

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Close Before You Doze

The fire department has three main priorities: life safety, incident stabilization, and property conservation. Of the three, life safety is number one and we do everything from training to public education to try and save lives. The fire department does all it can to promote fire safety but fire safety is everyone's responsibility. People should take time to prepare and be aware of fire safety concepts. The most recent campaign on fire safety is closing the doors in your home.

Fires today are faster than fires of yesterday. According to research by UL's Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI), fires are spreading faster than ever before. "Forty years ago, people had an average of 17 minutes to escape a burning home after the activation of a smoke alarm. Today, they have an average of three minutes or less due to synthetic furnishings, open floor plans and lightweight construction materials that can combine to accelerate the spread of a fire." This is why it is so important to have working smoke alarms, an escape plan, and now one more element - closing your door.

FSRI is promoting a campaign called "Close Before You Doze." The campaign is encouraging occupants to close their doors at night before they go to sleep. Their research found that rooms with closed doors had average temperatures of less than 100 degrees and 100 ppm of carbon monoxide, compared to 1,000+ degrees and over 10,000 ppm of carbon monoxide in the rooms with open doors. These reduced temperatures and carbon monoxide levels in rooms with closed doors gives occupants more breathable air and more time to escape or be rescued. Remember 50% of house fires happen between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

The FSRI suggest and UCFD supports that every home have working smoke alarms and CO monitors. They should be installed on every level of the home, in hallways, and in every sleeping area. They should also be tested regularly. Occupants should have an escape plan and practice it because visibility will be limited during a fire. FSRI also suggests closing your doors at night to limit fire growth and provide some protection to occupants.

If a fire occurs, occupants should get out quickly and close doors as they exit. If you can't escape, put a closed door between

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



Enduring Insights

The 2022 MLB season is delayed. After two years of pandemic, baseball fans just want it to be about the game. When players anthem-kneeled and Commissioner Manfred moved the All-Star game over politics, fans longed for simpler times.

Those simpler times exist only in your memories of little league or neighborhood sand lot action. Even in 1945, times were not simple. That's when an honorably discharged U.S. Army veteran signed to play for Branch Rickey, manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Rickey was an innovator. He introduced the batting helmet, pitching machines, and the farm system. He also introduced the world to his new recruit Jackie Robinson.

Rickey and Robinson's meeting at Dodgers headquarters had the makings of a historic moment, not just for baseball. Robinson would be the first black player in the league. "I know you're a good ballplayer," Rickey said. "What I don't know is whether you have the guts." Rickey wasn't talking about Robinson staring down fastballs in the big leagues, but facing the threats to his life and attacks on his dignity. "I'm looking for a ballplayer," Rickey said, "with guts enough not to fight back."

Knowing it would not be easy or simple, Rickey shared with Robinson the words of Jesus. "I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also" (Matt. 5:38). By this Jesus put personal retribution and revenge out of bounds. Jesus knew about emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and self-management before Daniel Goleman popularized the terms. It matters because to lose control is to lose sight of your mission. When we who share the life of Christ are wronged, that becomes our opportunity to sacrifice our egos, serve others, and love our neighbor.

Robinson accepted the charge from fellow Christian Rickey, and history celebrates the story. Eric Metaxas writes about Robinson. "With God's help, one man lifted up a whole people and pulled a whole nation into the future." All because a man of faith simply applied the words of Jesus to turn the other cheek.

All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Last week we talked about plastics recycling at the Union County Transfer Station. Today I will answer the questions that we received concerning the other types of recycling that we do.

Q. I read about plastics recycling but what other types of materials do you accept at the Recycle Center?

A. The Union County Recycle Center can accept mixed paper and paperboard, corrugated packing boxes, and aluminum cans.

Q. What constitutes mixed paper?

A. Mixed paper by definition is - different types of paper mixed together. Mixed paper is our catch-all category for paper. If the paper tears and is not contaminated with food or oil, it can be placed in the paper recycling bin. Examples include phone books, magazines, junk mail, office paper, newspaper, and paperboard packaging. Cereal boxes and gift boxes are generally made of a lower valued paper called paperboard. In this case, empty the box completely, including food, plastic inserts, or packaging material, flatten, and place in the paper recycling bin. To clarify, any kind of paper that doesn't fall into the category of corrugated cardboard is mixed paper including newsprint. If you work in an office environment or any environment in which different types of paper are used and need disposing of, this is the perfect situation for mixed paper recycling.

