# Opinions

# Everybody has one...

All Things

#### A New Year

People see a new year as a starting point. There will be New Year's Resolutions, gym memberships, and everyone wants to start that new diet. For Union County Fire Department, a new year means reflecting back on what we have accomplished last year and, most importantly, beginning to implement the objectives of this year's plan.

To me, there are two types of people in this world, planners and non-planners. I am a planner. I like

to have an idea of what we need to do, how we are going to do it, and most importantly, why. We plan in order to have a guide for future actions and to reveal any potential obstacles. However, not everything goes as planned. We use plans to give us direction.



Every November, we sit down and update our strategic plan. We start with a SWOT analysis where we review our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This measures our progress and makes us aware of any changes that must be addressed. We then review last year's objectives and measure our progress.

Objectives that were completed are expanded upon as needed. Objectives that were not completed during the year are evaluated. They are then either scrapped or moved to the next year. Once the review is completed, we look into the future and develop goals for the next five years concentrating mainly on the upcoming year. Objectives for the next year are then created. Two major elements that branch from the strategic plan are

programs and projects. These are created to fulfill our goals and objectives. A program is something that is on-going. We have several programs including Training, Pre-Incident Plans, Health and Wellness, Public Education, and Smoke Alarms, just to name a few.

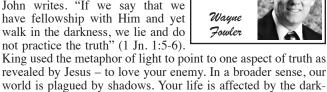
A project is something that has an ending date. Examples may include apparatus purchases or the building of fire stations. We create goals and objectives for each program or project and evaluate/update them each year along with the strategic plan.

The overall strategic plan is an all-encompassing, broad view of how we would like to see the department in the future. Does everything go as planned? Sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn't. The environment may change and priorities change with it. However, we are continuously looking into ways that we may improve and better serve the community. Union County Fire Department ~ Our Family Protecting Your Family~

# **Life-giving Light**

Martin Luther King, Jr. inspired many with his words and deeds. During his 1957 Christmas sermon in Montgomery, Alabama, he based his strategy of non-violence on Jesus' admonition to love your enemy. "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that," King preached. "Have we not come to such an impasse in the modern world that we must love our enemies - or

Light is a metaphor for truth in the Bible. "God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all," John writes. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth" (1 Jn. 1:5-6).



ness of deception. That's no surprise, as God has revealed to us that it's a fallen world – at least for now. It's a dark world that misunderstands human origins. The resulting confusion leads people to believe they can create themselves in their own image. What some call "expressive individualism" has led to the hubris of medical interventions and autonomous truth claims that deny the Creator. In hindsight, victims of bad ideas realize their stumble in the darkness. The light of

truth offers healing within God's ideal for human identity and

It's a dark world that denies any ultimate meaning. If you are but the product of an impersonal and material universe, then you must create your own meaning if any is to be had. The result is aimlessness or at best, hollow attempts to "make a difference." The light of truth says God loves you and has a plan for your life. That plan includes an offer of fellowship with God. He will direct your life to be part of something far greater than yourself - a worldwide enterprise of sharing His love and truth with your

It's a dark world that has no destiny. If this is all there is, your expectation is "when I die, I shall rot." Hope is limited to life in this fallen world. The light of truth says otherwise. Beauty, love, and altruism suggest a transcendence to life that is not ma-

See Fowler, page 5A

# **Commissioner's Questions**

Q. I am confused about all our local governments. I received my property tax bill from the county in September and they were due by December 20th. When I asked about an issue with the school, I was told that I should contact the school directly. If I pay my property tax bill to the county, why should I have to contact the school system for information? A. Georgia government can be

very confusing for newcomers to the from Union state and sometimes to those of us County Commissioner Paris

who have been here a while. There are three main levels of very independent government in all Georgia counties. Each handles their own business separately! You have City Government, (City of Blairsville), School Government (Union County School System) and Union County Government. Since each gov-

garding one of these, you should contact them directly because the other governments will not have any answers. Q. Can you explain each form of government and how they function? City, School and County?

ernment is independent of the others, if you have a question re-

A. Yes, I offer the following three explanations:1. City of Blairsville Government – The City of Blairsville has five elected council members who are elected at large. They also have an elected mayor who also manages the city. The city levies and collects its own property taxes and receives a large por-

tion of their income from water and sewer service. They also have their own police force and employees. 2. Union County School System - The school government is made up of five Board of Education members elected from certain voting districts in the county. The School Board members then appoint a School Superintendent to manage and operate the school system. The school system also has their own security team (Police Force). The Union County Tax Commissioner collects

