

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Promoting Peace

*Eliminating Arch-Terrorists Promotes Peace*  
By Yonatan Hamburger and Tzali Reicher



A week and a half ago, twin explosions in capital cities in the Middle East shook the buildings in which they occurred hours apart, but the reverberations were felt thousands of miles beyond.

On July 31, Fuad Shukur – the military leader of the Lebanese-based Hezbollah terror militia – was eliminated by a precise terror attack conducted by Israel. The death of Shukur, a leading and lifelong terrorist who was responsible for the deaths of thousands of Americans and Israelis over his evil career, shocked the leadership of Hezbollah and their patrons in Iran, but more bad news was still to come. Just hours later, in a brilliant operation that is still being dissected, Ismail Haniyeh – the leader of Hamas and a chief cheerleader of the brutal events of October 7th, 2023 – was killed in a house maintained by the Iranian regime, right in the heart of Tehran.

These incredible events were punctuated by these men's heinous track-records, and their miscalculated belief that they would be able to evade the long arm of justice for their trail of blood-drenched crimes.

With a \$5 million bounty on his head, Shukur was wanted by the United States for Beirut barracks bombings that claimed the lives of 241 American servicemen. He also planned operations that killed dozens of Israelis, including the Hezbollah cross-border raid in 2000 in which Hezbollah abducted and killed three Israeli soldiers. For decades, Shukur led Hezbollah's military operations and development into the largest terror army in the world, with the help and financial backing of Iran. Yet he remained a ghost. He thought he would be able to evade the consequences of his actions by avoiding technology and living underground, but Israel proved its capability to exact a measure of justice for his victims when the time was right.

Haniyeh's death made waves for different reasons. He was in the leadership of Hamas for over two decades by the time he authorized the massacres, rapes, and kidnapping of October 7th last year. Haniyeh calculated that living in Qatar, getting fat off the aid money sent by well-intentioned countries for the Palestinian people, and posing as a diplomat and peace negotiator, he would achieve an "extreme terrorist makeover" and pass himself off to the world as a statesman.

But they both severely miscalculated Israel's tolerance for terror attacks on their civilians. Shukur and Haniyeh both felt emboldened to keep attacking Israel, confident that the world's pressure campaign on Israel would keep their responses limited and restrained.

But finally, Israel had enough.

On July 27, Hezbollah fired a rocket that killed 12 innocent children playing soccer in the Israeli town of Majdal Shams. The attack shocked Israel out of its overly cautious approach to the war. Ignoring ridiculous calls to not respond and to "de-escalate" (as if the murder of children wasn't escalatory), Israel took necessary and decisive action and removed Shukur from the volatile Middle Eastern chessboard.

Haniyeh, responsible for the deaths of thousands, was traveling to his paymasters in Iran when Israel seized the opportunity to eliminate the leader of a death cult intent on its destruction. This strike also sent a clear message to Iran, the root of the region's turmoil: In the words of the Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to then-Senator Joe Biden, "We are not Jews with trembling knees."

For too long, Israel has let the world dictate how it should fight its wars to a standard to which no other country has ever been expected to adhere. From Washington and Europe to newsrooms across the world, Israel is lectured to and criticized as to how they fight savage enemies that are poised on every border who wish to annihilate them.

But this futile diplomatic approach is responsible for making the region even more dangerous by convincing Iran and its proxies that they can wage indiscriminate war against Israel, and that all will be good with them.

