

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

# OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

## Pays to be a Biden

As House Republicans' investigation into the Biden Crime Family ramps up, I believe it's vitally important to keep you and your family informed on the latest developments – especially since the mainstream media refuses to report the truth.



United States Congressman  
Representative Andrew Clyde

House Oversight Committee Republicans have released a third bank records memorandum detailing newly obtained information about the Biden family's influence-peddling schemes. The memo outlines how the Bidens and their business associates received millions of dollars from oligarchs in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan when Joe Biden was Vice President.

These latest bank records bring the total amount of payments that the Bidens received from foreign sources to over \$20 million.

Clearly, it pays to be a Biden. Alarming, this figure could only grow larger as the House Oversight Committee continues its investigation. Whether it's \$20 or \$20,000,000, bribery and extortion by a government official should spark grave concern for every American – regardless of party affiliation. As we know, the Bidens weren't offering goods or services in exchange for hefty sums of money. Instead, as Hunter Biden's former friend and business partner, Devon Archer, explains, they were selling "the brand."

Folks, "the brand" is the Bidens – specifically, the access and political influence associated with the family.

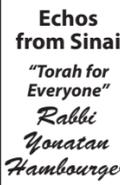
One of the stunning findings in the newly released bank memo describes that in April 2014, a Kazakhstan oligarch, Kenes Rakishev – who worked closely with the Kazakhstan Prime Minister – wired \$142,300 to one of the Bidens' shell companies after meeting with Hunter Biden. The very next day, the shell company made a payment for a sports car for Hunter – in the exact amount of \$142,300. Following the luxury purchase, Hunter and his business associates arranged for Burisma, a Ukrainian gas company, to visit Kazakhstan in June 2014 to evaluate a deal between Burisma, a Chinese state-owned company, and the government of Kazakhstan.

In 2014, Hunter Biden also received millions of dollars in payments from Russian oligarch Yelena Baturina. Interestingly, then-Vice President Joe Biden had dinners with both Rakishev and Baturina in Washington, D.C. in the spring of 2014 and 2015.

This is just the latest evidence that Joe Biden allowed the Biden brand to enrich his family while he served in the Obama Administration. Please know that House Republicans are committed to leaving no stone unturned in our pursuit of truth, transparency, and justice.

## Subdue the Earth!

"Pray for the welfare of the government," a great Jewish sage once said, "for were it not for the fear it inspires, every man would swallow his neighbor alive." An established justice system is the bedrock of any civilized society. Without it, the world would be chaotic and dangerous.



Echos from Sinai  
"Torah for Everyone"  
Rabbi Yonatan Hamburger

This week's Torah (Bible) portion, (Deuteronomy, Chapter 16:18-20:9), includes the commandment, "You shall appoint judges and officials...in all the settlements that the Lord your G-d is giving you, and they shall govern the people with due justice."

Thus, for example, in a case concerning theft, the court accepts the testimony of the accused if he confesses. In fact, the Talmud (the primary source of Jewish law) says, "admission by a litigant is equivalent to a hundred witnesses."

Yet, in a case of capital punishment, a confession cannot be accepted by the court. In fact, two witnesses are required to testify against the accused. So, in the case of one's possessions, a confession is accepted. But in the case of one's life, a confession is not accepted. Why is there a distinction?

Unlike material possessions, human bodies are Divine property, on loan to man. The book of Genesis (1:27) states, "And G-d Created man in His image, in the image of G-d."

"In His image" means people have the intelligence, self-awareness, and the capacity to choose to pursue good or its opposite. Genesis (1:28) goes on to say that G-d gifted these qualities to mankind to "subdue the earth." According to the Grand Rabbi of Lubavitch that means people should respect the holiness of their bodies and bring holiness to all their material possessions as well, in fact to the whole world. Then everyone will perceive that all existence, in all its details, expresses the glory of G-d.

The teaching that humans are created in the Divine Image is a call to action to subdue the world, rather than be subdued by it, not to accept personal challenges as fate, but rather to meet those circumstances and overcome them. Bear in mind, of course, that while humans are created in His image, only G-d is all-powerful. You may encounter circumstances you cannot control; but you can still exercise freedom to choose your perspective and how you react to challenges. That's what it means to be created in God's image.

Wishing you G-d's abundant blessings,  
Rabbi Yonatan Hamburger  
yonatan@chabadruralgeorgia.com

## 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.

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## When Difficulty Comes

When I woke up this morning to write, I made the mistake of scanning the headlines with my first cup of coffee. Every pixel seemed to confirm Cipolla's 5 laws, and my Muse went back to bed. So as we have done several times in the past when travel or trouble caused the ink to run dry, we looked outside the box for help from our old friend, Marty Levine. Marty is a Georgia native who spent much of his life living in Texas working for a major oil company. He and his wife, Cindy, recently returned to Georgia and are enjoying an active retirement.