3. Union County Government - The county government is completely separate from the school and the city government.

their property taxes on the combined tax bill you receive from the

county. School taxes are sent directly to the school system. The

school sets their own property tax rate based on their financial

See Paris, page 5A

#### The Need for Israel...

"The Need for Israel in a Modern World' By Yonatan Hambourger and Tzali Reicher

In recent weeks, Jewish communities worldwide have been captivated by the timeless tale of Jacob and Joseph as narrated in the latter portion of the Book **Echos** 

from Sinai

"Torah for

Rabbi

Yonatan

of Genesis, as they are studied in the weekly Torah porclassic The

story goes that after Hambourger being sent to Egypt

by his envious brothers that were jealous of his close bond with their father Jacob, Joseph underwent a remarkable transformation. The experience he gained from a life of adversity coupled with divine providence enabled Joseph to become a trusted advisor and administrator in his adopted homeland, ascending to the position of viceroy thanks to Pharaoh's recognition of his wisdom. Joseph's sage counsel was instrumental in safeguarding Egypt from the devastating seven-year famine that would have otherwise

> See **Hambourger**, page 5A Letters to the Editor

> > Thank You, Ava

News stories about Ava Sharp, the Union County

High School senior who has spearheaded the ef-

terials. She should be applauded for her foresight

nosed Type 1 and Type 2 diabetics two or three

times a week and had many diabetics in my prac-

tice, I often urged the Union General Hospital

Administration to start a Diabetes Education

Center here in the county. We have no endocri-

nologist. We have many nurses and nurse prac-

titioners who are Certified Diabetic Instructors.

They build all necessary ortho and women's

health programs and buildings, but as a Primary

Care Physician, I could not spend the time nec-

essary, and it is essential to teach diabetics about

lifestyle changes, drugs and diet, as this would

See **Quigley**, page 5A

Re: "Clyde Gets It Wrong Again"

an ounce of sense think that any U.S. Senator or

Congressdoobie would even bring to the floor a

are Leftists trying to throw that and make it stick

see that pass or even considered in D.C. Oops,

limits or a line-item veto first, and those ain't

See Tarter, page 5A

The Portal and Pop-Tarts

it out. Both are well over 500 pounds. It will be a

fair fight, right? Well, hold on. One of the bears

is missing his claws. He's still a powerful and

agile animal, but he has little chance of winning.

His primary offensive and defensive weapons,

on the gridiron Dec. 29 felt like watching that

one-sided grizzly match. Except, that fight was

boring, and I'm sure the fans who paid big mon-

See Ripma, page 5A

ey to sit in the AT&T Stadium felt cheated.

It would be permanent political suicide.

The only people seriously talking like that

If we were \$34 trillion in debt, we wouldn't

Heck, Congress would vote for term

Imagine watching two male grizzlies fight

Watching Ohio State and Missouri battle

College bowl games might be in a down-

resolution to cut Social Security or Medicare?

As we've asked before, does anyone with

Dear Editor,

to Conservatives.

happening.

Dear Editor,

we are \$34 trillion in debt.

claws, have been pulled out.

Proves my point though.

I have been following the North Georgia

As a retired physician who often diag-

e I diabetics with needed ma



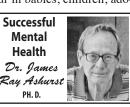
# THE REST OF THE YEAR

## Loneliness I

Nearly one-half of adults in the United States experience feelings of loneliness daily. (U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy)

Everyone on planet Earth has to deal with loneliness from time to time. It is no respecter of persons. It can occur in babies, children, ado-

lescents and adults in marriage and in single life. It can create a sad, dreary feeling. It sometimes becomes an Ray Ashurs emotion that we simply have to "ride



through" until we get to the other side.

Loneliness can disturb our peaceful souls. and stir up dismal feelings. Even in a room filled with people we love, we can still feel lonely. It doesn't provide us much notice that it's waiting at our doorstep. It knocks and comes right on in. As a result, we may feel like a survivor on a deserted island. Our loneliness can even construct a wall between others and us.

