

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Flood Safety Preparedness Week

Union County Emergency Management joins Georgia Emergency Management/Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) and the National Weather Service (NWS) in recognizing March 10-14 as Flood Safety Preparedness Week. This initiative encourages all Union County and the State of Georgia residents and visitors to educate themselves on how to prepare for potential flooding in advance.

"Last fall, during Hurricane Helene, Georgia saw firsthand the devastating impact of widespread flooding," said GEMA/HS Director Joshua Lamb. "Flooding is one of the most common and dangerous weather threats we face, which is why it's critical for everyone in Georgia to be prepared and know how to stay safe before, during, and after a flood."

Over the past six years, there have been 10 large-scale flooding events which made the list of "Billion-Dollar Disasters" nationwide. Last Fall, nearly 100 river gauges observed flooding conditions across Georgia. FSPW is a great opportunity to learn about the hazards of flooding and how to protect our businesses, families and homes in the event flooding occurs.

Flood Safety Preparedness Week showcases a different theme each day raising awareness about flooding risks while offering residents the opportunity to discover effective safety strategies. Monday, March 10 – Flood Safety and Awareness: Create a plan, build a ready kit and communicate with your household and community so you're prepared in case of a flood.

Tuesday, March 11 – Turn Around, Don't Drown: Never attempt to drive through floodwaters. Two feet of moving water can carry away a full-sized car. Wednesday, March 12 – Types of Floods: The most common cause of flooding is water due to rain and/or snowmelt that accumulates faster than can be absorbed by soil or carried away by rivers. Thursday, March 13 – NWS Services: Take time to understand the products and services NWS provides to update on changing weather and river conditions, including the new Flood Inundation Mapping (FIM) services, which will cover Georgia in Fall 2025.

Friday, March 14 – NWS Partner Services: Get ahead of the next disaster by knowing the important players before, during and after floods -- including flood insurance. Many homeowners

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Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief
David Dyer



The Successful Journey

Aaron Rodgers received no Division 1 college football scholarship offers. Nor was he the first quarterback selected in the 2005 NFL draft. But he went on to win the league MVP multiple times. His Packers won the Super Bowl in 2011.

Rodgers' journey to success left him with profound emptiness. "I enjoyed my private life, but winning the Super Bowl changed all of it," Rodgers said. "I was really struggling with who I was and who I wanted to be... Dealing with success is one of the greatest teachers in life, because it can make you question a lot of things, make you try and figure out who you are. I was definitely looking for other ways to kind of fill up that hole inside."

Simone Weil spoke of a "God-shaped hole (which) we try stuffing full of all sorts of things." Identity idols are among those other things. Tim Keller wrote, "Sin is the despairing refusal to find your deepest identity in your relationship and service to God." If you win the Super Bowl and still sense something is missing, chances are, success was your idol. You can't fix that with the psychedelic drug ayahuasca or a four-day darkness retreat, which Rodgers tried.

The Bible tells of Paul's success (and notoriety). His heritage, education, and position made him zealous to destroy people's lives. Then came his Damascus Road encounter, where Jesus called him to a new identity. Looking back, Apostle Paul dismissed his former success as "rubbish." He wrote, "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." Looking forward he said, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:8,14). Jesus put success in context saying, "Whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?" (Matt. 16:25-26).

"Life is a journey" is cliché, but apt. It's not blazing your own unique path. Nor is it struggling to summit a high peak. It's more like asking for directions and agreeing to start down a well-worn path, which leads to life and peace. It is a path that begins with a small gate and continues as a narrow way. You meet fel-

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All Things New
Wayne Fowler



From Your Commissioner

The View Grill located at Union County Government's Butternut Creek Golf Course is a hidden culinary gem. Have you ever tried one of their Smashburgers? Perched above the well-groomed fairways, this charming restaurant offers more than just sustenance for golfers, it is open to the public Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Diners can enjoy their meals while taking in breathtaking mountain vistas and sweeping views of the golf course, making it an ideal spot for both casual lunches and memorable dining experiences.