Q. When mixed paper is recycled, what happens to it?

A. One fact you may not know is that recycled mixed paper is used to make the hard covers of the books we read, the game boards that adorn our tables on family game nights, and it also makes up the cereal boxes that our favorite cereal is packaged in. Paper can be recycled 6-7 times before its fiber strength becomes too degraded to be recycled anymore. Paper recycling reduces the need for raw material and uses less energy and causes less pollution than producing a new product with virgin material. Paper makes up approximately 38% of U.S. solid waste.

Q. Can you tell us about the cardboard recycling? I see a bin that says, Corrugated Cardboard.

A. There can be some misunderstanding about what types of cardboard can be recycled. We don't want to confuse paper-

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Habitat for Humanity

On my morning commute to work, I notice varying gas prices increasing by a couple cents here and a couple cents there. Some higher than others but all categorized as outrageously priced. It's disheartening to say the least. Our way of life is being forced to be reimagined as we anxiously look for alternatives and work at our employment, now to pay for the gas that gets us to our employment. A tireless cycle with nothing to gain.

It's hard to ignore the growing rate of gas prices over the past few weeks in our nation. It has managed to cause panic across the country, affecting our travel, our choices in purchasing items, our overall finances, etc. It has sent us into a panic, and it's not hard to tell why.

During these difficult times, my family and I find ourselves looking to alternative solutions to our daily routine to save money. Growing our own garden, for example, not only helps the environment but provides us with vegetables

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Habitat Happenings
Madelyn Bailey



Letters to the Editor

Honor Books at Post Office

Dear Editor,
Over the past month I have donated approximately three dozen "Honor Books." On the bottom of the books the word "honor" has been written in green to help remind people where they originally got the book.

Just as a reminder, Honor Books are books you will find at the post office for FREE. You take a book, read the book, then return the book in order that others may do the same. Fingers crossed that is what people will do.

Linda Garrett

Let Parents Decide

Dear Editor,
Parents should be the ones to decide whether to expose their children to controversial topics, NOT books intended for small children!

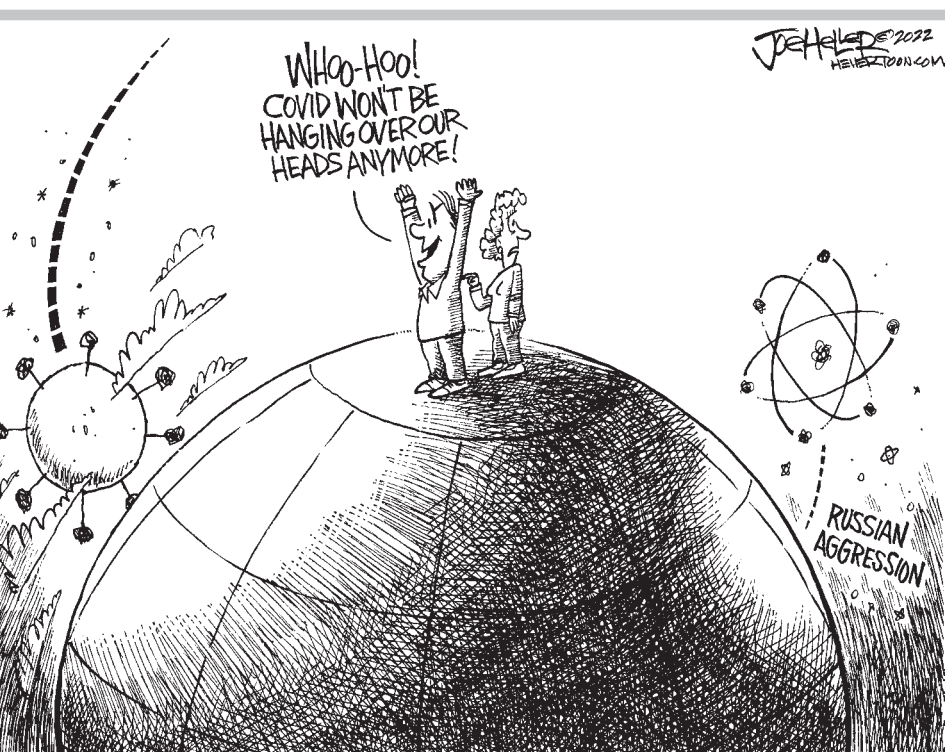
A children's book readily available from bookstores and libraries is a good example. The book, "The How and Wow of the Human Body" by Mindy Thomas and Guy Raz, is a delightfully humorous book about the human body and how it functions. However it contains a section that is inappropriate for small children, entitled "It's a BOY! It's a GIRL! It's... to be determined. Or NOT!" It teaches that "not all babies are born boys or girls," that "some people are born with reproductive parts that don't necessarily match the specific characteristics of 'male' or 'female,'" and that "others, as they grow, may find that they don't identify with the 'boy' or 'girl' label they were given the day they were born."

