

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Crash Victim Extrication

Motor vehicle accidents happen every day. One of the main responsibilities of firefighters is to respond to these motor vehicle accidents and to extricate victims out of the crashed vehicle. This requires knowledge and training on crash victim extrication.

On the weekend of April, 23rd and 24th, Union County Fire Department (UCFD) hosted a Crash Victim Extrication class conducted by the Georgia Fire Academy. The class is a 16-hour course designed for firefighters who respond to motor vehicle crashes with victim entrapment. The class had a total of 34 students, 33 of them were from Union County Fire Department.

On day one, students were instructed on the topics of vehicle anatomy, airbags, size up, victim disentanglement, patient removal, extrication tools, and firefighter safety. The lectures went in detail about the anatomy of automobiles and new safety features. Firefighters must be familiar with the safety features before they begin to cut any part of the vehicle. If certain safety features, such as airbags, are cut in the wrong places, it can be very dangerous for firefighters and crash victims.

The class also reviews the latest automobiles with alternate fuel sources. Vehicles can now operate on compressed natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, electricity, and there are various hybrid models, which run on a combination of alternate fuels. Firefighters must be familiar with each vehicle's different features which can be different depending on the year, make, and model.

On day two, students participated in a variety of practical exercises of simulated automobile incidents. These practical exercises provided an opportunity to use the various auto extrication equipment and tools that are utilized by UCFD. The firefighters are divided into teams and each team is given several vehicles to practice what they have learned.

Firefighters are then shown how to stabilize vehicles and use the various extrication tools. The hydraulic and battery power tools are the most utilized tools because of their power and speed. Essentially, firefighters are taught how to remove the damaged or wrecked vehicle away from the passenger in order to get them out.

With the numerous changes to safety components, vehicle types, and designs, attending this class enables firefighters the

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



A Woman's Value

William Shatner, Paris Hilton, and other celebs are buying and selling NFTs. I had to look up NFT – “non-fungible token.” I don't understand what they are, so they clearly have no value to me.

To value something, you must first know what it is. Take women for example. In a bizarre cultural twist, we have forgotten what a woman is. In her Senate confirmation hearing, Judge Jackson gave voice to that amnesia. Sen. Blackburn asked her to define the word “woman.” “No, I can't,” Jackson said. “I'm not a biologist.” By denying what has been obvious and understood since the beginning of history, the culture devalues women.

Jesus never devalued women, but the Roman and Jewish cultures of the first century did. Women had lesser legal status, and men treated them as possessions. That's one reason Jesus was a revolutionary figure. He scandalized the powers that be by respecting, affirming and teaching women. God the Son created male and female in His own image, and He values both.

Jesus encountered a woman at the Sychar town well. He was alone with her, spoke to her and asked to drink from her container. His disciples were shocked when they returned to find Him in a theological, intellectually-challenging dialogue with her. And for the first time, He revealed that He is the long-expected Messiah. To a woman! (John 4)

The historical record indicates that women were witnesses to the greatest news the world has ever known. Mary Magdalene, (another) Mary, and Salome witnessed His death and resurrection (Mark 15-16). In fact, all four gospels record that women visited the empty tomb of Jesus. God inspired the gospel writers to record these women's witness to these events.

If you want to know who you are as a woman, go to the One who created, loves and knows you. In Him, you will find your value and identity.

I value the women in my life, starting with my mother.

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All Things New
Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

I couldn't help but notice that the local trivia contests are beginning again as we move through the Spring season and into the Summer. The next couple of weeks I will provide some basic trivia about Union County and the surrounding area. These are questions that have been asked at different points in time, but they have never been printed together. I hope you will find it as interesting as I do.

Q. How many voting precincts do we have in Union County?

A. We have 11 voting precincts. The precincts are scattered across the county – ensuring that everyone has local access. They are Ivy Log, Dooly, Gum Log, Blairsville, Pat Colwell, Trackrock, Coosa, Jones Creek, Owl Town, Choestoe, and Suches. Union County residents are assigned to a voting precinct according to the address of their place of residence. Are you registered to vote in Union County? Voter registration may be made in the registrars' office, at any public library, at the Department of Drivers Services, and other locations. Residents may also print and mail an application or apply online through the Georgia Online Voter Registration System.