The restaurant boasts daily specials complemented by a full-service bar featuring select craft beers, and the outdoor patio provides an especially enchanting setting for those who prefer their meal overlooking the beautiful mountain setting. Rated 4.5 out of 5 by diners, The View Grill has earned its reputation for excellence through a combination of quality cuisine and exceptional service. Guests particularly praise their generously portioned dishes, with their juicy jumbo chicken wings and beer battered onion rings standing out as local favorites.

The restaurant, in combination with the beautiful Community Center ballroom, also serves as an elegant venue for special events, where the scenic surroundings create an unforgettable backdrop for any occasion. The ballroom has been used for local business functions, Chamber events, private parties, destination weddings and UCSO training classrooms.

Crystal Gaylord leads operations at The View Grill and Community Center, both known for New American cuisine and a sophisticated atmosphere. Under her management, the restaurant has maintained its reputation for combining exceptional dining with stunning views, offering guests a memorable experience that goes beyond just the meal. As General Manager, Gaylord oversees all aspects of the restaurant's operations, from maintaining the highest standards of service to ensuring guest satisfaction at an affordable price. Her management style focuses on creating an experience that keeps customers returning.

I support The View Grill and the Community Center as they are both valuable resources for our community and the residents who live here in Union County. Anyone interested in speaking

Union County Commissioner
Harold Collins



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America FIRST

On Friday, Feb. 28, President Trump and Vice President Vance reinforced that strong, America First leadership is back in the White House.

It's been more than three years since Russia unjustly invaded Ukraine. Sparked and fueled by Joe Biden's weakness, the war has led to death and destruction in both countries. The Biden Administration cheered the war-fighting on, constantly calling on Congress to approve billions of dollars in aid to Ukraine.

In total, American taxpayers have spent more than \$175 billion on assistance to Ukraine – with zero oversight.

Instead of funneling more of our hard-earned tax dollars overseas as Ukraine and Russia tear each other apart, President Trump is committed to ending the war and putting these two countries on a path to lasting peace.

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United States Congressman Representative
Andrew Clyde



Letters to the Editor

Sorghum Festival

I really got good enjoyment out of the Blairsville Sorghum Festival back in the '70s when I marched in the parade with the High School Band. We had three or four bands from other counties participate with us in "Street Drill" competitions. Of course, we usually won First Place. Could we help it if we had one heck of a band director back then? Sadly, the bands stopped coming altogether, and it was just us, just a parade.

I remember Sheriff Harlan Duncan always leading it off on his horse. Special days and times. The old Standard Telephone float.
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Report Card

At the end of this first month of President Trump's administration, it is time for a report card.

The political elite, deep-state bureaucrats and other Democrats have earned an A-plus for staying on message. Their belief that transgender boys must be allowed to play on girls sports teams and that only bureaucrats are experts enough to know what is best for American citizens are just two examples. Of course, climate change is the greatest threat to mankind. Their constant message is that democracy is endan-

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Axe the Senate

We aren't supposed to talk politics in the Lodge, but I ran into Ron in the parking lot this morning, the third such warm Spring morning in a row.

Ron, I says, "I figured out a prize big enough to convince the Red States to give up their sweetheart Senate Congressional deal."

Ron says, with slight sarcasm, "How's that gonna work, Sir Herald?"

"Well," I said, undeterred, "You remember which state closed down their state senate in

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Generational Brain Teaser

My father loved to tell jokes and riddles to stump me and my siblings. I recall this one distinctly because it sent me thinking in a new direction. Let's see if you can follow the simple logical answer. Now listen closely and let your brain do some wandering. It might help to draw what I tell you, especially when I reveal the answer. Here goes...

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Letters to the Editor

Storm Cleanup

The county did a great job last week removing trees out of the roadway after the storm. I had called while on my way home, as there was a tree down across both lanes of traffic, and within a short time the county had the tree cut up and out of the roadway. While I was there, they were getting multiple calls for other locations all throughout the county.

Chris Collins
***Editor's Note: Union County Manager Tony Hughes reported that the Road Department spent many hours cleaning up after the March 4-5 overnight storm, with an estimated 60 downed trees impacting county roads plus several on state highways.