To support these statements, the book references a publication by Planned Parenthood, the organization that was caught selling body parts from late-term abortions, and the supporting publication does not appear to be entirely factual. Regardless, the above statements regarding gender do not support the overall subject matter of the book and should have simply been left out.

We all know that children are naturally curious and will learn about gender on their own. Along the way, some little girls wish they could pee like boys. Some girls become tomboys and some boys play with dolls. Girls sometimes wish they were born boys and vice versa. These are all stages of growth and are not indications that a child will never identify with their God-given gender. Rather, it's kids being kids.

Per the Bible, the Good Lord made male and female; no other genders. This design is beautiful and practical, in that it allows us to have children. Additional so-called genders will likely be redefined again and again by segments of the population and are therefore controversial. Con-

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Letters to the Editor

Biden Gaslighting on Gas Prices

Dear Editor,
Gas prices in the United States hit a new all-time high under President Biden's watch last week. Biden would have us believe that it's all Russia's fault. It's obvious that Biden's policies, not just the Russians, are to blame for rising prices at the pump. The week before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the average price of regular gas was \$3.53 per gallon, compared with \$2.38 the week Biden took office.

We all know that the pain at the pump has been planned by the Biden administration for some time. Biden wants higher gas prices to force us from being able to drive where we want and when we want. It's all a part of the new green deal agenda, which panders to the radical environmentalists on the far left. His actions have backed that agenda up. Biden canceled the Keystone XL pipeline and suspended new drillings on federal lands in an effort to move us away from the energy independence established under President Trump. Biden has made clear his plan for Americans to get rid of gas-driven cars and buy electric vehicles.

And those who speak on behalf of the administration have echoed Biden's plans. Just recently, Jen Psaki, Biden's Press Secretary, reminded us that it's a good time for "reducing our dependence on fossil fuels." Pete Buttigieg, Transportation Secretary, says "you don't have to worry about gas prices if you buy an electric vehicle." By the way, the average cost of an electric vehicle is \$56,437. The median household income in Georgia in 2021 was \$58,700. Now how out of touch does that sound!

Tim Groza

Real Reason for Gas Prices

Dear Editor,
In the race to politically exploit the high cost of gas, Republicans are banking on voters not caring that they're lying through their teeth about how much of this is Biden's fault. The president does not, as they would have you believe, have a dial in the Oval Office that he uses to set gas prices. Meanwhile, suggested fixes the GOP has offered up would do nothing to shrink Americans' costs, which suits them just fine for now.

Vox's Rebecca Leber put together a great roundup. As Leber noted, oil companies are the ones who won't be ramping up production anytime soon. The industry is still trying to recover its losses from during the pandemic, when demand for oil cratered and prices briefly plunged to negative levels. Likewise, while the number of active in the U.S. continues to rise after that 2020 crash, oil companies, like most other in-

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Hard Working Immigrant

My family lived in Chicago for a short period of time when I was small. My memory of this time is comprised of living in an apartment, big fins on big cars, the Cubs, the cold water of Lake Michigan, snow, Chicago-style hotdogs and Myron Levinski. The man was of Ukranian lineage and was an immigrant from Soviet Russia.

He came to the United States seeking political asylum. His brother and father became political prisoners in a Soviet labor camp as a result of opposition to communism. The pair were tortured and starved in an attempt by the Soviets to rehabilitate them into communist doctrine. My Ukranian friend escaped with a sister and his mother and found a ship bound for the USA. He was told America was the land of freedom and promise with money growing on trees like apples. Upon landing in New York, the immigrants of the ship were divided into three groups. One group stayed in New York. Another was sent to Philadelphia. And the other was sent to Chicago.