Q. I've seen a few cemeteries in Blairsville and some associated with churches. How many cemeteries do we have in Union County?

A. According to our Geographic Information Systems Professionals, there are 116 cemeteries in Union County. Some are associated with churches, but some are older family cemeteries. Interest in cemeteries increased more recently with the curiosity associated with genealogy – tracking ancestry. Historians, archaeologists, stone conservators, planners, preservationists, and others frequently visit Blairsville's cemeteries as they investigate and record the lineage of those buried here.

Q. What is the status on cell towers? Sometimes I have good cell service and sometimes I can't get any kind of signal.

A. There are 13 cell towers in Union County. According to Verizon, the quality of cell service can be impacted for several reasons:

1. Network Connections. Large numbers of users in densely populated areas can take up a great deal of cell tower service.

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Q & A from Union County Commissioner
Lamar Paris



Habitat for Humanity

Introducing Me! This week marks a year of my being at Habitat for Humanity of Towns Union Counties. I have done and learned so much in my time here at Habitat, the opportunities are endless when you have a mission worth working towards and a community that is so supportive through the process of helping others.

I moved to the area in 2020 from upstate New York with my family. We absolutely love it here and are so happy to call Georgia home. I graduated with my bachelor's degree from Houghton College. I studied Communications, with concentrations in marketing, psychology, and writing. In my spare time I love to be outdoors, hiking, swimming and just being in the sun. I also love to write. I do poetry, short stories, and am currently working on a novel.

I also have another business I run, “Madelyn's Marketing LLC,” where I help local businesses with starting up, creating websites,

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Habitat Happenings
Madelyn Bailey



Letters to the Editor

On Sheep

Dear Editor,
Facts are terrible things, and we don't get to make our own.

Biden did not “inherit the mess” at the Southern border. No one working or living down there will argue that. Among other things, Trump didn't fly and bus illegals across the U.S.

Mexico had an agreement with us to keep immigrants on the South side of the border until they could be processed by our agencies. Biden no longer requires that, so the word is out and caravans of migrants arrive every week.

Biden canceled the permit for the Keystone Pipeline's border crossing from Canada, the source of the oil to be transferred through the pipeline. The pipeline contractors then canceled the partially constructed pipeline; what was their option? Hundreds of miles of pipeline had already been constructed.

Biden killed the pipeline. To say otherwise is disingenuous at best.

Putin invaded Ukraine because he knew Biden would not stop him. “Biden set the table; Putin had the feast.” This was a known perception after the Afghanistan debacle. Putin invaded other countries when he perceived weakness, during both the Obama and the Biden adminis-

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Common Sense

Dear Editor,
The fear of God is the most basic ingredient in seeking His wisdom, for it depends on how we learn to be submissive to His purpose and will in the here and now, as not fearing God is the same as rejecting wisdom outright.

Let's imagine you are a jet fighter pilot and you had to eject from your plane due to an engine malfunction and your only option to return safely to earth would be to use a parachute attached to your ejection seat. Undoubtedly, you would not think twice about using this life-saving equipment.

Sadly many folks often fail to use the same logic when it comes to their spiritual needs, because they have swallowed the lies of Satan and are slowly being pulled down daily into the pit of hell in which there is no safety equipment of return. Jesus Christ is the only parachute of hope from this dying world, and if one doesn't choose to eject from the wrath of God to come, then all hope is forever lost for one's soul. The bible tells us that fearing God is the beginning of wisdom and only a fool says there is no God.

Grab hold of God's wisdom and come and live a life worth living with Jesus Christ for all of eternity.

Frank F. Combs

April Showers...



Bring May Flowers



Letters to the Editor

Biden's Green Military

Dear Editor,
The number one function of the U.S. military should be the use of force to eliminate threats posed by foreign enemies in defense of our nation. But Joe Biden wants a “green” military, you see. It appears that Biden sees the U.S. military as a cultural experiment for the executive branch to impose its leftist Green New Deal ideology upon the American people.

