

Guest Columnist

What is Agent Orange?

by Mike Priven

In my previous journal I mentioned Agent Orange (AO) and the trouble Viet Nam Veterans (VNV) are having. So what is Agent Orange?

The vast majority of Americans, doctors included, do not know what AO is, how it was used or how it affected/affects the US troops. The troops affected were stationed in country VN, just off shore VN, or by handling contaminated resources both outside and inside the U.S. Recently I found that according to Department of Defense (DOD) Agent Orange was sprayed in north Georgia and Tennessee along the TVA rights of way in 1964 and 1967. Sites in Florida were also sprayed and across the U.S.

So what is AO? Simply it is a super strong vegetation defoliant. It kills all vegetation it touches, especially if used in super strong concentrations. For example we have all used roundup. We use the premixed stuff and it kills in a week or so. If you purchase the concentrated version and use it right out of the bottle, you will see how quickly it kills everything. Stone dead in a day! I do not recommend anyone try this as it can also kill you and your pets as well as any and all vegetation.

This is the way AO was used in VN, full strength. But that is not the end of the story. To entice the cocktail of death the government decided to add a dioxin to the mix. Dioxin is the most deadly synthetic chemical known to man. Once absorbed by the human body its presence can be detected indefinitely. There have been recent studies that indicate it is transmitted to offspring for two to three generations. Experiments with mice indicate its presence for as many as 5 generations.

The justification for the use of AO was strong, and I will not try to justify or condemn its use. According to the New York Times Admiral Zumwalt, who was Chief of Naval operation (CNO) at the time, was the one who ordered the use of Agent Orange. He wrote in his book "My Father, My Son", that even knowing what he had come to learn about the chemical's effects, he "still would have ordered the defoliation to achieve the objectives it did, of reducing casualties". His son died presumably from AO at age 43 and his grandson was born handicapped. The book was published in 1986; I can only speculate as to whether the good admiral would feel the same way today.

The spraying operation took on the name: "Operation Ranch Hand". By the time it was completed more than 19 million gallons of herbicides were sprayed over 4.5 million acres of land in Vietnam. Many places multiple times!

At first it was used on rural food sources. This forced civilians to the US controlled cities thus denying Viet Cong (VC) of a food supply. It then moved to the forests and rivers where the VC laid in ambush for US troops. It did save lives, but at what cost?

As stated before there was no apparent regard for our troop locations or movements. There are numerous reports of aerial spraying being seen overhead and a few minutes later a fine mist covered everything and everyone. No one paid any attention to it.

After an inordinate amount of VNV died very early in life, congress finally acted in 1991. They charged the National Academy of Sciences to research the available scientific evidence regarding associations between diseases and exposure to dioxin and herbicides, i.e. AO. As of now they have found a relationship between AO exposures and the following diseases: Prostate Cancers, Diabetes Mellitus Type 2, Hodgkin's Disease, Multiple Myelomas, Non-Hodg-

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Letters to the Editor ...

Sunflowers

Dear Editor,

Wow, our thanks go to the folks at the Georgia Mountain Experiment Station for planting that beautiful field of sunflowers on 129 south of town! We just returned from taking grandchildren photos among the flowers, as we have seen many families doing since the flowers bloomed around July 1. (Sad to say our son saw some selfish person actually cutting some of the sunflowers to take home.) But the popularity of this field gave me the idea that Blairsville could become the Sunflower Capital of Georgia! Imagine Sunflower Day at the Union County Farmers Market, or even a Sunflower Festival, with Ms. and Little Miss Sunflower! It could include flower arranging and sunflower crafts, harvesting sunflowers for bird seed and lots of other "flowery ideas." This might be just another way to showcase our beautiful mountains, support our local farmers, and just generally enjoy this wonderful natural area!

Kathleen Lowery

Patent Office

Dear Editor

Did anyone besides me notice this strange coincidence? A U.S. government agency (Patent Office) getting involved in the Washington Redskins football team name and logo. Only after the name offended Harry Reid (D-NV). I do not care for the name personally, but Harry Reid really offends me.