Myron landed a job with the City of Chicago as a laborer. He and the other immigrants all resided in a big warehouse. Very few of these people spoke any English, but they were willing to work. At first, he dug ditches, and like other jobs, a man doesn't get paid every day. My friend had no money to purchase food, and what little he had was given to his mother and sister. Digging ditches in July was pretty tough, and after four days with no food, he'd lost weight and eventually passed out. At first his supervisor thought our friend was in the wrong job. But, somehow it was found that Myron had not eaten in four days. So, his boss lent him some money and helped him secure an apartment.

The grateful immigrant paid back the money owed to his boss. He saved every dime he could and soon purchased his first real estate, a small three-story apartment building in Cicero. He continued saving his money and bought other pieces of property around town as well as a second home on Lake Michigan. During this process of obtaining property, another poor family migrated from the hills of northern Alabama to the Windy City. My father secured a job and an apartment in that first apartment building purchased by Myron.

Not long after moving into this apartment, Khrushchev gave his famous speech to the U.N. about how the Russians would someday conquer America. For those of you old enough to remember, it was the speech where the communist leader was beating on the podium with his shoe. The speech was on all the evening news

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



Raised Beds

This week I would like to talk about raised beds. There are many different ways to make raised beds. So I'll go through different types of materials that you can use and some basic principles to use when building your raised beds. I'll also talk about situations where I like raised beds over growing in the soil and vice versa.

Raised beds are a great tool to use if you have don't have a lot of sunlight in your yard. Plants grown in raised beds will still need full sun, but if you only have a small area of your yard that has full sun, a raised bed is a good way to maximize that spot. If you have slopes that are too steep to plant, leveling out a small area and putting in a raised bed in that spot is another good idea. Oftentimes, the best soil in Towns and Union is found in river bottoms. If you don't the good fortune of putting your garden in one of those places, growing in a raised bed will also be much easier than fighting with heavy clay soils. Raised beds are also going to have fewer weed issues, and less soil compaction. You can build elevated raised beds to that you don't need to do as much bending down.

Dimensions for a raised bed depend on the materials that you are using. Generally, I like raised beds that aren't more than 4 feet across. If you have really long arms you can make them wider. I also like beds that are about 8 feet long. If you make long beds, it's just more difficult to walk around them, especially if you've put a bunch of raised beds next to each other. 10 inches height will be enough depth for most vegetables. Potatoes will need more depth. The deeper you make the raised bed the more material you will need to fill it. Soil to fill raised beds costs money, so don't make them needlessly deep. If you have tall crops planted in your raised beds they can shade out other crops, so orient them in a north-south direction. You want the raised bed to be completely level. To do this you may need to dig out the place where you're putting it.

Let's move on to materials that you can use. There are several different types of lumber. Cedar is very good, because it does not rot quickly. However, it is very expensive. Cypress is often easier to get than cedar. Oak and other hardwoods can be difficult to find in sufficient quantities, and are only a little more rot resistant than pine. Pine is the most readily available and cheapest lumber. It will rot, but I've seen where you can get several years of use out of pine. An alternative to lumber is cement blocks, brick, concrete, or stone. If you are going to build the wall high, you would need some mortar to keep the walls from falling.

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Chamber of Commerce

I would like to thank Habitat for Humanity and the Union County Rotary Club for hosting last week's Business After Hours. We had a great crowd and a wonderful time networking with other Chamber members. I want to congratulate Jessica Anderson of Comfort Keepers for being named Ambassador of the Quarter and Sharon Davis with Book Bound Bookstore for being named Business of the Quarter.

The "Lucky Coin Hunt" is well underway with a lot of great prizes. The winning numbers are 225, 388, 410 and 137. Check out our website for a list of our sponsors and participating businesses where you can "hunt" for more gold coins.

We are looking forward to our new series, "Success in 60," that will begin on March 30th at the Union County Community Center. Join us for our breakfast meeting to learn new tips and techniques for using social media: Facebook, Instagram & Advertising.

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board (described above) with cardboard. Fortunately, unlike some other items, recycling cardboard is pretty straight forward. Almost all of it can be recycled. It is a high-quality material capable of being recycled multiple times. Recycling boxes also reduces processing pollution by 95% because the fiber has already been processed.

Q. Some of my boxes are very large. How do I handle that?

A. Be sure to remove any plastic packaging or bags from your boxes. Then, break down or flatten your boxes to allow for more recyclables in the bins.