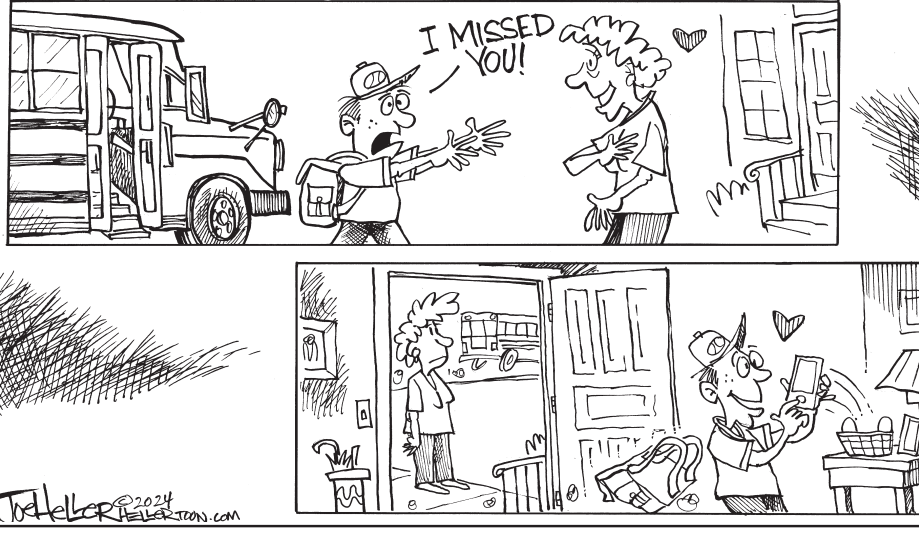
Hamas continues to hold over one hundred Israeli and American hostages and refuses to surrender. Hezbollah rains hundreds of rockets on Israeli cities and towns. Israel has had enough of following the world's narrative that every Israeli action is escalatory while every terror attack is justified retaliation.

Israel has embraced the age-old wisdom that President Ronald Reagan described as peace through strength: Peace comes when the enemy realizes they can never defeat you and surrender is the only way.

The world is a better place now that Haniyeh and Shukur are gone. Their removal ensures that the possibility of peace and prosperity grows a little more.

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## AS THE YEAR BEGINS, MORE SCHOOLS ARE BANNING CELLPHONES



Todd Heller 2024

## Mid August Morning

A reliable indicator of the perfect morning temperature is when butter left on the sill of an open kitchen window is firm enough to hold its shape but soft enough to spread on a biscuit with approximately the same amount of force it takes to drag a razor across two-day stubble. Not to get too technical about it, but that temperature is about 64 degrees.

Waking up to that perfect temperature in mid-August is one of the reasons I prefer the higher elevations. In the spring, the mountain dwells in the past, but in August, it glimpses the future. While the hillsides are still verdant from the generous rains, a few leaves begin to curl up and fall, and before the month is over, chilled ribbons of high country air will flow down and mix with the warm breeze for a thrill just this side of a shiver.

The mountain in August is a man in his forties, still possessed of youthful vigor but discovering just a touch more forehead than he had before. The flowers of summer have faded, but the fall blooms are yet to come, and the harvest.

When I was slightly taller than my grandfather's walking stick, we would sometimes take a walk in late August to a special place he called "the old sawmill hollow," where we scouted out the location of chinquapins that would be ripening in September. I haven't seen a chinquapin growing wild in years.

Like the red alders that purify creek water and prevent bank erosion while sustaining insect-eating birds, chinquapins are now scarce. They have fallen victim to the undergroving practiced by developers aiming to satisfy customers who, frankly, I wish would just move to Yorkshire. In Yorkshire, the picturesque, treeless rolling hills already match their idealized rural landscape. The silt that turns the water brown after a rain is a clear indication that this is certainly not Yorkshire.

The rooster crows as the gray sky in the east yields to strawberry and magenta. A lone crow, a scout, flaps lazily overhead toward the ridge where he and his kin keep watch. They are quiet now as the valley wakes up, and if something should move that doesn't look right, they will tell us about it. A gardener I know is frequently raided by crows. He shoots them and puts them on spikes as a warning, and still they come. We provide the crows a home, and they have never once taken as much as a kernel of corn. Nature can be ruthless, but it isn't stupid.