Jack Howington

Courthouse Security

Dear Editor

Good grief! I could not believe the uneducated diatribe that spewed forth from a letter denouncing a Public Official for putting the required actions of Georgia House Bill #60 into effect. I guess that person can't read news outside of his own 30 or 40 feet of space. He apparently don't know that the State Government was the body that made Commissioner Paris do this job. He would be remiss to do otherwise. Some people whine and complain when laws are enacted to protect them and they also would complain if they were hung with a new rope. If this person would try to take his Courthouse business elsewhere, lots-a-luck. Maybe another state or another country.

Charles Sowers

Marriage and Humor

This is the marrying time of the year. Newspapers almost everywhere announce weddings and print pictures of newly weds. Few occasions are a greater cause for celebration than a Christian wedding. It is a new beginning and a new life, a life of togetherness. It is a time for celebrating God's great love. God's love for mankind makes marriage possible, and in a Christian marriage the love of a man and woman reaches its ultimate expression. It is also true that few subjects offer greater entertainment than jokes about married life...

It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



A man and woman had been married only a few weeks when the husband said to his wife, "you wouldn't mind if I point out a few little flaws that I have discovered about you?" The wife answered, "Oh, no!" "It's those few little flaws that kept me from getting a better husband." It is true that when a man and woman marry they become one; but the trouble begins when they try to decide which one. Men are not only slow learners about marriage, but they are also quick forgetters.

On anniversaries, the wise husband always forgets the past, but never the present. A foolish husband says to his wife, "Honey, you stick to the washing, ironing, cooking and scrubbing. No wife of mine is gonna work." Men, the trouble in marriage usually starts when a man gets so busy earning his salt that he forgets his sugar. And as one man said, "Whether a man winds up with a nest egg, or a goose egg, depends a lot on the chick he marries." You newly wed men need to remember that if you have enough horse sense to treat your wife like a thoroughbred, you will never have to live with an old nag.

Women seem to be smarter than men when it comes to choosing a mate. That is seen in the fact that many women prefer to marry military men. Most military men can already cook, sew and make beds. Most of them are in really good health, and they are already trained to take orders. The longer a couple lives together the more entertaining married life becomes. One wife said that she had a glow-worm marriage. The glow was gone, but the worm remains. A couple got married. They were both twenty years of age. They both were now fifty years old and decided to

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Questions and Answers

Q. Isn't it a good thing that our courthouse now has courthouse security screening and shouldn't we all feel better about it?

A. As I have said several times, I was not ready for instituting courthouse security because of the cost, because of the inconvenience to our citizens, and because none of us can ever be completely safe, no matter what our job. But as I also said, there were many others who have been involved in this ultimate decision to begin this process besides just me. So overall, while I was not ready for this, it would probably have had to happen sooner rather than later.

Q. Why is a courthouse potentially more dangerous than other public buildings?

A. It is really pretty simple. While there are lots of good things that occur in our courthouse, there are some situations that are out of the ordinary. Many counties have their courthouse completely separated from their county offices and elected officials. However, for convenience to the public and at a tremendous cost savings, in Union County all offices are located in one building.

Let me remind you of some of the situations that go on in our courthouse that do not occur in other public arenas. Parents have children taken away from them in juvenile court, convicted felons lose their freedom, indigent defendants are a part of the system, husbands and wives' lives change forever as the result of a divorce, fortunes can be lost in law suits, family farms and homes can be lost in legal proceedings and repossessions, a person's life can be ruined as a result of a child molestation conviction, people are embarrassed and lose reputations as a result of certain public documents being recorded in a courthouse, and the list goes on and on. So why do these potential issues seem meaningless to some? Our judges, Sheriff's Dept. and county officials are in unison with regards to the new courthouse security.

Q. Why are you blaming the new gun law for the need for courthouse security?

A. If you will read my last two weeks Q & A, all the blame does not fall to the new law, but it was the straw that broke the camel's back. The new law, HB 60, does not require courthouse security, but because we are not only a courthouse, but an office

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Budget Blinds Named Business of the Quarter

The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that Budget Blinds has been chosen as our Business of the Quarter for third quarter 2014. The Business of the Quarter program was established to recognize outstanding businesses and organizations that go above and beyond to serve the local community.

Blairsville-Union County Chamber

Cindy Williams



Nominees are selected based on chamber involvement, general reputation, contribution to the community, and new construction, renovation, or beautification of their business property.