The real challenge in dealing with loneliness is realizing that we need to have some type of contact with a living creature, and then actually doing it. Our loneliness is propelling us toward receiving some type of attention. Whether it's a pet or a person, we crave the acknowledgment. In my own life, there have been times when I would go to the grocery store just to sit and to watch - I just needed to have my loneliness taken care of. I knew that to solve the loneliness would require my being in the midst

Loneliness can be paralyzing because one feels miserable and forgotten. You and I may feel lonely and forgotten, but you and I are never truly alone. God is always with us no matter how

Loneliness occurs in the young, old, rich and famous. In the book "Invitation: Billy Graham and the Lives God Touched," the authors Basyle and Adam Tchividjian (grandsons of Billy Graham) tell the story of Dr. Graham being in south Florida for a board meeting. While there, Dr. Graham was feeling lonely. He knew what to do – he looked up some friends who lived nearby and went for a visit.

Loneliness can be sad, painful, corrosive, and depressive. Its power can turn a sunny, bright day into a dreary, lackadaisical, miserable one. For the individual, it has the person lacking enthusiasm and even feeling cheerless while going through the corridors of the day. The day does not seem ever to end. When a person is enduring a time of loneliness, there is a loss of interest in life's activities. The staggering fact is that one in three people in America is impacted by loneliness, and one in 12 is affected severely.

See Ashurst, page 5A

# Chamber of Commerce

Did vou know that Jan. 9 was National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day? On Tuesday morning, we were honored to be able to host "Coffee with A Cop" where the community was able to get together to thank our local Law Enforcement for all they do. Thank you to all those

that came out to show their appreciation for local Law Enforcement. You cannot have a good community without a caring Law Enforcement that takes

County Chambei Steve Rowe



pride in keeping our community safe, and Union County has some of the best.

Our Annual STAR Student Banquet is next month, and we are excited to recognize two STAR Student winners. The STAR Student must have the highest score on a single test date on the SAT and be in the Top 10% or Top 10 students of their class based on grade-point average. The STAR students choose a STAR Teacher to share this recognition. We also will be recognizing six additional students, teachers, and alumni

See Chamber, page 5A

#### Blueberry Pruning

Blueberries grow pretty well in Georgia. Rabbiteye blueberries are native to the southeast, so they're well adapted to our climate. Let's talk specifically about pruning blueberries.

Blueberries don't need to be pruned every year to be fruitful. However, if you start doing some cane renewal **@UGA** pruning every year

on a mature plant

the bushes will be

more fruitful and

have more longev-

ity. The ideal time

Watching and Working Jacob Williams



to prune blueberries is late winter because the plants are dormant. February is late winter for us in the mountains. Plants in their dormant state are going to be less prone to infection or stress from the pruning.

Blueberry is a multi-stemmed bush. Each one of the stems that comes out of the ground is called a cane. Cane renewal pruning is removing old canes from the plant so that there is space for new canes to grow. Ideally, under cane renewal pruning you'll remove old canes each year so that in five years all the canes on the plant will be completely different. Each year go through the plant and cut out the oldest canes that you find. Also, remove any diseased or dead canes. Ideally, you don't want to remove more that 25% of the canes in a single year. If you have a blueberry bush that hasn't been pruned for a couple of years it may take a couple years to get it back into shape. If you have a blueberry bush that hasn't been pruned for many, many years cane renewal pruning probably isn't going get the plants back into shape. In that situation, I'd recommend something that may seem very drastic. but is better for the plants in the end. Mow the bushes down to the ground. Mature plants will be able to take this hit, and put up new suckers. that turn into canes. This is going to give you fresh growth, and a new healthier plant. You'll go without blueberries for a couple of years. Therefore, if you have several plants that need to be mowed, you could do a couple a year, until they are all back under control.

New plants should be pruned to have the healthiest plants. Prune back 2/3 of the top growth on bare root plants, and ½ of the top growth on potted plants. If the new plant has many canes prune out all but 1-3 of the best looking ones. You also don't want a first year plant to produce fruit, so pick off any flower buds. If you prune plants like this the first year, the second year won't need much pruning. In the second year pick off flower buds again, and remove any diseased canes. The third year, remove diseased canes, but you can leave the flower buds on vigorous shoots. The fourth year, the plant should be able to handle full crop, but if you have some

See Williams, page 5A

# Legacy

During my younger days I was told many stories about my ancestors. These stories dealt with many varied subjects; some told of far-off places like the old world, some told of happy events like weddings or births of children, some were funny and some were sad, and some of the

stories dealt with my family's past. These stories are a legacy from my ancestors. From this legacy come many lessons. There are things we can learn



from our past because if we do not learn from the past we are sure to repeat the same mistakes many of our ancestors experienced.

