

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Illusion of Equal Justice

The Department of Justice's years-long investigation into Hunter Biden came to a head last week as the President's son reached a plea agreement on charges



United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde

related to taxes and gun possession. Hunter is expected to plead guilty to two federal misdemeanor counts of failing to pay his taxes in 2017 and 2018, as well as enter into a pretrial diversion agreement regarding a separate charge of illegally owning a gun while being a drug user.

Notably, this agreement will likely result in no jail time for Hunter Biden.

No other American could conceive such a slap-on-the-wrist scenario. Clearly, the President's son stands to benefit under our unscrupulous Department of Justice.

Yet President Biden's sinister scheme and the Deep State's nefarious intentions cannot be overstated. Hunter Biden's sweetheart deal is nothing more than our weaponized government attempting to conceal the Biden family's corruption and distract Americans from the truth.

But the American people won't fall for this nonsense. For years, the DOJ and FBI have blissfully turned a blind eye to the Biden family's crooked behavior and shady foreign business dealings. Even now, as we have troves of evidence detailing Joe Biden's criminal misconduct and pattern of corruption, these politicized agencies maintain laser-focus on obscuring the truth to protect both the President and his family members.

And while Hunter Biden enjoys this unjust protection, President Donald Trump is bearing the brunt of our weaponized government.

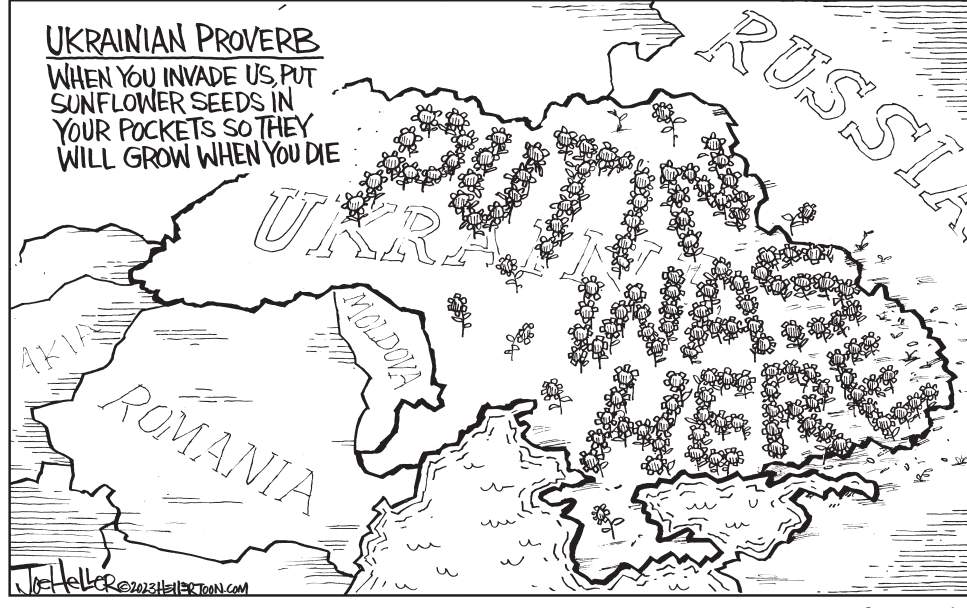
As you know, Trump faces more than 30 felony counts in a federal indictment related to his alleged mishandling of classified documents. In crystal clear truth, our sitting President is weaponizing the Department of Justice against his political rival for the offense that he committed — though these cases are undoubtedly worlds apart.

Rightfully, many Americans cried foul — arguing President Trump's federal indictment is the most damning example yet of our two-tiered system of justice. These concerns led to the conveniently timed news of Hunter Biden's sweetheart plea deal — revealing a desperate attempt by the DOJ to create an illusion of equal justice.

But Americans deserve more than a facade of fairness. Rest assured, the DOJ-Hunter Biden deal will not deter Congress from fully investigating the Biden Crime Family's corruption — with Joe Biden at the very center. As this congressional probe presses on, I look forward to working with my colleagues to deliver accountability to the American people.

### UKRAINIAN PROVERB

WHEN YOU INVADE US, PUT SUNFLOWER SEEDS IN YOUR POCKETS SO THEY WILL GROW WHEN YOU DIE



## Canadian Wildfire Smoke

We constantly promote controlled burns in our forests around here for many reasons but one of the most important is for fire managers to control where the smoke goes using sophisticated computer models. These models can predict with good accuracy the smoke mixing height and the direction it will go away from populated areas. A wildfire has a mind of its own and happens at the worst time for smoke dispersion which sends it wherever the winds may carry it, many times in communities where it can cause problems for people with respiratory problems.

RC&D Executive Director

Frank Riley



Over the past six weeks, hundreds of out-of-control wildfires have spread across Canada causing mass evacuations and burning through millions of acres. While the Canada wildfire season runs from May through October, such destruction this early in the season is rare. Canada is on track to have its most destructive wildfire season in history. This Canadian crisis has not been limited to the Great North. Smoke from the fires has spread across large portions of the U.S., affecting air quality for millions as the fires rage on without signs of stopping.