Sorghum Festival

As a citizen of Union County, I can't believe that the argument between the organizers of the festival and the commissioner is played out on the front page of the paper. This should have been settled before it went to press between the two parties. It is made to look like there was a misunderstanding. Has that ever happened in the 55 years prior to the new commissioner?

Jack Curington

Pause the Largesse

Wow! All the left-leaning locals wrote in to the North Georgia News at the same time!

The sky is falling because the 10% of American charitable recipients are having some sort of conditions placed on their life subsidies.

Contemplate that number and further contemplate that the same people who are complaining of service cut backs are the same ones who

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Re: Sorghum Festival

It's beyond me why anyone would think Commissioner Collins wouldn't want the Sorghum Festival! He's a farmer, for goodness sake!

I think he got very bad advice on two counts. First, to meet with one member of an organization and not the entire group; and second, if he was considering not holding the event this year, he should have publicly laid the groundwork and taken input for perhaps eliminating it.

I'm a fan of the Commissioner's open-door policy and his advisors gave him "closed-door" input!

Jeanne Mills

Old Barns

As I look back on my life I can see the importance of old barns in the shaping of my character because of the lessons I learned around them and the history associated with them. Silently they stand through all types of weather; hot and cold along with wet and dry conditions.

These old barns never complain or protest. They never discourage or encourage. Old barns simply do the jobs for which they were intended, and if you will sit back and watch you might learn a thing or two from them.

My Papa had an old barn with a loft in the top and stables down each side with two wings that provided storage space for implements. At one time the loft held bales of hay for his cattle. But, when round hay balers were invented the loft was too small for the round bales of hay and the loft became a place to collect old junk like an old bicycle, old boots and jars. I can remember my Granny fussing at Papa to clean out the old loft, and over time it accumulated more and more junk.

One summer day Papa and I were out mending a fence on the James Place and decided to head back to the house for some lunch. Granny was there with my little brother and a younger cousin named Darron. While my grandmother was busy preparing lunch, the younger boys had walked up to the barn and climbed into the loft where they found the treasure trove of junk. They decided to clean out the junk and keep the good stuff. They began throwing old shoes, jars, boxes and anything else they could find which was deemed as junk out the door of the loft onto the ground below. As we walked up to the back door of the house we heard laughter up at the barn and noticed the barn yard was littered with all the old junk from the barn loft. I learned two lessons that day. First, when your wife suggests that you should clean up an old junk barn you should listen. Second, if you are watching two young boys which disappear and become quiet, you should go and find them.

Every morning and every evening, the first and last chores of the day were to milk Old Floss which was the red Ayrshire milk cow. One of my earliest memories is walking to the old barn with Papa or Granny for the previously mentioned chore. The stable door would be opened and sweet feed would be placed in the feed bin. Old Floss would walk into the stable and a stool would be placed at her flank. I watched as her teats would be washed and then Papa would begin stripping each teat to start the milk. I learned some important things about milking the cow.

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Spring Ephemerals

Spring ephemerals are (in my opinion) some of the prettiest native plants that we have in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Some of these plants can be quite rare or difficult to find. They usually have some unique site requirements, which makes them difficult to transplant. The difficulty in cultivating some of these makes them all the more beautiful when you find them in the wild. These plants are called spring ephemerals because they come up quickly in the spring, bloom, and then quickly die back. The suddenness that they appear and disappear with makes them difficult to find sometimes. Let's talk about some of these spring ephemerals, all of these are shade loving plants.

Trillium is a fairly common spring ephemeral. There are many different species of trillium, which have different colors of flowers, although white, red, and pink seem to be the most common. Sweet Betsy is one species that has a deep red flower. The leaves on it have a variegated look to it. Trillium always comes up on a single stalk that turns into 3 leaves. The flower is usually on the top of the plant, but with nodding trilliums the flower is on a stem that drops below the leaves, hiding the bloom.

Trout lily has a beautiful yellow flower. The leaves are a very attractive mottling of green and purple. This is a very low growing plant with thin stalks that support the intricate flowers. Trout lily grows in the shade. It tends to grow on drier sites. There are also white trout lilies, but they don't seem to be as common in our area.