There are a couple of things I have always wondered about in regard to my family history. First, I wondered if all the stories I have heard about being descended from the Cherokee are true, and second, I wondered why my family is so blessed by God? Regarding the second question, there are both scoundrels and saints in my family. Some of these people made liquor, some were instrumental in the persecution of others during the Middle Ages and some were pirates. But, on the other hand, some of my ancestors were Doctors during the time of the Plague, some were ministers of the Gospel and some were prayer warriors. My Mom was raised by a prayer warrior.

I remember learning something many years ago in Genetics 101. I learned that we are the way we are for two reasons: Reason No. 1 is that we acquired certain traits from our parents, and Reason No. 2 is that our environment influences those traits. Basically, this means we inherit things like eye color, right-hand dominance, being curly-haired vs. straight-haired from our parents. But the environment in which we are raised also has a tremendous influence on what makes us tick.

During the past few months I have been researching my family history and found some information that answered both of the earlier questions. Below are the answers for which I

Hiram Baker was born in 1805 in North Carolina. Sometime after the Indian Removal, he and his family moved to the area around what is now Towns, Union and Clay County. He is listed as living in both Union County, Georgia, and Swain County, North Carolina, in the 1850 census. He must have been counted twice during that census. But, the problem is that Union County and Swain County do not meet. However, they did until the late 1850s. Prior to this time Towns County and Clay County did not exist. Therefore, my 3X Great-Grandfather

See Cummings, page 5A

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# Cummings... continued from Page 4A

lived somewhere around the county lines between what is now Towns County and Clay County. I suspect it is in the present location of the Southern Nantahala Mountains close to High Tower Bald. Shortly after the 1850 census his wife named Mary died and is buried somewhere in these mountains. Many of his children remained in the area.

But Hiram moved with his youngest children to Marion County, Alabama. While living there he met and married a lady by the name of Martha Borden. Her parents were David and Sara Borden. They had been living close to his parents in what is now the Sipsey Wilderness in a place called Borden Creek. David was 3/4 Cherokee and Sara was full-blooded Cherokee. So, my Grandmaw Adams was correct when she told me her family had descended from the Cherokee. But, that is not all of the story.

David and Sara had a very large family, meaning they had many children. But, he is also listed as a minister. So, now I can see more of a connection. They were the in-laws of Hiram Baker. Hiram was the grandfather of my greatgrandfather, Charlie, who was married to Alvie Motes Baker.

When my Mom and Dad began dating, they went to a family dinner at the Baker home where Mommy Baker (Alvie) asked Dad the following question, "Son, are you a heathen?" Dad responded, "No, I am a Cummings." She smiled at Dad and explained that she had been praying for years that her granddaughter would marry a Baptist Preacher. Dad was a long way from being a preacher. He was taught to be a good person. But, his family did not attend church regularly. Later after I was born Dad was converted and became a preacher because of the prayers of Mommy Baker. And she was influenced by the first preacher in our family which was a Cherokee Indian by the name of David Borden. His influence upon our family has lasted five

The Cherokee people were ripped from their homeland and forced to another place now called Oklahoma in the 1830s. Some of them escaped and tried to live normal lives among the whites, and their genetics live on in many of us now. There is a place not too far from my grandparents home called the Rockbridge. It is a natural limestone arch that has Cherokee carvings on the rocks under it. These are much like ones would see at Trackrock Gap. An old story among my relatives is that during the Indian Removal, one Cherokee woman ran across the bridge through the woods while carrying her baby and screaming as she ran from the soldiers. Now, sometimes late at night, I am told you can still hear her screams as she runs across the Rockbridge. This must have been a really sad time.

I am glad that my ancestor Hiram made his way to North Alabama and met Martha Jane Borden, whose parents somehow escaped the awful Cherokee Removal and the Trail of Tears in the 1830s. David and Sara Borden must have prayed for their children and grandchildren, because their influence on my family's life, physically and spiritually, has lasted for generations. They influenced their grandson Charlie and his wife Alvie, who influenced my Mom and Dad, which had a great influ-

#### Quigley... continued from Page 4A

require too much "time." But that is exactly what a diabetes education program is designed to do.