Recently, Biden made the following comments on Earth Day: “In the U.S. military, every vehicle is going to be climate-friendly. We're spending billions of dollars to do it.” Is this guy serious? How about the goal that every military vehicle be equipped to help the military meet its aim of taking the fight to the enemy with the express goal of winning? The U.S. military should not be an army of leftist eco-ideologues. If this were the case, the U.S. Navy would still consist entirely of a fleet of sailing ships.

Tim Groza

Signs of a Successful Life

Dear Editor,
As I have aged, and not always so gracefully, my values have changed. It is written that as we get older, we are supposed to get wiser (Job 12:12). I think I have the getting older down to a science. My hair is leaving my head faster than I care to acknowledge, and the “getting wiser” part is under review.

Some of my treasured possessions are soon to be in danger of being discarded or given away. Things I have moved from one state to another, from one basement to another, and from one century to another, now pose a question for me – why? Why did I keep this or that? No one, not even my children, will give two cents for most of my prized possessions. Any money, certificates of deposit, stock, vehicles or property will take center stage, but what about my tools, and my not-so-valuable collections of this or that? What about the collection I have of my vain scribbles? How many trees died because I perceived myself to be a writer? Will anyone read my writings after I'm gone?

The more we acquire during our journey, the more difficult it becomes to assign values to our stuff. Having less, makes the things one has seem more valuable. Our excesses get shelved in our basements, creating the descriptive term “full basement.” The pinnacle of a successful life is attained when one has to rent a storage building to house their possessions. By the time one realizes that less is more, it's too late. The basement is already full and the storage building has been rented.

Gene Vickers

Dan and Dennis

My Granny's brothers were the best fishermen I've ever known. They could catch a fish out of a mud hole. They also loved bird hunting and had some of the best bird dogs in North Alabama. During Sunday afternoon family gatherings they would sit on the front porch and regale the family with tales of hunting, fishing and natural wonders they had visited through the years. Uncle Freeman was the quiet one that never got bent out of shape about anything. Dalton was the more traveled and easy going brother. Dan was one that loved to laugh and was the quiet prankster of the group. Granny used to tell him, “Dan, I can see the devil dancing in your eyes.” And then there was Uncle Dennis. He was a combination of all his brothers and had keen sense of smell and maybe even ESP. He was also bigger than his brothers because he loved to eat, especially cake.

Dennis would show up at the door of my grandparents' home very unexpectedly and for no apparent reason other than the fact that my grandmother had made a coconut cake. We could never figure out how he knew that she'd made the cake. But, each time a cake was baked and cooling Dennis would show up and ask for a piece. Granny even went as far as hiding the cakes she'd baked in a closet on a shelf. And yet Dennis would search the house until the cake was found.

All of the Hyde brothers were what we'd call Bee Charmers. Their Daddy, Clifford, would place a cap off a Coke bottle filled with sugar water on the ground and watch for honey bees coming to it. Then he would watch the direction in which the bee traveled after leaving the sugar water. The boys and their Daddy would walk for a distance in that direction and place another Coke cap on the ground. The process would be repeated until the Bee Tree was found. After finding the tree the boys and their Dad would rob the bees of their honey. Also, the Queen and hive would be captured, and after a few days the whole hive would be transported back to the Hyde Farm at Liberty Hill. The men never used any protective equipment and were rarely stung during this process.

During one of these Bee Tree Honey Robberies my Papa asked to go along. He was fascinated about his in-laws not getting stung by the honey bees. But, he wanted to only watch from a distance because was very fearful of being stung. He watched as the Hyde Family tracked the honeybees and stood a safe distance away as Dan cut the Bee Tree. He watched Dennis and Freeman

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings



Chamber of Commerce

Can you believe it is already May? May is the time in the mountains that the trees turn green and the cars turn yellow. How many of you like to get up in the morning and open the windows or sit on the porch and enjoy that first cup of coffee? We are truly blessed to live in this part of the Country and in a community like ours!