Mayapple is an interesting looking plant that sends up a single stalk with leaves drooping over that make it look like an umbrella. Mayapples tend to grow well in wet areas. A plant will have a single white flower, that is hidden beneath the leaves. It does produce a fruit in May that kind of looks like an apple. Hence the name, mayapple. It is not recommended to eat these fruits as they are toxic.

Dutchman breeches have a unique flower. They are white and yellow. If you use a little imagination they look like upside-down britches (breeches) that would belong to a dutchman. This plant is an important pollinator forbumbees. The leaves look a bit like fern leaves, but less glossy.

Bloodroot has unique shaped leaves that change as the plant ages. It tends to like places that stay fairly dry. It blooms early in the spring with white flowers, that look similar to daisies. The juice from the root is an orange-red color. Native Americans had many uses for this plant

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UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



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First, do not just pull on the teats to get the milk out. You must strip each one by beginning at the top and bringing your fingers down the length of the teat. Watching my grandfather milk his cow was fascinating to me as a little boy. The person milking a cow also had to learn some technique. First, you had to sit close to the udder. Then you buried your head in the flank of the cow and you should never look up and back toward the tail. The tail was always used by the cow to swat flies even while she was being milked. And many times her tail might have wet manure in it. If you were looking toward the back of the animal and she flicked her tail toward you, you would get a face full of manure. The most important thing I got from learning to milk a cow was to appreciate where my milk comes from. There are many people in this life that have no idea what it is like to have a wet, manure laden cow's tail slap their face. I think it would do them a world of good to experience this just one time.

This past week a good friend sent me link that explained about the color of red barns. Many barns are painted red and have been for a long time for a simple reason. In the old days Linseed oil was used to paint barns to preserve the wood, and rust from metal was mixed in with the linseed oil to help protect the wood from

decaying organisms. This combination of rust and linseed oil gave the barns their red color.

And if you travel into Kentucky you will find many black barns for which there is a good reason. Many of the black barns were once used as Tobacco Barns to dry Burley tobacco. After harvesting the stalks of tobacco farmers will hang it in barns too dry. This harvesting takes place in the fall when temperatures are cool and you want some warmth in the barn to help cure the tobacco. As you know black will absorb heat, therefore a black barn will be warmer than a lighter colored barn.

Also, the making of bourbon is important in Kentucky and you will see the barns where bourbon is stored are painted black. After the bourbon is made it is stored in barrels. A black bourbon barn will be as warm as 130 degrees in the top of the barn during summer. It is my understanding that during the curing process water and alcohol evaporate at different temperatures. The black color of bourbon barns will help pull more water out of the wooden barrels and leave a more desirable amount of bourbon. I know my explanation is simplistic, however, that is what I was told while on an agricultural tour in Kentucky.

I will soon be 67 years old and I am still learning from old barns!

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including dye and insect repellent. The flowers will open during the day and close at night. The leaves are deeply lobed. I think the leaves look a little bit like the bat signal.

Ramps don't have a very showy flower. They are in the allium genus, which is the genus that contains garlic and onions. They are edible and have a very strong flavor to them. Historically, ramps are an important part of Appalachian cuisine. Today they have become more difficult to find on public land so there are regula-

tions regarding wild harvesting them.

There are many more spring ephemerals for you to discover. When these plants are found in the wild, it is best to leave them there and enjoy them as wild plants. There are nurseries where you can buy seed for these plants if you want to have them in your yard.

If you have questions about native plants or spring ephemerals contact your County Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

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and all of the other floats that were elaborately designed and decorated, not just thrown together. The cloggers, the covered wagons and horses. The parade went for miles and was usually 20 minutes long. The last parade I attended was sometime back in the 1990s, and I could tell it was dwindling away.

Then when they moved the festival out of town completely, I said then it was a matter of time before it would all just vanish. Thing is, once you move something from its location after many, many years, or make changes, it is never the same after that.

Just like the Georgia Mountain Fair in Hiawassee. Once it moved out of town and on down the road to its current location, it's never been the same. Even that is dwindling away as prices soar and vendors don't come much

anymore, and they changed the days and times now that they are even available.