The Georgia Department of Community Health and Medicare have programs and materials already available to set up these programs. According to the CDC, our county ranks at the bottom 25% of counties with Diabetic support in the state (https://www.cdc. gov/dhdsp/maps/gisx/mapgallery/GA\_DSMES.html).

And according to the Georgia Department of Public

Health, approximately 1 million people (12.4%) in Georgia have a diagnosis of diabetes with an additional 230,000 people with diabetes but are unaware. Undiagnosed diabetes can lead to kidney failure, blindness, cardiac disease, neuropathy, and other symptoms, even Alzheimer's.

Isn't it about time the county hospital put prevention above treatment? Thank you,

Sincerely, **Debora Quigley** 

# Tarter... continued from Page 4A

Just scare the good folks on fixed incomes.

And most Americans are smart enough to see that electric vehicles are impractical, expensive, environmentally dirty and dangerous.

They go very fast for 200 miles on a warm day and then need plugged in for a few hours after you get to the end of the queue.

You can buy a fuel-efficient luxury car for the same price and drive two states over on a tank of gas and refill that tank in five minutes.

The rare earth metals and other goo for the battery packs are ransacked from other countries that don't worry about pollution or damaged

Ask any first responder what they think about putting out a fire at an accident involving these lead sleds. They are very heavy, high voltage/high amperage and tend to explode at odd intervals.

As soon as the Left gets us all driving these goofy vehicles, they will pull the plug on vehicle and recharge availability, and we will all live in a Utopian City like Atlanta taking robot "Ubers" to church if they are allowed to be open for services.

That's why the "EVs" are piling up in dealer back

"Beep beep." J. Murray Tarter

# Ripma... continued from Page 4A

ward spiral, with so many top players entering the transfer portal or opting out. Not so long ago, like maybe last year, playing in a bowl game was an honor and a privilege. Most players wanted to compete and support their teams and their schools, even if it meant risking injury. It appears that that ideal is rapidly disappearing.

I do get that college players generate millions for their schools and the entire sports complex. And sustaining an injury can be life-changing for that player. But, for the fans, college football could be losing its shining end-of-season crown.

Before you attack me,

Could it be that the complete commercialization of college football has a dark side? For me, the decline of

#### Williams... continued from Page 4A

weak looking canes, thin out the buds to prevent over fruiting, which can cause permanent bending of canes from the

Each year after harvest is completed cut plants back so that they don't become too tall. Tall plants are more difficult to harvest for people; bears and birds probably won't have that same problem.

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

the bowl games began with the rebranding of traditional bowls with the names of wellknown and important commercial enterprises. The Goodyear Cotton Bowl, The Capital One Orange Bowl, The Allstate Sugar Bowl, and I can go on.

I'll end this rant with the dumbest bowl name yet, The Pop-Tarts Bowl. John Ripma

#### Chamber... continued from Page 4A

for their contribution to the success of the Union County School System by going above and beyond to help others. The winners will be announced in the NGN in the next week or

Thank you to our local Law Enforcement for making Life Better in Blairsville!

#### Fowler... continued from Page 4A

eryone who lives and believes in me will never die" (John It's a dark, fallen world,

terial. Indeed Jesus said, "Ev-

but there's hope! Civil rights gains show King got it right: Light overcomes darkness. That has personal implications for you. So much of human misery is caused by a failure to walk in God's truth! To borrow from King, have you not come to such an impasse in your life that you must embrace God's life-giving light – or else?

# Hambourger... continued from Page 4A

ravaged the nation. This dire period ultimately led Joseph's brothers to leave their land of Israel for Egypt to seek his assistance, resulting in a sincere apology and mending of relations, followed by a heartfelt reunion with his father, who never gave up hope of reuniting with his son throughout the 17 years he was missing.

Moreover, this period of hardship and resilience culminated in the establishment of a vibrant Jewish community in Egypt. This community not only thrived but also garnered the respect and appreciation of their Egyptian neighbors, who acknowledged the Jews' vital role in helping establish Egypt as a prosperous nation and the recognized superpower of the day. This legacy endured for centuries, marking a chapter of peace and prosperity for the extended family of Jacob and Joseph in a foreign

But in this week's Torah portion, the first of the book of Exodus, the Jews experience a radical change in fortunes. There arises a new king "who did not know Joseph," which the sages interpret to mean he did not acknowledge the contribution Joseph and the Jews made to Egypt and sought to enslave and enact policies targeting the Jewish community of his time.