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"And do not be drunk with wine which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit."

– Saint Paul, Letter to Church at Ephesus.  
Before I scare off any readers, this piece is not about Christianity. As a Christian, however, I know that the truths I find in Christianity have broad applications with many having a resemblance to those found in other world beliefs. And besides, whether one believes or not, there is much good writing in the Bible.

I have encountered of late those who have experienced that which is inevitable in life: sadness and difficulty, ranging from the burden of financial troubles to the soul wrenching grief at the loss of a loved one. Perhaps only an accomplished nihilist who has dispensed with all meaning in life would say otherwise, but in the bargain, they have sacrificed any chance of joy.

In some cases, we bring difficulty upon ourselves, and in doing so invariably bring despair to those who care for us. Likewise, others may visit despair upon us by their actions. Sometimes despair comes upon us slowly, while at other times it sudden and sharp – what I refer to as life's "drive-by shootings."

I have also observed that people respond to difficulty differently, with some being able to move on in time while others, to their detriment, stew for the rest of their lives. When in despair, questions are asked: "Why did this happen to me" or "How could they do this to me" or "When will there be justice?"

Often, there are simply no satisfactory answers to these questions. I know those who have seen counselors and in the final analysis, the only answer they leave with is "time will heal" or "you must just put this behind you and move on." In time, unchecked despair leads to dissipation or depression and with that, all hope for joy is lost. Thus the nihilist who decides their own fate and the person who neglects their increasing depression find themselves at the same destination – in a place of hopelessness, burdened by a life without meaning.

I know quite well a couple who lost their daughter in her early 20's to an incurable condition that plagued her most of her life. They spent years sitting with her in hospital, at her bedside while she was wracked in pain. They were with her in the hospital when the heart monitor flatlined and the alarm for the nurses sounded. Surely, they asked those very questions, and I am quite certain no satisfactory answers came.

Back to the brief passage from Saint Paul. I will take some liberty with the context of the passage, which is the Christian effort to become more like God – who is all good – by replacing that which is not good – in this case too much wine – with Himself, in the form of His Spirit.

Imagine you have a glass of oil that you want to fill with water. You have two choices as to how to do so. You could pour out the oil and then refill the glass with water, or you could begin pouring water into the glass and water, having a higher density than the oil, would push the oil out of the glass.

In the passage from Paul I have always wondered about the order of the process he proposed: That one needs to empty one's life of the bad – to pour it out – in order to make room for the good, or if by simply taking in good, one would displace the bad. I could argue the point either way, but the effect is the same. In the end we must jettison the despair and replace it with goodness that brings joy.

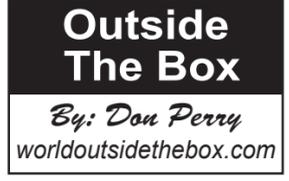
So, what is the point of all of this? In asking the "why did this happen" type questions, those who have experienced tragedy are in a sense looking for a logical reason to allow them to empty their lives of sadness. Once they have a reason, then they believe they can pour out the pain. Alas, in most cases such an explanation never fully comes. Thus, the means of returning joy to their lives is to begin to fill their lives with good things and allow the good – like the water – to force out the bad. To allow that which dissipates to be displaced by that heavier stuff that brings joy.

The couple I know who lost their daughter, whether they did so consciously or not, did just that. While the loss of a child can never be forgotten, they did over time assuage the sharpest pain by filling their lives with good things. They became more involved in their church and volunteer activities. They took up new interests like golf. They made new friends and traveled. They poured themselves into their grandchildren and moved several times so that they could be near their son and his family. In time, the tragedy they suffered no longer defined them, rather, they were defined by the goodness they had taken on and the joy they brought their family and friends.

Often metaphors like the water and oil example can be a source of even deeper meaning. Imagine if instead of having glass of oil you had a glass of water. Try pouring the oil into the water. It will not displace the water, at least not very well. Most of the water will remain in the glass. In a similar fashion, those whose lives are filled with good can withstand onslaughts of difficulty. Good has more power than evil. Love can overwhelm hate. There are no guarantees to avoiding life's difficulties, but a life filled with good has a better chance of bearing up when difficulty comes.

I once heard a statement that I have come to understand as true: "The best measure of a person is not how they act, but how they react." A life built on good, particularly that of the eternal nature, can react to the difficulties of this world better than one without. Such as life has more solid stuff to draw upon. And with that, we are back to the topic I promised to not discuss – Christianity.

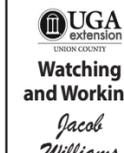
Postscript: For the curious, I was in the room as well when that young woman breathed her last. She was my sister, Susan.



