, American Legion Riders, and Sons of American Legion (SAL) work tirelessly for this event.

We will also recognize the deceased Towns County Veterans names inscribed on our Memorial Wall, this year, 2021 and their loved ones who will be present. Our keynote speaker will be Vicky Healey, first Sergeant, U.S. Army.

Veterans Day is to honor ALL Veterans who have served our Sovereign Republic. All gave some; some gave all. Remember 11-11-11.

Come and enjoy the friendship camaraderie and enjoy meeting Veterans who usually have some interesting tales to tell.

A really great bunch of special men and women.

Semper Paratus

The Veterans' Corner Scott Drummond USCG Veteran



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