The fires season is also lasting longer and hotter. Spring is coming weeks earlier and fall is coming weeks later. More time for the fires and grasslands to burn. In 2021, Canada experienced its hottest day ever when Lytton, British Columbia hit 49.6 degrees Celsius, 121 degrees Fahrenheit, smashing the previous record of 113 degrees. It tied California's Death Valley as the hottest place in North America that day. In the Canadian prairies of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where fires now rage, drought has hit particularly hard. According to the Canada Drought Monitor, all 10 provinces are experiencing abnormal dryness, moderate or severe drought.

The jet stream, which creates weather and moves it from west to east, also contributes to the fires. It's getting weaker because its strength depends on the temperature differences between the Arctic and the south. The Arctic is warming faster than the rest of the world, which makes the jet stream weaker. That's one reason why we see hot, dry weather systems stall, allowing heat domes to build and set the stage for fire. According to the Canadian Wildland Fire Information System, the destruction from these fires up to this point in the season has been 13 times worse than the 10-year average.

New York City has suffocated under a thick smog that turned the skies orange and shrouded its skyscrapers and the Statue of Liberty. Warmer temperatures and severe droughts mean forests burn faster, burn hotter and burn bigger, and the warming is happening at a faster pace in countries with higher latitudes. Dry, hot weather also breeds more lightning. In a normal season, half of Canada's wildfires are started by lightning, but those fires account for more than 85% of wildfire destruction. The other half are human caused like here in Georgia (65%). Most fires in the boreal forest of northern Canada are started by lightning. A one-degree Celsius increase in temperature amounts to about 12% more lightning. So the warmer it gets as the climate heats up, the more triggers there are for fires to burn.

In Quebec, for example, fires were sparked by lightning. Elsewhere in the country, these fires have been human caused in various ways from discarded cigarette butts to debris burning, to sparks from passing trains. Harsh weather conditions are fueling these fast-spreading fires, making them extremely difficult to combat. The country is currently at "national preparedness level 5," meaning Canada has fully committed all its national resources to mobilize the fight against the fires. As part of that "level 5" declaration, "international liaison officers" from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa are flying in to help fight the fires. Firefighters are also coming from the U.S which has deployed more than 600 U.S. firefighters, support personnel, and equipment to support Canada as they respond to these record wildfires that are intensifying because of the weather systems in place over north America.

Fire and weather authorities hold little hope for relief any time soon. The Canadian government recently issued an updated outlook for the wildfire season stating that, "current June projections indicate the potential for continued higher-than-normal fire activity across most of the country throughout the 2023 wildland fire season due to ongoing drought and long-range forecasts for warm temperatures." We can only hope that the winds will shift and take the Canadian wildfire smoke away from the US and over unpopulated areas where it can dissipate and not create problems for people.

Always call 911 when you see smoke, but don't complain to the Forest Service when the sky is hazy and smokey because there is nothing, they can do about it now. Canada and our west need to follow our lead here and use control burns to reduce fuel that can lead to destructive fire and smoke. There are some things we know here in Georgia better than other parts of the country and that is controlled fire is much better than wild. When you see smoke don't get mad, be glad that our forest managers are working to prevent a disaster like the Canadian smoke. Are you Firewise? Check out [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) and [www.garxfire.org](http://www.garxfire.org)

## The Zip Tie Economy

They say the United States has a "mixed economy." It combines elements of a command economy, where government or central authority regulates economic activity, and a market economy where prices respond to supply and demand.

Economists with a more historical perspective describe the evolution of our economy from agrarian to industrial, to today's economy based on information and services. Information and services is a big umbrella, but looking across the laptop through my window to the Amazon box on the deck that was delivered yesterday by UPS, it seems to mean we buy and sell information on where to buy things manufactured somewhere else.

Catherine Austin Fitts described our system as a "tapeworm economy," where financial "instruments," derivatives, and complex bundles of monetized debt extract value from commerce. At every turn and in every transaction some kind of local, state or federal authority also feeds off of the transaction. Government now taxes future generations to sustain current levels of spending. Bloated government and corporate entities exist, not by creating value, but by extracting it.

Thinking outside the Amazon box delivered by UPS, we are beginning to develop our own terms for understanding the economy. For the record, I'm here to tell you that for the average American, we now live in a Zip Tie Economy. You heard it here first. If you don't follow, bear with me.

Living in the country and disdaining home garbage service, every week or so Tracey and I bundle up our Amazon boxes and other refuse and haul it all to the transfer station. Afterwards we go into town and support the local economy in various ways. We refer to this trip as our "dump date." "Nothing but the best for my gal," he says. "He treats me like a queen," says she.

Yesterday our dump date was almost spoiled when a quarter mile from the house, the windshield wiper, brand new, top of the line and expensive, detached itself and danced on the hood of the truck. The cheap plastic clip had failed at precisely the wrong place, exactly where the most torque would occur in the movement of the wiper. If you wanted a wiper to fail, you couldn't have picked a better place to skimp on plastic.