I hope you were able to attend our second “Success in 60.” Matt Meeks of SquareFrame Media did another great job providing insight on how to improve our businesses' social media. We learned there is a difference between someone liking your post as opposed to a comment or a share. We also now know the importance of using the same name, address and phone number on every document or post. I have been known to say that being a member of the Chamber improves your position on a Google search, and now it has been confirmed that Google and other search engines use Chamber membership as a determining fac-

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Blairsville - Union County Chamber President
Steve Rowe



Blueberries

I think that most people enjoy eating a handful of blueberries. Eating them always reminds me of my grandfather because he always puts them on his cereal in the morning. Blueberries grow pretty well here, but there are a few things to be aware of so let's talk about those so that you can have a successful blueberry crop.

If you are selecting a site to plant blueberries, choose a place that will receive full sun for at least half a day. They can grow in shady spots, but the fruit production will be less. Blueberries like soil with a pH of 4.5 – 5.2. This trait makes them well adapted to native soils because most of our soils will naturally be in that range. Therefore, lime is probably not needed when planting blueberries. Rabbiteyes do best with 5 – 6 feet between plants in row and 11 – 12 feet between rows. When planting make sure you don't plant too deep. After planting prune back 1/3 to 1/2 of the plant. This will cause the plant to focus on developing its root system. The first year you want to pick off any blooms, because you want the plant to put its energy into growing roots and not fruit. You can apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 after the plant has begun to put on leaves the first year. The second year after planting put out 2 oz. of 10-10-10 in March and July. Make sure not to over fertilize blueberries, as that can harm them. After the third season, apply 1 oz. of 10-10-10 per foot of height on the bush.

Blueberry bushes do require pruning each year. Once plants reach 6 feet high you'll want to start cane renewal pruning. This means removing 1 – 3 of the biggest canes each winter at ground level. Over a period of 5 years the bush will be completely renewed. New canes are going to bear more fruit than old canes so it's important to maintain this pruning process. If you have bushes that haven't been pruned for a few years, it might take several seasons to get bushes into the 5-year rotation. After you've picked the fruit, you can top plants if they are over 6 feet tall. This will keep bushes at a more manageable height.

Blueberries aren't bothered by many insects or diseases. However, one disease to look out for is mummy berry. It will cause berries to shrivel up and drop. The berries that drop carry the pathogen over to the next year. Therefore, it's important to keep the space beneath your bushes sanitary. Remove any old berries, wood, and leaves. Placing thick mulch around the base of plants will help prevent the disease from spreading as well. Captain is an effective fungicide at controlling mummy berry, but the timing of the

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Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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2. Physical Barriers. Mountains and buildings can obstruct the delivery of service in specific areas.

3. Seasonal Changes. Weather can obstruct cell service delivery.

4. Building materials. Various building materials or designs can block some cell service. This is why some basements cannot get service.

5. Antennae Direction. Companies point the antennas towards the most densely populated areas. If you suddenly lose coverage in a specific area, a tower may have been recently changed to point in a different direction.

Q. How can you define or illustrate what Union County looks like with regards to property found within the county limits?

A. This is a very interesting question because we have much data about land use. As of the week of April 18, 2022, there were 19,485 addresses registered with the 911 system. These addresses are categorized into 9 Land Districts. There are 24,023 land parcels. Of that, 210,558.94 acres are found in Union County, and 732.07 acres are within the Blairsville City Limits. There

are also currently 533 subdivisions in Union County. This information is followed closely by the Union County Geographic Information Systems personnel.

Q. Because we are a rural area, I sometimes worry about how the Fire Department can get water to us in an emergency situation. Can you talk about that?

A. First, let me say that our data shows there are 986 fire hydrants throughout most of Union County. In areas that do not have a fire hydrant, the fire department uses a water shuttle. This is made possible by the fire trucks and tankers that respond to a fire. Most fire trucks carry 1,000 gallons of water and the tankers carry 2,000 gallons. The initial response to any structure fire will be at least two engines and three tankers for a total of 8,000 gallons of water. The fire department then shuttles water from the nearest water source such as a fire hydrant to the fire scene.

The fire trucks and tankers used to fight fire and shuttle the water were purchased through donations to the volunteer fire stations and through SPLOST funds.

Habitat...continued from Page 4A

advertising, and social media management. Marketing techniques are always expanding and changing, and I love to stay ahead of the game and help local businesses reach a greater clientele base.