Peaches and I surprised a young female bear on our morning walk to feed the chickens, quite safe from bears in their reinforced chicken fortress. She was cute as a button and dangerous as a bear. I know she's female because of her big "Cuthbert Rumbold" ears. She's still young enough to climb a tree when startled, but the broken branches tell me that she'll soon be beyond that as she starts putting on weight for the winter.

I wish there were some chinquapins to eat her add to that winter coat. I'm hoping she'll dig up and help that yellow jacket nest behind the blueberry bushes before she moves on up to higher ground. "Aren't you afraid of the bears?" Cautious, not afraid, like I'm cautious with the electricity that surrounds me. I'm not going to crowd a bear or get between her and her cubs just like I'm not going to stick my finger in an electrical socket.

The tomatoes have grown heavy with fruit and they need tying. I'm determined to pick those peaches before the squirrels do, and Tracey's bell peppers are ready to harvest. These are things best done before the heat of the day, but there's time for a second cup of coffee as the first rays of the sun peek over the ridge, and there's always time for gratitude and the counting of blessings.

## Letters To The Editor

### Free Stuff

Dear Editor,

The American landscape has changed and continues to morph into something older Americans don't recognize or understand. Basic work ethic and individual responsibility disappear more and more with each passing year. Today, businesses are suffering because of lack of participation in the labor market. Free food, free medical, free college and even free phones allows those so inclined to do anything except work and be responsible for their own provisions and necessities.

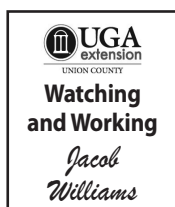
There was a time in our country when a little bit of embarrassment accompanied free stuff at the expense of others. Handouts to those not willing to work are made possible by the taxes being levied on those who do work. Politicians use the promise of "free stuff" to garner votes, but those promises are quickly forgotten until election time rolls around again.

The Bible says in Proverbs that "the slothful shall go hungry." There's a monumental difference in being disabled because of age or illness, and actually needing assistance, and being slothful and shirking individual responsibility. It's past time for the freebies to stop being handed out to those able to work and take care of themselves. I assure you, not a one of those able to work will starve to death if the free stuff is stopped. They will get off their duff, go to work again, and America will be better off for it.

Gene Vickers

## Tomatoes

I have been getting a lot of questions about tomato diseases this summer. The summer started off so dry that we did not have very many disease problems. However, it started raining at the end of July and diseases seemed to explode on tomatoes. Let's talk about some of these diseases and what you can do to manage them.



Tomatoes are affected by a litany of diseases. Most of them require moisture and humidity to spread. So, while the dry period was tough on plants because it was so hot, if you were able to water your plants, they hopefully made it through. However, when the rains came back in July, that created a cool, wet environment which is ideal for plant disease spread and growth.

One of the common diseases that we have seen is early blight. This is also called Alternaria. There was an explosion of it because the rainy conditions caused the temperature to drop into the ideal range for infection to occur. Older leaves near the ground show symptoms first with small brown or black spots. The spots grow in size until the leaf is engulfed and dies. It will progress up the plant and the lower leaves will drop off. If conditions are right it will progress until only a few green leaves remain at the top of the plant. The disease survives on infected debris left in the field, it can also carry over on seed.

Septoria leaf spot can look very similar to early blight. Septoria tends to create smaller spots on the leaves, but it can also turn the entire leaf brown like early blight. It also starts on the lower leaves of the plant and moves upward. In some cases, you will have both diseases on the same plant. The fruit will not be infected with Septoria. It can survive on infected plant debris, weed hosts, and seed. Infection tends to occur at cooler temperatures than early blight.

Late blight causes irregular spots on the leaves and the fruit. The lesions on the fruit are dark and greasy looking. It spreads quickly and plants will die in a few days. Late blight tends to be an issue here when we have unusually cool and wet summers, although there will be some of it present every year.