We were not stranded in the rain, however. Having been aware for some time of our transition to a Zip Tie Economy, I was able to reach into the glove box and retrieve a quick solution to our problem. A zip tie saved the day, and I think I've fundamentally improved on the wiper design since the plastic in my tie is of a superior quality to that being used by the wiper manufacturer.

Zip ties secure the throttle cable on my mower because the inferior clamps manufactured in Asia and sold by an American company failed. They anchor the tarp covering that mower because the elastic tie downs manufactured in Asia and sold by an American company failed as well. They hold in place some of the wiring under the hood of my pickup because the replacement cable guides sold by the manufacturer cost half as much as the cables.

Some people might prefer the term, "Duct Tape Economy," but the principle is the same. Zip ties and duct tape both serve to compensate for the deficiencies in quality suffered by so many manufactured goods. Technology has enabled us to build more sophisticated devices, but it has also enabled us to build things more cheaply. Just how thin can we make that metal part before it fails? Keep in mind that we want it to fail eventually, preferably just after the warranty expires. How much can we save the company if we shave off another nanometer from the widget that connects to the thingy?

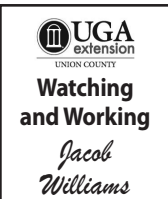
The history of quality makes for an interesting study. As a good friend recently retired from one of our few remaining industrial giants explains, American companies in the 1980's felt threatened by the quality and affordability of automobiles manufactured in Japan, and so for a decade or so, quality became synonymous with a sustainable business model in the US. Eventually, however, as the tapeworm infestation grew, the manipulation of stock prices began to be prioritized over quality.

We keep a plentiful supply of duct tape at home. I carry zip ties in my toolbox and there are some in the emergency kit of every vehicle. Alas, the tapeworms are now infesting my supply of zip ties. The last ties I ordered were ever so slightly, almost unnoticeably thinner than the ones I bought last year.

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

## Fire Ants

Fire ants are very common throughout Georgia. Thankfully, we don't have as many in the mountains as they do south of us. However, once you experience a fire ant bite, you won't ever forget it. Another problem with fire ants is that you rarely get just one bite. Fire ants were first reported in Georgia in the 1950s. They've been found all the way from North Carolina to Texas, and down to Florida. Let's talk about fire ants and things that you can do to control them so that they don't take over your lawn or pasture.



If you can manage to get an up-close look without being bitten and stung, you'll see that fire ants have two nodes between their abdomen at the end of their body and the thorax in the middle of their body. Fire ants generally like to stay in open grassy areas.

Fire ants are most active when temperatures are between 70 and 85. In the fall fire ants are active because they are foraging for food. This makes fall the best time to treat them. Treatment during the spring and summer is also possible, but effective population control will be less likely. When it's really hot during the summer time fire ants will burrow deeper into the ground, making them more difficult to treat. Treatments in the summer are best done in the morning or evening when it's cooler.

Using a bait will be the most effective way of controlling fire ants. Amdro is the main ant bait that is used for fire ants. Broadcast the bait in a circle around each mound. It's important to know that Amdro is not labelled for use in vegetable gardens. It has to be used in scenarios where the plants growing there are not going to be eaten, like your lawn. If a few mounds remain after seven to ten days, a follow up application of Orthene will be effective against those problematic mounds. Take a long stick and quickly put a hole in the center of the mound. Then fill the hole with insecticide to eliminate those mounds. When applying pesticides always make sure to read and follow the label.

I have also seen people using orange oil mixed with soap and other ingredients. This treatment is effective because it eats away the ant's skin. However, it will also kill any other insects, grubs, or worms that are in its path. It could also strip away the outer layer of any roots that it meets.

There are not many biological controls for fire ants in the United States because they are an invasive species. Fire ants are native to South America and have many natural enemies there. Researchers have to be very careful about introducing a natural predator, because the effects of that introduced species are unknown on our ecosystem.

If you have any questions about fire ants and fire ant control, contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at [Jacob.Williams@uga.edu](mailto:Jacob.Williams@uga.edu).

### 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](mailto: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.

## Guest Columns

From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial.

Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea. Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper. If so, please write.

Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

The Towns County Herald is an independent and non-partisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articles covering local events, etc.

## Letters To The Editor

### An Open Letter to Congress

Dear Senator/Representative,

On behalf of all Americans, I implore you to pass permanent legislation that ALL current members of Congress must pass a mandatory, structured, and comprehensive U.S. Civics exam, no less rigorous than that which is required of all immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship. Passage of this same exam must be an eligibility requirement for all future Congressional candidates.

It is not unreasonable to demand that the people who make our laws must understand, comprehend, and comply with those laws to any less degree than those who are expected to obey our laws. The testing and grading circumstances and conditions must be as exact, and failure to pass said exam results in disqualification.

I ask that this proposal be implemented - as well as effective - immediately.

Thank you,  
Gary St. Lawrence

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Shawn Jarrard  
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Todd Forrest  
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Derek Richards  
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Jordan Hyatt  
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Office located at: 518 N. Main St. Suite 3 "The Mall", Hiawassee

Phone: (706) 896-4454 Fax: (706) 896-1745 Email: [tcherald@windstream.net](mailto:tcherald@windstream.net)

Or mail to: PO Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546