Since being at Habitat I have been the administrative assistant and am now the marketing director. I manage Habitat social media via Facebook updates, fun videos and information design. Our Facebook group is called "Habitat for Humanity of Towns/Union Counties." Be sure to join the group to stay up to date on all the fun events and sales. In addition, I work on event planning for our organization. Save the date for our Volunteer Appreciation/Recruitment Day, on May 2 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the Habitat parking lot. I design our flyers, brochures and social media posts in efforts to reach our community via different platforms. I also help in the ReStore, greeting and helping customers find what they're looking for. In addition, I manage donations, fundraising in the ReStore, and finances within our outreach programs. I write these articles, create press releases,

and anything else that comes up in terms of advertising for our organization.

What I love most about working at Habitat is the volunteers that we meet who are willing to help others, and the people in our community that we help. It is an incredible thing seeing our community come together firsthand for different Helping Hands projects, the Habitat home build for the Snow family, and financial contributions. We are definitely growing, and it is such an exciting thing to see.

I love the opportunities Habitat has brought to my life, in meeting an amazing work family, an environment to improve and grow my marketing skills, and the opportunity to get our community involved, whether it's on our social media page, our events or Habitat home builds. We are a Christian organization dedicated to empowering and improving homes and lives of community members in need.

We are always improving here at Habitat, and our growth is thanks to our great team and giving community!

Thank you for reading my columns. God bless you and yours!

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

tor for your company's placement. Don't miss the third in the series, "Creating Video & TikTok for Your Business." With all that is going on with Twitter and Facebook, you don't want to miss out on this valuable information. Call Ashley at the Chamber to reserve your seat, and mark your calendar for June 15 at 8:30 a.m. and join us at the Community Center.

The Shoot for the Stars Golf Tournament is sold out,

but there are still opportunities to be a hole sponsor or to donate a door prize. If you would like to be a part of raising money for scholarships for local students, call the Chamber now before it's too late. We will be announcing the results after the tournament, including a very generous donation from one of our local businesses.

Thanks to all our Chamber members and leaders that help make Life Better in Blairsville!

School Board Candidates Meet and Greet Thursday, May 5th

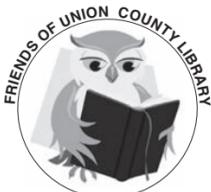
The Union County GOP is sponsoring a Meet and Greet for School District 2, which includes Coosa, Jones Creek, and Pat Colwell precincts. All the school board candidates have been invited, as has Mr. John Hill, Superintendent of

Union County Schools.

The Meet and Greet will be held on Thursday, May 5 at 6 p.m. at the Coosa United Methodist Church located at 767 Mulky Gap Road.

Light refreshments will be served.

Friends of Union County Library Bake Sale Friday, May 6th



Advocating for Libraries, Literacy, and Lifelong Learning

Friends of Union County Library (FOUCL) will have delicious treats on sale to the public in the Community Room at Union County Public Library on Friday, May 6, from 10 AM until 2 PM – or until all items have been sold. We have scheduled this bake sale for the Friday before Mother's Day knowing that our baked goods make excellent additions to Mother's Day celebrations. The funds raised will go towards FOUCL's financial support of Union County Public Library, which includes their upcoming Summer Reading Program.

We are also asking for donations of bakery to sell and will be in the Community Room on Thursday, May 5, from 2 until 5 PM to receive

what you have baked. Don't want to bake or buy? Monetary gifts are always appropriate and welcome. Checks can be made out to FOUCL and mailed to us at P.O. Box 1546, Blairsville, GA 30514 or dropped off at the Union County Public Library circulation desk. This will be our first in-person fundraising bake sale since November of 2019 and we look forward to renewing this tradition.

The next event we are happy to announce is Everything You Need to Know: Ready, Set, Travel on Tuesday, June 7, beginning at 3:30 PM in the Community Room at Union County Public Library. FOUCL is partnering with the library for this gathering. Plan to come and share your travel experiences while picking up new information you can use for your next trip – local, national, or international. Perhaps you can relate to Susan Sontag who said, "I haven't been everywhere, but it's on my list."

FOUCL members hope to see you soon at the library!