Q. My family eats a lot of pizza, so this is the perfect way for us to handle these boxes, right?

A. As long as your cardboard is clean and dry, it can be placed in the recycle bin. Wet or greasy cardboard, like pizza boxes or fast-food boxes, are considered a contaminate and belong in the garbage. Here's why: wet or contaminated items can jam sorting equipment at the recycle processing centers and it can ruin good, clean material. Just one greasy pizza box can contaminate an entire bin of cardboard. Please do not

place these in the bin for recycling. Instead, these need to be grouped with bagged trash.

Q. That leaves aluminum cans. If I want to recycle, what do I do with these?

A. Here is a bit of related trivia: Aluminum is a sustainable metal and can be recycled over and over again. An aluminum can is generally turned into a new can and could possibly be back on store shelves within 60 days. In the United States, a staggering 105,784 aluminum cans are recycled each minute — leading to an overall recycling rate of nearly 50 percent, the highest recycling rate for any beverage container. Additionally, due to the infinite recyclability of aluminum, 75 percent of all aluminum produced is still in circulation. (Greenbiz.com)

To prepare your aluminum cans, make sure all cans are clear of liquids or foods that could be left in the container. You can do this by rinsing the can when you're finished with it. The same applies to aluminum cans in that foods or liquids left in cans might contaminate the bin.

The Union County Recycle Station also asks that you flatten the cans if possible.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

shows, and my friend was watching. He became so enraged at Khrushchev's words and actions that he took off his heavy work boot and threw it toward the TV. Upon striking the television it shattered the screen. Myron Levinski hated the Russians because they took this country and killed his father and brother.

After moving into his apartment building, my Dad and the immigrant became good friends. He liked Dad so much that he placed him in charge of collecting his rent from the folks leasing apartments in his building. This assignment provided a break for us on rent, and we really needed the break. Mom and Dad had nothing at this point in their lives.

So, every Saturday we drove into the country to Skokie Lagoon where our friend lived to deliver the rent money. Our friend found out that we were from a farm in Alabama and proclaimed his love of peanuts to Dad. So, Dad wrote to Papa and asked for some peanut seed. Next spring these seed and directions of production were delivered to our friend.

In the early fall we were

visiting with our friend at his home on the lake, and Dad asked him about the peanuts. Myron told us in a heavy Ukrainian accent about the peanuts in his garden. We found that the plants grew big and beautiful and had wonderful blooms. But he never found any nuts on the plant, so he mowed them down. Dad asked for a shovel, and we all walked out to the garden. He told our friend that he wanted to check the plant roots for root rot.

The shovel was inserted into the ground where the peanuts had been planted. When the shovel was raised up, it brought the biggest bunch of roots and peanuts you could imagine. Myron grabbed his hair and screamed "the stupid peanuts, they grow under the ground." My immigrant friend was hard working and refused to let life's troubles bring him down. He loved peanuts as much as he hated Soviet Russia and Khrushchev. Finally, he helped a bunch of folks from Alabama when they needed it most. And he learned a little about the agronomic production of peanuts and their growth habit.

Grazis... continued from Page 4A

industries, are struggling to hire workers and procure equipment amid the ongoing supply chain backlog.

Crude oil was trading around \$126 per barrel. As for some of the steps Republicans are suggesting Biden take to lower prices, none would have much short-term impact. But all of them just happen to fit within the same set of energy policies the GOP is constantly pushing. Even if the Biden administration were to announce today that it would subsidize every new oil well in America, it's not like sticking a straw into a milkshake. The time that elapses between initial drilling to a completed well that can deliver hydrocarbons can span from a few months to a few years. Tuesday, 58% higher than the roughly \$80 per barrel it was at before Russia's aggression against Ukraine roiled the market. That price, which makes up over half the total cost per gallon of gas, is based on global demand — something Biden has even less control over than how much your local Exxon station charges.

But is there anything to the idea that Biden's policies so far have blocked the U.S. from producing and importing even more oil? Well, not really. The death of the Keystone XL pipeline from Canada is a favorite talking point for Republicans, but that pipeline wasn't even scheduled to be operational until next year, which would have no impact on today's gas prices. Likewise, Biden's pause on licensing new federal lands for drilling, which was overturned in court, didn't stop those licenses already issued from being used; there are also 9,000 approved permits that haven't been used yet.

