

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## USCG Pearl Harbor History

Hopefully most folks know that our USCG Cutter "TANEY" took part in battling the incoming Japanese aircraft on 7 December, 1941. That being said the USCG was directly involved in several other incidents, that terrible "day of infamy".

**The Veterans' Corner**  
**Scott Drummond**  
 USCG Veteran



Barbers Point Light Station, Light Keeper John M. Sweeney in charge saw two Japanese airmen bailing out of their shot up bomber, landing close by. He called for U.S. Army troops and joined in the search for those enemies. A battle lasted all that night, Keeper Sweeney survived unhurt. Not so much for the two Japs who were killed.

Ford Island, Lt. Frank Erickson assigned to Cutter Taney as aviation officer, witnessed the first wave of attacks. He was relieved of watch by his CO, ran to his duty station as AO of control tower and aided in the battery of machine guns set up on the roof. He later wrote that nearly all our combat planes had been destroyed.

USCGC Kukui, Ni'ihau Island, transported an Army battalion to Ni'ihau, as the pilot, Shigenori Nishikaichi crashed his Jap Zero there. Local Hawaiians found and killed him as USCGC Kukui arrived. The USCG and Army retook command and control of Ni'ihau, immediately.

USCGC Tiger under CWO William J. Mazzoni on routine patrol off Oahu, intercepted a message concerning the Navy's destruction of an enemy submarine. Tiger, not being equipped with anything but VERY basic sonar located an underwater object off Barbers Point. They maneuvered to gain a better position and the target was lost. They resumed patrol duty, and began taking fire from sources unknown. Tiger remained on patrol while at GQ off the harbor entrance, and our anxious Army units on shore continued to fire upon the USCGC Tiger. CWO Mazzoni wisely order the crew to NOT return fire as they did not know who was shooting at them. The distant friendly fire never scathed the Tiger or crew.

USCG-8 moored at Pier 4 Honolulu, saw the first incoming attack. Under command of First Class PO Boyd C. Maddox he and the crew prepared the former rum-runner captured and converted into a Patrol Boat, immediately got underway and was attacked by Japanese aircraft. With God's Blessings those Jap Zero drivers weren't very good shots at moving and maneuvering CG-8 thus survived to continue patrol duties in the area the rest of the day. I am certain that USCG Historian, Scott Price has written and has thousands of words describing in detail what happened and was documented that terrible day, which triggered the horrific WWII. May God Bless all who served America, their families, then and now, as those who perished surely sit at God's Mighty Right Hand forevermore.

- Semper Paratus



## Working with Wildlife

Wildlife can be part of what makes living in the mountains so beautiful. When you see deer serenely grazing in a nearby field they look very peaceful. However, if those same deer are eating the plants around your house or garden they can seem like a menace. Let's talk about wildlife and some steps that you can take to protect your property from wildlife.

**UGA extension**  
 UNION COUNTY  
**Watching and Working**  
 Jacob Williams



To start off I want to say that to have success in managing wildlife can take a lot of hard work and perseverance. There is no magic bullet. These are living creatures with a mind of their own. You may end up having to redefine what success is for you. For example, having healthy soil means that you will have more earthworms and grubs in the soil. Those earthworms will attract moles. So sometimes we have to reevaluate what success is going to be realistically.

The best action model to use when trying to manage wildlife is H.E.R.L. H.E.R.L. stands for Habitat modification, Exclusion, Removal or Repellent, and Lethal control. Habitat modification means making your space less attractive to wildlife. This can include things like mowing the grass and removing brush or debris piles. Tall grass and piles give cover to mice and mice are a food source for snakes. Therefore, removing those habitats will make your space less welcoming to snakes. Cutting dead limbs and removing trees eliminates habitat for bats, flying squirrels, and woodpeckers.

The next step is exclusion. Exclusion is using fences or other barriers to keep wildlife out. When using a fence make sure that it works for the specific wildlife that you're trying to exclude. A fence for deer will need to be eight to ten feet tall. A fence for wild hogs may only need to be three to four feet tall, but very sturdy. A fence to keep rabbits out may only need to be two feet high, but should also be buried at least six inches so that they can't dig under it. If you are working with wildlife that burrow the fence will need to be buried to be effective. Around your house make sure that doors, windows, pipes, wires, and cables are well sealed to keep wildlife from coming indoors.