Blossom end rot is technically not a disease, but it creates symptoms that look like one. It is a calcium deficiency. Most of the time, if you have a pH of 6-6.5 for your tomatoes, the soil has enough calcium in it and you don't need to add any. However, because of the drought we've had you might still have issues with blossom end rot even if you have enough calcium. Calcium requires a lot of water to move through the plant. So, if you were not watering your plants regularly or deeply enough when we had no rain, you could still see blossom end rot.

Tomato plants are going to get diseases and die. It is inevitable. Your goal should be to keep them alive long enough so that you can get tomatoes off of them. Spacing plants out and staking them so that good airflow happens will help reduce disease. Removing and destroying all plant debris, including roots, each season will help. Using seed from reputable companies and only saving seed from healthy plants is important. Rotate the varieties in your garden so that pathogens don't build up. Plant varieties that have good disease resistance. Finally, there are fungicides that can be used to slow the spread of disease.

If you have questions about tomatoes, contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

## Newsflash, Kamala

On numerous occasions, Border Czar Kamala Harris has erroneously claimed that "an undocumented immigrant is not a criminal."

This assertion is absurd, ignorant, and patently false. After all, the very first act an illegal alien commits in the U.S. is unlawfully entering our country. So, regardless of their future actions or behavior, they have already committed a crime by illegally setting foot in America.

Yet plenty of illegal aliens add on to their rap sheets once arriving in our communities.

Headline after headline, we've witnessed the heartbreaking realities of illegal alien crime. Last August, Rachel Morin, a mother of five, was murdered in Maryland by an illegal alien from El Salvador. Earlier this summer, 12-year-old Jocelyn Nungaray was murdered in Texas by an illegal alien from Venezuela. Back in February, 2-year-old Jeremy Poo-Caceres was slain in a shootout involving an illegal alien from El Salvador.

The list goes on and on.

These tragedies are devastating families nationwide – including the Peach State. Six months ago in our own Athens community, Laken Riley, a 22-year-old nursing student, was brutally murdered by an illegal from Venezuela.

All of these heinous crimes were 100% avoidable – because none of these illegal aliens should be here in the first place.

Yet Border Czar Kamala Harris won't call them criminals. Moreover, she refuses to use the term "illegal aliens" because it's "offensive."

Newsflash, Kamala: An illegal alien is a criminal. And what's offensive is pretending they're not.

It's a slap in the face to Americans, legal immigrants, and the rule of law to coddle illegal aliens and justify their crimes to score political points. Unfortunately, Kamala's radical record is littered with policies and rhetoric that do just that.

As the Biden-Harris Administration's intentional illegal invasion continues to wreck our nation, we desperately need leaders who uphold the law and put Americans first. Rest assured, I remain committed to advancing policies that secure the border, deport illegal aliens currently residing in our country, and protect you and your family.



United States Congressman Representative Andrew Clyde

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## Towns County Community Calendar

|   |                      |          |
|---|----------------------|----------|
| <b>First Monday of each month:</b>          |                      |          |
| School Board...                             | HS/MS Media Center   | 6:45 pm  |
| <b>Every Tuesday:</b>                       |                      |          |
| Storytime for Children...                   | TC Library           | 10:30 am |
| <b>First Tuesday of each month:</b>         |                      |          |
| Hiaw. City Council...                       | City Hall            | 6 pm     |
| YH City Council...                          | YH City Hall         | 6:30 pm  |
| <b>Second Wednesday of each month:</b>      |                      |          |
| Board of Elections...                       | Elections Office     | 4 pm     |
| <b>Third Monday of each month:</b>          |                      |          |
| Planning Commission...                      | Temporary Courthouse | 6 pm     |
| <b>Third Tuesday of each month:</b>         |                      |          |
| Commissioner's Mtg...                       | Courthouse           | 5:30 pm  |
| City of Young Harris Planning Commission... |                      |          |
| Meeting Room in City Hall                   |                      | 5 pm     |
| TC Water Authority Board Meeting            |                      | 6 pm     |

## Towns County Herald

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