I may not see it in my lifetime, but I say eventually that will also come to pass. In a way, I can see the point, but in other ways, it's sad this generation won't know unless they go back in the archives.

Now, if they could move the car shows and etc. from off of the square to a better location... I have almost run over kids darting across the street in front of me, and that is as dangerous as a cocked gun. I hope it won't take this actually happening before changes are made regarding that.

Anyway, God Bless the memories, and I pray you all have a great day and week ahead.
Blessings,
DeeAnne Barnes

Kramer... continued from Page 6A

A man went to visit a male prisoner in jail. After leaving, the guard asked the prisoner who his visitor was, and this was the prisoner's reply: "That man's father is my father's son." Ready for the answer? It was the prisoner's son visiting, and here is why - HE is his father's son. Confused yet? Get out a pen and paper and you will see. I may be jumping the gun again with the HE and confusing you, but you'll understand soon enough with hints along the way. Here goes...

Draw three circles on two rows. The first circle label son, the second is the prisoner, while the third is the prisoner's father. Do the same on the second row. Now say the brain teaser again. Start drawing lines up and back until you get it. Keep saying the theme lines over and over again. You will be drawing

what you say.

Let's begin. Line one, that man's father, connect a line from the son's circle to the prisoner's circle, aka the prisoner is his son's father. Now leave circle 3 alone on the first line and go to the next line of three circles. Forget circle 1. Draw a line from circle 2, the prisoner, to circle 3, the prisoner's father, aka the prisoner is HIS father's son.

Therefore, to put it another way, his father was a father to his son, his son being the prisoner, just like he, the prisoner, is a father to his son (circle 1). HE is his father's son. The HE is the prisoner talking about himself, and HIS FATHER is his son's grandfather. You may have to go back to your circles and lines 1 and 2 again.

And now you know the story's end.
Lisa Kramer

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the '30s?"
"You told us about the Cornhusker Unicameral months ago."

"Well, close up the Senate Chambers, and give each state their own Supreme Court Justice."

Ron quickly replies: "That would give the President way too much appointment power."

Then the solution quickly appeared in both their minds: "Have each State appoint their own Justice for the Supreme Court, giving us three healthy governmental entities: the House of Representatives, a fifty Justice Supreme Court,

and the President, each with equal powers."

"Good thinking", Ron replied... "Any other constitutional changes you care to propose this fine Spring dandelion and daffodil morning, Sir Herald?"

"Yes, one other thing: convert all elections to ranked voting where you make three choices. If your first choice didn't receive a majority and your second choice received more votes than your first choice, then your second choice counts, etc." This is similar to Instant Runoff Voting, which is now used in Maine and Alaska.
Harry Holdorf

Clyde... continued from Page 6A

In fact, as part of negotiations to end the Russia-Ukraine War, the Trump Administration crafted a rare earth minerals deal that would provide America with access to Ukraine's minerals as back payment for the billions of dollars in U.S. aid to Ukraine. The deal offered a win-win solution to both countries and delivered progress in discussions to end the war for good.

Therefore, the plan that Friday was for President Zelensky to visit the White House and simply sign the deal alongside President Trump. Yet Zelensky came with other plans and grievances - which he opted out of sharing behind closed doors.

In front of the media and during a meeting in the Oval Office, Zelensky repeatedly tried rehashing the details of the deal and demanding more from the U.S. This led to a war of words between President Trump, Vice President Vance, and President Zelensky.

Throughout the heated exchange, Zelensky appeared ungracious and impolite - shrugging, rolling his eyes, and muttering under his breath as President Trump and VP Vance refused to give in to his demands.

At one point, Vance spoke for millions of Americans when he simply asked Zelensky, "Have you said 'thank you' once this entire meeting?"

The meeting ended off camera, with President Trump eventually kicking Zelensky out of the White House. The President publicly shared that Zelensky "disrespected the United States of America in its cherished Oval Office. He can come back when he is ready for peace."

Make no mistake, President Trump and Vice President Vance were standing up for We The People.

Collins...

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with Crystal Gaylord about the Community Center can contact her at 706-439-6054.