That's perfectly fine for the GOP, whose members now get to have their cake and eat it too. Biden has done just what Republicans who wanted to look tough on Russia wanted. As a token of their appreciation, they'll spend the coming weeks and months working to convince Americans that it's Biden — and not Russian President Vladimir Putin — who's draining their wallets at the gas pump. Again, I am not backing Biden about ANYTHING. He is a

poor president, while Trump was the worst we ever had. I am neither a Democrat, nor a Republican. I write here occasionally to post facts about issues, since so many here post lies and conspiracy theories from FOX "NEWS."

Jim Grazis

Chamber...

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If you would like to be a part of the Compass Day Community Job Fair at Union County High School and meet job seekers, please email jDavis@ucschools.org. Businesses are encouraged to set up a table and hand out applications, but if you are unable to attend and would like to still be represented, please let us know. The Chamber will have a space also where we will represent all of our members and the positions they are recruiting for, and we would be happy to include your business, too!

With all of these great events and opportunities going on, we can't think of a better place to be right now. Life is so much Better in Blairsville!

Chaussy et al...

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versely, whether a child is born a biological "boy" or "girl" as defined by their God-given body parts will never change.

Our access to books of all kinds in the USA is invaluable, but it is disappointing to find a book intended for children with such inappropriate and confusing material. We bring this to the attention of North Georgia News readers so that parents in our area can better protect their children and simply let their kids be kids.

Sincerely,
Beverly Chaussy, Mary George, Faye Nelms, Judy Kurtz, Sam Underwood, Nancy Gallahue, Joann Hoppie, Joan Clarke, Ellen Wollett, Jane Childers, Patricia L. Spencer, Carol McRae, Diane Jones, Stephanie Switzer, Stacy Smith, Teresa Holman, Dagmar Spielmann, AM Gray, Deborah Pissott, Barbara Papoi, Sandy Shreiner, Beverly Sutton

Habitat... continued from Page 4A

and fruits to utilize as prices increase.

Habitat for Humanity of Towns Union Counties ReStore encourages recycling and repurposing items not only to help our environment but to save on costs during this difficult time. Habitat receives gently used items every day to resell and help our cause of making sure everyone in our community is living in a safe and affordable environment.

The term "shop local" has never been more imperative than it is right now. It is your local shops that need your support the most. Shop at the businesses that give back to the community in valuable ways.

The ReStore is for anyone in our community looking to shop gently used furniture, décor, electronics, tools, etc. We have different sales everyday and always work to accommodate our customers' needs as best we can. During this nationwide financial pinch, shop at the Habitat ReStore.

Shopping at Habitat is an easy way to save money instead of buying brand new items that are overpriced in this current climate of economic uncertainty. We are a dependable store dedicated to filling the needs of our customers any way we can.

Williams...

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The research that is available says that pressure treated wood is safe to use for food production. Arsenic is no longer used to pressure treat wood, and has not been used since 2005. Wood treated with creosote should not be used. Railroad ties and utility poles are treated with creosote.

If you have questions about building your own raised beds contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Dyer...

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you and the fire to buy yourself valuable time. Don't ever go back inside a burning home.

Fire safety is everyone's responsibility. There are many steps that you can take to protect you and your family from fire. Close before you doze is one more extra step of protection. For more information on this campaign, please visit <https://closeyourdoor.org/> or contact Union County Fire Department. Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Your Patriot Reflection



A Republic or a Monarchy?

On the last day of the Continental Congress Convention, in 1787, Dr. James McHenry, a delegate from Maryland was privileged to overhear a conversation between Dr. Benjamin Franklin and a Mrs. Powell who was from Philadelphia. Dr. McHenry had the foresight to record it, and rightly so as it encapsulated, in a few words, the hopes and dreams of the Framers of this fledgling nation.

As Franklin departed the Convention Hall Mrs. Powell stepped in front of him and point-blank said, "Well, doctor, what have we got? A republic or a monarchy?" Franklin, equally as direct, and short of words replied, "A republic, madam— If you can keep it." There it was, in a nutshell. Some 230 years later the question remains: "Can we keep it?" We cannot give 'carte blanche' to our Executive, Legislative or Judicial branches to do what they think is best, and expect the Republic to stand. We see how that has turned out! It is up to "We the People" to ensure the longevity of this nation as a Republic.

Think about this, if we lose the Republic, it is lost forever! It is up to every American to put forth the effort to keep our Republic. We are the keepers of the flame of liberty and the ones charged by Franklin and the other founders and by history past and present with this grand promise to the world.

A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www.joshuaswarriors.org.