Such has been the story of the Jewish people throughout history.

Time and again throughout history, the Jewish community is welcomed for their wisdom and contributions, and celebrated for a number of years, before 'a new king arises' and the classic tropes begin playing on the minds of those who have always sought to harm the Jewish people. The Jewish people's contributions are then twisted against them and framed as a malicious attempt to control the rest of the population. Public resentment is stirred and before long, the

#### Paris... continued from Page 4A

The county budget and some of the operation is managed by the Sole Commissioner, who is elected. But there are also 6 other county elected officials who run and operate their own county departments independent of the commissioner. They are the Union County Sheriff, the Clerk of Court, the Probate Judge, the Magistrate Judge, the Tax Commissioner and the Coroner. Each of these officials must have their budget approved by the county Commissioner, but they are totally in charge of the employees and operation of each of their departments.

#### Ashurst... continued from Page 4A

A definition of loneliness is being in a state of mind of wanting or even expecting things from a relationship. In other words: wanting and actually getting in specific relationships and acknowledgment. More on loneliness next week.

### **Honor Flight trips** to Washington, **D.C.** for Veterans

Sponsored (no cost to Veteran) Honor Flight trips to Washington D.C. to see the memorials to the Wars in which they served.

Veterans do not have to have been deployed overseas .. just to have served during the War period. World War II, Korea, and Vietnam veterans are included. Spring and Fall

If interested, call Paul at 615-232-4445. Thank you!

> **Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse**



**January 2, 2024** In memory of Virginia B. Meeks on her birthday by Ginger and Terry Meeks

January 21, 2024 In memory of Dollie C. Meeks on the anniversary of her death

by Ginger and Terry Meeks **Bell ringing information** at 706-745-5493

Jewish community is attacked

and expelled, and forced to

start this cycle all over again. Until the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948, Jews were thrown out of ancient Egypt, medieval Babylonia, and modern Europe. Between the year 250 and the year 1948 - a period of 1,700 years – Jews in Europe experienced an average of one expulsion every 21 years. Fresh off the largest an-

nihilation of Jewish people in history, thanks in large part to the leadership of the U.S.A., the world – in a rare moment of compassion for the Jewish people - recognized the need for the Jewish people to have a state of their own in their ancestral homeland, smack in the middle of 22 mostly hostile Arab countries. For the first time in 2,000 years, the Jewish people lived autonomously in their homeland and had a state that would serve as the home of a displaced people and could be responsible for ensuring the protection of their own coreligionists. Never again would the Jews be subject to the whims of a volatile leader and citizenry.

Faced with so many existential wars and attacks since its re-establishment in 1948, what is Israel's secret? How have they managed to repeatedly defeat their enemies and fend off the world's continuous demonization and obsession with its legitimacy, while simultaneously absorbing hundreds of thousands of penniless Jewish refugees threatened with mass slaughter by the Arab countries where they were living for 2,000 years? Well, it's a mixture of faith and fortitude, and a

recognition of that fact that then-Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir told now-President Joe Biden in 1973: "We have nowhere else to go." Those who say there is no need for Israel as a Jewish country in a modern world in favor of a pluralistic and naive "one-state solution" ig-

nore the realities of escalating antisemitism in Europe and around the world, and the role Israel plays in ensuring the safety of the global Jewish population. Antisemitism has been

on the rise in Europe and beyond. Jewish communities, particularly in France, have witnessed a mass exodus due to the alarming surge in antisemitism. In England, the occurrence of over 50 daily antisemitic incidents, including large rallies promoting hatred

and division, has been deeply unsettling. Australia, too, has seen troubling events that underscore the ongoing threats faced by Jewish populations. with riots featuring chants of "gas the Jews" capturing worldwide headlines.

The United States is a truly friendly and welcoming country thanks to the ethos of our founding fathers, the divinely inspired U.S. Constitution, and the demonstrative support from the 'faith-based' community, and so many others. Jews have flourished in this great country and have made enormous contributions as well. We pray that all of us who love our great country will stand united against the onslaught of those that want to end the American way of life that we all cherish, and that the Jewish people will remain secure as well. Jews in many other places around the world are safer for Israel's existence and the knowledge there will always be a home for them when the tides turn, as history tells us they always

Yonatan Hambourger is an Atlanta-based rabbi working with Chabad of Rural Georgia to teach the richness of Judaism, while Tzali Reicher is a rabbi and writer currently residing in New