I hope to see you at The View Grill taking advantage of one of their budget-friendly daily Early Bird Specials (3-5 PM), satisfying your hunger at Chicken Wing Wednesday's or joining your friends for a night of fun and fellowship at Thursday Night Trivia with the all you can eat buffet.

Fowler...

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low travelers along the way, which is a joy because few find it (Matt. 7:14).

You can be one who does. To know Christ is to have a successful life journey. That is as true for a Super Bowl champion as it is for you.

Resource: The Alpha Course can help with your spiritual journey. It is coming to Blairsville on March 18. Visit Alphausa.org/try.

Chamber...

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ball reached the Elite-8 in the State tournaments, the wrestling team had a State Champion and 2 runner-ups, three members of the cross country team placed in the State and the Chorus Large Group received the highest score ever in their annual competition. I know I may have failed to mention someone, but the point is that we have a lot of students that have not only been excelling in the classroom but have gone beyond to make Union County Proud.

These students represent the future workforce of Union County. Many of the businesses that not so long ago had to close January through March now look to have a bright future as Union County Schools prepare their students as Union County's future workforce. Thanks to the Union County students, teachers, coaches and administration for helping to make Blairsville Panther Proud!

Dyer...

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policies don't cover floods. Be financially ready for a flood event by visiting [fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program](https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program) and remember, flood insurance takes 30 days to go into effect!

For more information and resources, visit www.georgia.gov/plan-prepare/ready-georgia or https://www.weather.gov/ffc/flood_preparedness_2025.

Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Burch... continued from Page 6A

gered by all Trump supporters.

The Republicans earn a B-minus for staying on message. They are good on the closing of the border and following science in the fact that they affirm there are only male and female genders. They are failing at telling citizens the timeline as to how energy production will lower the cost of goods and services. They are failing to explain steps being taken that will ensure "we the people" are in charge of government, not deep-state bureaucrats.

The political elite, deep-state bureaucrats and other Democrats earn an A-plus for being hypocrites. They all talk about Elon Musk not being elected and how the Department Of Government Efficiency (DOGE) is not one of the 400-plus Federal Government agencies, which of course it is. When they disagree with closing government agencies that do nothing for the citizens, they run to an unelected Federal Judge to get a temporary restraining order to keep the agency open.

The Republicans earn an F on being hypocrites. They kept their promise to close the borders, and to deport illegals, starting with the worst. They created DOGE to stop waste, fraud and abuse. If you keep promises you make, you don't make a very good hypocrite.

The political elite, deep-state bureaucrats and other

Democrats get an A for planning ahead. They seem to be setting up for the most violent summers this nation has seen. The leaders of the Democrat Party shouting they will "fight in the streets," and their new theme song "we fight from dawn to dusk" makes clear what is planned. They are ready for the George Soros funded army to take to the streets this summer (they don't riot in cold weather) to turn the country against Republicans. This is all so they can claim we must return them to power in the 2026 elections.

The Republicans get a B-minus for planning ahead. Fulfilling the promises of the 2024 election will not be enough. The social unrest this summer needs to be addressed with a clear plan now. In addition, Republicans need to communicate how they plan to keep citizens safe, healthy and economically secure.
George Burch

Tarter...

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justify the addition of millions of new recipients over the past four years.

Their whining rings hollow.

Every three months our national debt increases by a trillion dollars of tax money involuntarily removed from our pockets.

Did we vote on that? "Catholic" Charities Inc is not "charity" when it's taken from us. That is the Marxist "Redistribution of Wealth" Obama likes to moon about.

We can legitimately "donate" at Mass if we are so inclined, although I wouldn't give corrupt organizations a scuffed-up dime.

There are plenty of legitimate charities like St. Vincent de Paul or even a local food bank actually doing the work the Lord requested of us.

In our country, local charity has been replaced by federal socialist policies that are bankrupting our country and robbing our children of a life like we have enjoyed.

Let's pause the massive largesse and start anew with some sensible policies that truly are a safety net for the most vulnerable among us.

I worked for the legislature on Capitol Hill; I know first-hand the extent and abuses of our tax collections.

"OPM."

J. Murray Tarter