Budget Blinds is an active member of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce. Owners Rick and DeeDee Siefken are well known in Union County for their excellent products, outstanding customer service, and willingness to give of their time, talent, and treasure. They have supported the Chamber and local business community by participating in and sponsoring many of our events. Rick currently serves as an Ambassador of the Chamber and recently graduated the Leadership Union program.

Budget Blinds as a company has a very positive reputation in the community. The local team will meet with you to discuss the best options for your window covering needs within

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Making Market Memories

I can't believe it was 5 years ago that the "movers and shakers" in this town got together to put on the first Green Bean Festival. It was originally conceived by the Downtown Development Authority. At the time, our Farmers Market was held on Saturdays in the Courthouse parking lot. We moved the Market to the Square on that last Saturday of July. People loved it. But it was hot. Very hot.

Farmers Market Moment

JorAnne Leone



A lot has developed since then. The Farmers Market has taken over the full responsibility of the Festival and it is all held at the Market grounds, with the exception of the Kid's Pageant, which is the effort of Lisa Little, and still held at the Haralson Civic Center this year.

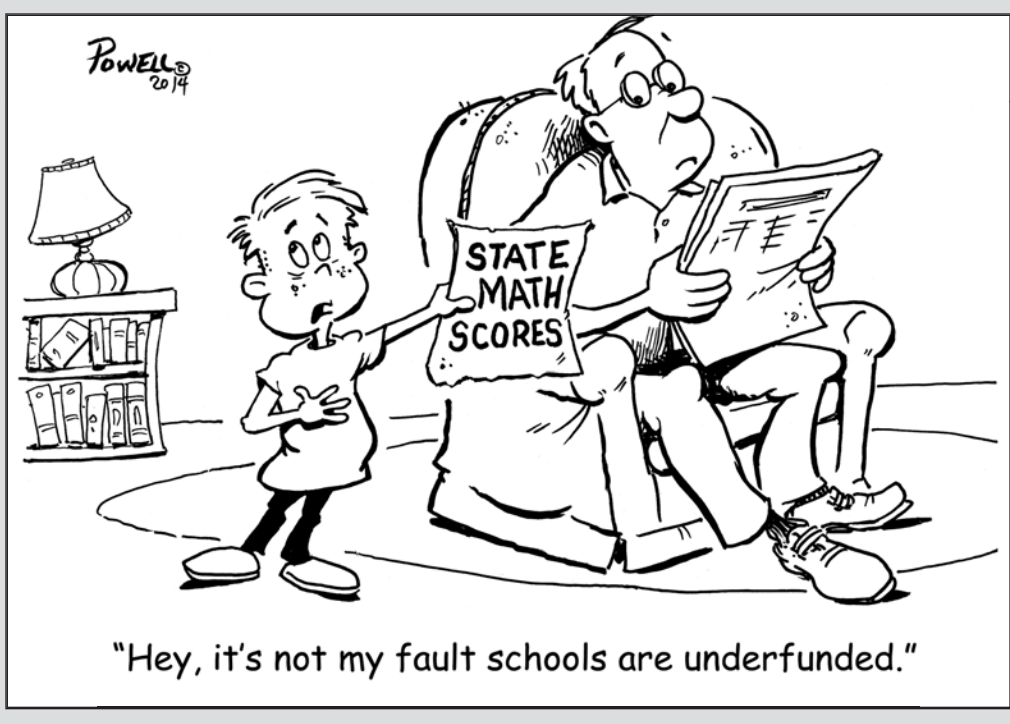
We've had record breaking crowds every GB Festival, to date. This year, we are prepared for the parking, but unsure if all the development we are doing to the facility will be in place. We are still pushing ahead. It takes place on Saturday, July 26th, so mark your calendars.

One of the additions we made to the Festival two years ago was an appearance by Mr. Green Bean. He's a hit with kids and adults, alike. Everyone wants their picture taken with this giant green pod. This year Mr. Green Bean will be walking through the Festival, handing out balloons, posing for pictures and kissing babies from 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. In between, he'll be performing live in our Music Booth, across from the main office.

We are also honored to have Raven and Red performing at the Festival this year. They will be starting the music venue hopping at 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. This highly talented duo has been a huge hit with audiences at the Courthouse Friday nights and at the Scottish Festival.