Removal involves trapping the animal and moving to another location. The issue with removal is that it only treats the symptom and not the problem. Safety is a concern whenever you are moving a wild animal. Another concern is legality. There are laws regarding the transportation of wildlife. For example, it is illegal to transport wild hogs in Georgia. Repellents are products that you can use to scare or discourage wildlife. Snake repellents that work by smell or sound are ineffective because snakes can't hear or smell. These products are only short-term solutions so you will need to reapply them. How effective they are can also be impacted by how hungry the wildlife is. If you are using repellents on your garden check the label first because some are only intended to be used on plants that you don't eat. Milorganite can be an effective repellent for deer. It's an organic fertilizer.

Lethal control is the last step when managing wildlife. It's best to work with a professional Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator. Make sure that you are aware of the laws regarding lethal control because some wildlife is protected, or lethal control is only allowed in season. If you have questions about managing wildlife contact your local Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

## By Comparison

I was standing in line at the post office yesterday, and as a longtime resident of this area, feeling inconvenienced by the wait. Not too many years ago our town was very quiet in December, by comparison. I struck up a conversation with the gentleman in front of me. He was standing contentedly with a very different mindset from the one I was developing. He told me that in West Palm Beach, where he had lived a few years ago, such lines regularly stretched out the door and around the building. He went on to describe how much he enjoyed living here and also noted, with a smile, how the feeling approaching amazement which he had just experienced paying his property taxes was very different, by comparison, than the one produced by that same transaction in Florida.

I'm grateful to the gentleman for stimulating my own short term memory of recent travels through the urban cliff dwellings and the unremitting reduction of the thickness of my brake pads in the rapidly moving and rapidly stopping stream of ruthless and eternal traffic. By comparison, the botheration of waiting thirty seconds at one traffic light began to evaporate. I had a better day because he reminded me of what I should already know.

Last night I heard crickets chirping in the woods and a few peepers peeping from the pond. I stood in the moonlit mist in my t-shirt waiting for the dogs to conduct their dog business and compared Decembers past with the springlike temperatures of the moment. I could almost feel a fully formed template of concern ready to snap into place, a paradigm of thought built up by years of comment on climate ranging from scientific curiosity to emotional pearl clutching. I almost - almost - lost the opportunity to enjoy the moment and appreciate the beauty of the moonlight, the tenacity of life adapting to a different kind of December, and most of all, how comfortable I was in that t-shirt.

By comparison, my power bill for these springlike fall temperatures will be a cause for celebration. Don't get me wrong. Climate is certainly a cause for concern as it always has been throughout the history of humanity. Great civilizations unable to adapt to the changes have disappeared. My point is that "concern" in our society has mutated from the realm of the scientific, practical and expedient to something caustic and unhealthy, a monetized, leveraged and politicized assault of our emotions and peace of mind.

Some of the responsibility lies in the structure and function of our brains. The brain is a "difference engine" in that it is constantly making associations and comparisons, averaging and collating data, often erroneously, in order to create recognizable and actionable thoughts. It seeks to provide a complete image from whatever scant data is available. Optical illusions result when certain neurons that create visual images "win out" over other neurons. The process is not fully understood, but science has observed that what we see is also influenced by past experience and cultural conditioning.

Conditioning. Herein lies the problem. We swim in a sea of information increasingly designed to monetize our fears and concerns. Differences of generation, culture, race, nationality and an ever increasing number of "identities" are a given, but each and every one of these divisions, whether cultural, biological or self-imposed, is subject to targeted conditioning competing to monetize our attention.

I have a friend who spends countless hours watching a highly politicized network which produces continuous breaking news updates on the falling sky and the end of civilization brought on by a certain political party, peering through a small screen into a virtual world of fear and hatred in the comparison of us and them. There is a window overlooking a garden right next to the television, but the garden is now untended.

Another acquaintance looks through a similar screen tuned to a different illusion, absorbing daily reminders that people who vote a certain way are guaranteed to be despicable people with a long laundry list of reprehensible beliefs. This partisan can now quickly identify, by comparison, them from us by simply observing how "they" dress or talk or what they drive, and those infallible clues will immediately reveal how they vote, which of course reveals the quality of their character.

This morning the dogs and I were greeted by another spring day in December. We enjoyed it thoroughly, the dogs with their intrinsic "be here now" nature and me with a conscious choice to disengage the difference engine long enough to splash in a few puddles and throw the ball. Incidentally, the snow cover in the northern hemisphere is now at the greatest extent it has been for the last 56 years. All that cold are is not going to stay put forever. Chances are that by the time Christmas comes around we'll be bundling up and complaining how cold it is, by comparison, to just a short time ago.