By: Dan Perry  
worldoutsidethebox.com

## Yellow-Legged Hornet

Some of you may have heard of the yellow-legged hornet that has been found in Georgia. This is a new invasive species. This is a different species of hornet from the Asian Giant Hornet that was discovered in Washington state a couple of years ago. These new hornets are primarily a threat to pollinators. They pose the same level of threat to people as most other hornets or wasps. Let's talk about these new invasive species a bit.



Watching and Working  
Jacob Williams

They originate from Southeast Asia. They are in the Vespa genus, which means that they are true hornets. Many of the wasps that we call hornets here are not technically hornets since they are not in the Vespa genus. The bad news is that hornets are predators of bees and wasps. Bees are very important for pollination. Even wasps can serve as pollinators. Figs are an example of a food that is pollinated by wasps.

Our native bees and honeybees would struggle to defend themselves against these new hornets. These hornets are bigger, stronger, and have a thick exoskeleton for protection. They will form a nest, which means that they communicate with each other when they find a tasty meal, such as a beehive. These yellow-legged hornets prefer honeybees. They can be identified by their legs, which are dark brown on the top half and yellow on the bottom half. The adults are about 3/4 of an inch long or 2 centimeters. They also have a very narrow waist. Their fourth abdominal segment has a yellow stripe on it.

So far, these hornets have only been found in Savannah. Because pollinators play such a crucial role in agriculture and the environment the Georgia Department of Agriculture has taken a very proactive role in working with the USDA and UGA to trap, track and eradicate these pests. If you think you have found a yellow-legged hornet you can report it at the Georgia Department of Agriculture website (<https://agr.georgia.gov/>). You can also bring a sample by your Extension Office to help with identification. Any samples brought by the Extension Office should be dead or in a tightly sealed jar.

I still get questions about the Asian giant hornet, or 'murder hornet'. The name of this insect has officially been changed to the northern giant hornet. They have not been found in Georgia. They have only been found in the Northwest corner of Washington state. The northern giant hornet has not been spotted in the US since 2021. Hopefully, they won't be found and eradication efforts that were taken quickly prevented them from establishing. Similar efforts at eradicating the yellow-legged hornet are underway in Georgia to keep this pest from becoming established. Most insects that I have received that someone thought was a northern giant hornet were a European hornet. While invasive, these have been around for over 100 years. Some have been the cicada killer, which is a native wasp.

If you have questions about the yellow-legged hornet contact your county Extension Office or email me at [jacob.williams@uga.edu](mailto:jacob.williams@uga.edu).

## Letters To The Editor

### Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Prohibited

Dear Editor,  
I am responding to the report on the Election Board meeting in the Towns County Herald Aug. 16. I was present during that meeting where a resident had some concerns regarding the Dominion voting machines being used throughout the state.

Though the resident believes that Towns County was not "subject to foul play," his concern was that other precincts using ballot-scanning machines had faced "problems" with voter integrity. He did not present any evidence for his views.

David Plunkett, a member of the Board of Elections, spoke up to say that he had listened to the video the resident submitted featuring two people sharing their views on the dangers of using voting machines. Sharing his training as a retired attorney and former election specialist, he devoted time to reviewing their comments against current Georgia law requiring the use of voting machines, etc., studies on vulnerabilities in Dominion machines, studies on hand-marked versus machine-marked paper ballots, court cases involving conspiracy theories about election fraud, a State Election Board hearing on the legality of hand-marked paper ballots, and the 2019 General Assembly debate on the current law requiring counties to use voting machines.

The Herald's story captured his point about hand-marked ballots having issues such as a higher error rate, if hand counted, than machine-marked and counted paper ballots. As an adjudicator for the county's elections regarding hand-marked absentee ballots, I can see why errors on hand-marked paper ballots would be greater, as voters sometimes don't follow directions in marking their ballots, thus causing some of their votes to not be counted.

However, the story missed his most important point. As Mr. Plunkett made clear while hand-marked paper ballots might be preferred by some voters, Georgia State law prohibits it. Towns County does not need to be penalized by State-issued fines and sanctions for breaking the law.

Mr. Plunkett properly referred the resident to communicate his views to our State elected officials, Sen. Bo Hatchett and Rep. Stan Gunter, since the decision to require machine-marked paper ballots was made in the State Capitol.

For now, the General Assembly did not see fit to change this part of the law when it passed a package of election law changes after the 2020 vote, and our Governor and Secretary of State have dismissed the false claims of wide-ranging voting fraud in Georgia and expressed complete confidence in the voting machines.

Sincerely,  
Charlotte Sleczkowski

### 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)

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Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

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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

## Towns County Herald

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Kenneth West  
Owner/Publisher

Shawn Jarrard  
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