Coming up from South Georgia will be the Washboard Band. We are looking forward to having this addition to our musical lineup, as what could be more appropriate than that, here at the Festival that celebrates the crop that helped this County survive the Great Depression. Washboards will be humming at 1 p.m. Hopefully they'll stick around to join the Green Bean Festival Famous Kazoo Band.

See Leone, page 5A



Border Patrol

To Saxby Chambliss, Jonny Isakson and Doug Collins and all members of our legislative branch of government:

I thought you all were elected to represent us peons and to look after our interests.

Is not the Legislative Branch along with the President and Supreme Court, (equally) the top authorities in this great nation? Have I got those facts wrong?

If I am correct will you please explain how an agency that you, our leaders formed, can deny any member of our top lawmakers the right to inspect what they are doing. I am talking about the Border Patrol denying entrance to a United States Legislator to these internment camps for these illegal children? Going so far as to ban cameras, recording devices and not being able to interview anyone. Are you kidding me! You are their boss! There is no law that prohibits a legislator from doing these tasks, only rules made up by an agency that you created.

You-and no one else are letting our country fall to where we are beginning to sound like Germany or Russia before the people became slaves.

Somebody, in the legislature needs to go there and push your way in. What are they going to do? Arrest you? On what charge? Looking out for the interest of the people? Suck it in and do your job. The people out here want to know what is being hidden. We are the ones that will eventually pay for it.

If you guys would have closed the border years ago, like you voted to do, we would be home safe now.

James L. Boyer, citizen, Korean Vet, author, voter!

Vietnam Veterans

Dear Editor,

In response to Mike Priven's column (July 3, 2014), I congratulate Mr. Priven for addressing such an old war on subject as the Vietnam War. Yes we were drafted and some volunteered, and yes we were for the most part naive. We were reared by the greatest generation and were taught old values from another era. A time when WWI and WWII were fought and won on guts and glory, old American values and might. Some of us went because our fathers and grandfathers went into battle and we thought it was the right thing to do.

After we were in Viet Nam some of us wondered why we were there. Probably a similar feeling modern soldiers felt while in Iraq and Afghanistan, who is the enemy and where is the enemy?

While current society realizes that modern soldiers didn't start the war, the 70s culture treated us as if we did. Even VFW members didn't want us in their ranks because we lost.

We hear about how poorly our soldiers See Vandergrift, page 5A

Good Times

The phrase "Good Times" puts me in a mind of growing up in the country and enjoying all the things that go along with that mentality. For example, I can remember a primary form of enjoyment

for me was catching a June Bug and tying a string to its leg. I would then hold to the string and watch the bug fly in circles around my head.

Another enjoyable time that comes to mind is canning time. I remember staying in the garden until all of the green beans were picked and then sitting around breaking beans all evening with my cousins. When we were finished, you could tell we spent more time throwing beans and bean parts at one another than we did breaking and snapping the beans. The next day was spent listening to the hiss of the pressure cooker as the beans were processed for winter storage.

As I grew older I decided to process my own foods and I began with the easiest vegetable to process which was tomatoes. I have a bad habit of not following recipes and instructions well and this one was no different. I love tomato juice and on a spur of the moment I decided to make a batch of tomato and fruit juice. I used my own tomatoes and whatever else I had.

I used blueberries, grapes, cabbage, pears, apples, peppers, celery and a few others. I ran everything through a food processor and liked the way the concoction tasted. So, I placed the juice in jars and processed the jars in a hot water bath just like my book directed. After processing I let the jars seal and placed them on a shelf until later that fall.

One cool November afternoon I decided to try the juice and opened a jar and drank some of the juice. I must say it was very good. I placed the leftover juice in the refrigerator and left it a few days. When I went back to get another glass of juice I shook the jar to return the small solids back into suspension. Upon shaking the jar the contents fizzed just like a bottle of champagne. This alarmed me so I sent the contents to the University of Georgia Food Science Department. A few days later I received a phone call and heard laughter on the other end. A good friend explained that I no longer had tomato juice. I now had 12 quarts of wine. And it was good.

The Green Bean Festival will be held at the Farmers Market on July 26th. As usual we will hold a Canning Contest as a part of the festival. You can bring canned Green Beans or other fruits and vegetables. To enter the contest you should complete an entry form and each entry will be judged according to how the food item was processed and its appearance. For example, was the item processed according to UGA Food Science Guidelines? These guidelines can be

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



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