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retrieve the honey comb from the tree and then watched Dalton as he captured the queen bee. What he did not know was that while the queen was being captured, Uncle Dennis caught a drone. Remember, a drone is a male honey bee which cannot sting.

Finally, the boys and their father with their bucket of honey walked back to my Papa. While they were admiring the honey comb the brothers grabbed Papa and Dennis released the drone bee inside his shirt. Papa later told me that he just knew he was about to be stung. "That ole bee was a buzzing around next to my bare skin and I was having a conniption." He ran toward home while taking off his clothes at the same time. After 100 yards he had nothing on but his drawers and brogan boots. As you can see, Uncle Dennis was a prankster and loved a good laugh as long as it was on someone else.

After I came along we would go to visit my relatives in Alabama each summer. That trip was our vacation. Really, I can only remember going on one or two trips where we would go to the beach, or let's say to Gatlinburg. Most of our trips always led to the family farm. Each summer while visiting we would take a trip to Smith Lake near Haleyville where we would swim and fish until late in the evening. The whole family including Freeman, Dennis, Dan and Dalton were fishing in Smith Lake during the summer of 1969 when the tables were turned on Dennis Hyde.

A couple of days prior to our trip, Dan and Dennis had gone to the local bait store up close to Liberty Hill to purchase some white-bellied spring lizards to use on trip to the We-Hunt pond. They requested two dozen of the lizards and headed out for an afternoon of fishing. Each man rigged up his rod and reel with some bait and cast out into the pond. Then Dennis noticed that they had been slighted by the bait store. Instead of having 24 spring lizards there were only 15, and these were very small. Uncle Dennis went on a rant and threatened to go give the man at the bait store a whipping. Uncle Dan spent

the next three hours trying to calm down his older brother. He promised to go by the store to get the fellow to make things right.

Two days later found us at Smith Lake, and I just knew we were going to catch a lot of fish. All of my Granny's brothers were there except Uncle Dennis. Finally, he showed up and walked down toward us. Uncle Dan looked at me and winked all while smiling like he was up to something. He told us all how he and Dennis had been cheated at the bait store. Then he told us how he had gone back to complain. Much to everyone's surprise the man had provided an extra dozen spring lizards to him to make up for the mistake before. Uncle Dennis mumbled out loud that he just couldn't believe it. So, Dan said, "Here look for yourself!"

As Dennis approached his brother gingerly shook the large styrofoam minnow bucket which contained the spring lizards. Just as he began to lift off the lid, his younger brother struck the bottom of the bucket and the largest black snake I have ever seen unraveled out of the bucket and landed on

the older brother's arm. That was my first experience with colorful language. Dan turned and began to run through the woods along the lakeshore while his older brother gave chase. I laugh each time I remember the scene of a 250 pound man giving chase to his tall and wiry younger brother, all while spitting out words I had never heard before.

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knowledge and skills to better respond to motor vehicle accidents. We are very proud of our firefighters who participated. We would like to thank the instructors of the Georgia Fire Academy for providing a great class and Mulkey's Garage & Wrecker Services for providing the vehicles.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Williams... continued from Page 4A

application is very important. You must apply it while the flowers are in bloom because that is when the infection occurs. You must spray Captan every 7-10 days during bloom. Serenade is another product that you can spray instead of Captan that is organic, but it is not as effective.

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

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As for an NFT, well, it's a "unique crypto token managed on the blockchain." It's valuable, especially to whoever created it and knows what it is.

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trations. That is accepted wisdom among military strategists and was anticipated as is the attack to come on Taiwan. Wanna wager anything?

Fuel prices decreased and stayed there during the Trump administration. From January 2017 to January 2020 the average price of gas was from \$2.39 to \$2.25 respectively. That included the entire devastating first year of the pandemic.

During Biden's first year January 2021-January 2022 it went from \$2.25 to \$3.29 and way higher later. Don't blame Trump for that turkey.

No, we don't owe it to elected leaders to support programs we disagree with. It shouldn't even be expected. It certainly was "honored in the breach" during Trump's term in office. Especially when said programs and practices may be doing permanent damage to our children's country.

J. Murray Tarter