**Outside The Box**  
 By: Don Perry  
[worldoutsidethebox.com](http://worldoutsidethebox.com)

## Letters To The Editor

### Re: "A Divided Family"

Dear Editor,

This responds to the first paragraph of a letter in the Dec. Towns County Herald.

Sir: 1) the "captured" court to which you refer (as well as others) would/has permitted you, to the consternation of many of those in Towns County, to exercise your Constitutional right to free speech, to include your deeming yourself "the non-believer" when it comes to religion; (2) this newspaper has also rightly allowed you to express similar views (religious or otherwise) a multiplicity of times; (3) that same Constitution does not permit the president, via fiat, to cancel debt -- Constitutionally, only Congress may do so; and (4) my wife and I, both from deeply lower middle-class families, worked our way (via part-time and full-time jobs; no extracurriculars) through high school, college and professional school, and we NEVER took or borrowed any money from anybody, and thus learned the beneficial lessons of personal industry and self-dependence, as have many others, I'm certain.

Claude Spears

### Fossil Fuel Reparations

Dear Editor,

A few weeks ago, approximately 20,000 delegates from more than 100 countries attended the 2022 UN Climate Conference in Egypt. Biden spoke at the conference where he again promoted the erroneous theory that America owes the rest of the world money for burning fossil fuels over the last hundred or so years. "We're racing forward to do our part to avert the 'climate hell,'" Biden told the audience.

At the end of the conference, the only agreement that the delegates could reach was a commitment from some rich nations, the United States in particular, to give "reparation" money to the poor nations of the world. The premise is that the United States owes the rest of the world money for burning fossil fuels over the last 100 odd years. And we all know that this all boils down to hardworking American taxpayers footing the bill for hundreds of billions of dollars of government handouts.

And of course, the two largest polluting nations, China and India, did not even attend this conference.

One silver lining in this whole fiasco is that the new Congress must vote on the funding for these reparations. With the U.S. running a \$1.2 trillion budget deficit, there is no extra money to spend right now on foreign aid. So no, America should not be owing climate reparations to the developing nations of this world. Actually, America should be getting reparations for all the fossil fuels used in both world wars to save humanity from fascism and communism.

Tim Groza

### 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.

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## Habitat for Humanity

Once a year, Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties sends a tithe to Habitat International, which is based on the revenue from our Restore. A tithe supplemental country is then selected by our affiliate's Board of Directors. For Fiscal Year 2022, Habitat Haiti was selected as our placement for the annual tithe.

In August of 2021, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck southwest Haiti, damaging or destroying 135,000 homes. Habitat Haiti had built more than 300 homes in the same region five years earlier, in the wake of Hurricane Matthew. 98% of the Habitat houses built previously were deemed habitable, and had suffered minimal damage. Most homes in Southwest Haiti lack structural reinforcement and quality building materials that enable homes to withstand natural disasters. During the Fiscal Year 2022, 26 new homes (average cost \$12,700) were constructed. Over 2500 shelter kits, produced by ShelterBox, were distributed to the half a million citizens who were displaced from this earthquake.

In recent years, Haiti has endured extreme political unrest. Since the overturn in government in last year, basic infrastructure has crumbled, and cholera outbreak has been rampant. Currently, Haiti's capitol Port-Au-Prince, is 75% controlled by local gangs, which now control the main fuel terminal, soaring gas prices to \$25-\$30 a gallon. Violence, murder, and widespread kidnapping have become daily in an island of 11 million people.

I reached out to Anna Oltmann, the Resource Development and Communication Manager of Habitat for Humanity International Haiti. She states, "We are continuing to build homes and support families affected by last year's earthquake, although it is taking longer and we do have to take breaks when there are fuel shortages or security challenges. Yes, the security situation and gang activity within the country continues to be a huge problem. We monitor the situation daily and make recommendations. Some of our implemented security measures include, restricting staff travel when necessary, utilizing helicopters to travel out of Port-au-Prince instead of traveling by road, and modifying the manner in which we purchase and store construction materials to reduce risks. It's definitely a daily struggle for our staff, and I really admire the way they and our partner families are dealing with the situation both professionally and personally as they ensure the safety of themselves, their families, and loved ones."

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**Habitat Happenings**  
 Executive Director  
 Charlotte Randall



# Towns County Herald

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