

Shabbona Express

March, 2024

Village Government News

The Village Board had two meetings in February. There was a special meeting on February 7th and the regular meeting on February 26th.

On February 7th they approved an intergovernmental agreement with the Shabbona Fire District and then went into a closed executive session to discuss matters relating to "The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees" and "The sale or lease of real property".

On February 26th:

- Village has decided to table the new restrictions on chickens and pets.
- Instead of a blanket ban they are looking into implementing a new enforcement process where they appoint an adjudicator to help settle ordinance violations.
- Village approved funding the Farmer's Market this year.
- Village agreed to let the 501c3 non-profit Building Shabbona Together use a \$20,000 grant the Village received from the DeKalb County Community Foundation on Purdy Park.
- Village approved applying for a grant for a mobile speed sign grant that would pay for half of the cost.
- Village will be re-examining their parking ordinances and will likely put in provisions to allow the towing of parked cars on streets when there is snow removal in progress.
- There was another closed executive session with the same subjects as on February 7th.

Events

March 1-23 – Peeps Diorama Contest - Flewellin Library

March 2 – Story Time @ 10AM – Flewellin Library

March 6 - Story Time @ 10AM - Flewellin Library

March 9 – Special Leprechaun/St. Patrick's Themed Story Time @ 10AM - Flewellin Library

Community Game Night @ 6PM
Up Realty (104 W Comanche)

March 11-16 – St Patrick's Themed Drop In Crafts - Flewellin Library

March 13 – Story Time @ 10AM - Flewellin Library

March 15 – Last day to register for a free tree @ Flewellin Library

March 16 – Story Time @ 10AM & Cards with Kim & Jamie @ 6PM - Flewellin Library

March 18-23 – Spring Themed Drop In Crafts - Flewellin Library

March 20 – Story Time @ 10AM & Elder Care Services @ 12PM - Flewellin Library

March 22 – Last day to drop off Peeps Diorama

Game Night & Light Meal @ 5:30PM - Shabbona Community Church

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Events

(Continued)

March 23 – Special Easter Bunny
& Story Time @ 10AM -
Flewellin Library

March 25 – Tie Dye T-Shirts @
10AM - Flewellin Library

March 26 – Special Hours Easter
Drop In Crafts - Flewellin
Library

March 27 – Story Time @ 10AM &
Kids BINGO @ 10AM -
Flewellin Library

March 28 – Special Hours Easter
Drop In Crafts - Flewellin
Library

The Chicken Problem

By Kallan Welsh

We have a chicken problem.

Well, the problem isn't, strictly speaking, chickens. While the village government has walked back on making the keeping of chickens effectively illegal within village boundaries, the potential problems and nuisances they can impose remain an issue. Chickens can be smelly, loud, damage lawns and gardens, and sometimes attack neighboring animals. In a village with many small lots, it takes a responsible person to keep chickens without being a nuisance to neighbors.

Taking the argument to ban chickens because they can pose a nuisance its logical conclusion leads to some interesting outcomes. Dogs are also potentially smelly, loud, and disruptive. (Should dogs be illegal too?) Actually, so are motorized vehicles. What's to stop an annoying neighbor from revving his engine all through the night? I hope there's an ordinance for that! If we tried to list all the animals, vehicles, appliances, and uses of land that could potentially be disruptive, I'd be writing all day. In every case, the responsible neighbor finds a way to coexist while minimizing disruption. Doesn't a person have a right, in principle, to own a dog, a vehicle, to host a barbecue or a party, or have on his property all manner of potentially disruptive articles?

(Continued on next page)

Shabbona Express

The Chicken Problem

(Continued from the previous page)

One solution that does not respect the rights of individuals is to ban all of these things. No parties, barbecues, dogs, cats, cooked salmon (gross!), motorized vehicles, music, yelling, or chickens. Perhaps we can achieve a state of minimal disruption, the perfect quiet neighborhood where no one is allowed to be annoying to anybody else, but I don't think that's a world anyone wants to live in.

Another solution is to craft a set of (necessarily arbitrary) regulations on the matter. Maybe you're only allowed one car, and no more than a 50cc motorcycle. You can have a party, but not past 10pm. You can cook smelly food, just not salmon (this one I can get behind). But an irresponsible neighbor can wreak havoc with only one dog; the neighbor might let it bark into your bedroom window all night, tear up your petunias, and poop in your yard. Meanwhile, a responsible dog owner might keep 20 dogs with no disruption to his neighbors whatsoever. What you find with a patchwork set of regulations like this is a failure to meaningfully control nuisances, while at the same time interfering with the rights of responsible people, who aren't a nuisance to anyone else, to order their affairs as they see fit.

I propose a different solution, which is simply this: take these things on a case by case basis. Create an arbitration panel which is disinterested and bind the parties to the results. In rare cases, the matter may end up in county court, which is a potentially long and expensive headache. The point is, that is still better than the alternative where not only is the nuisance victim offered no restitution by default, but you may have to take your neighbor to court to settle the matter anyway. This isn't some radical idea; in fact, arbitration for nuisance cases was considered the standard prior to the early 20th century. It's true that arbitration may not always result in a fully just outcome, but the alternative guarantees an unjust outcome by either arbitrarily infringing on God-given property rights, or arbitrarily allowing for abridgements of the enjoyment of property by being too lenient on nuisances.

You cannot craft a perfect regulation that makes sense in all cases. You can come much closer to perfect regulation by taking these cases as they come, with all their nuances.

Godspeed to the chicken-keepers!

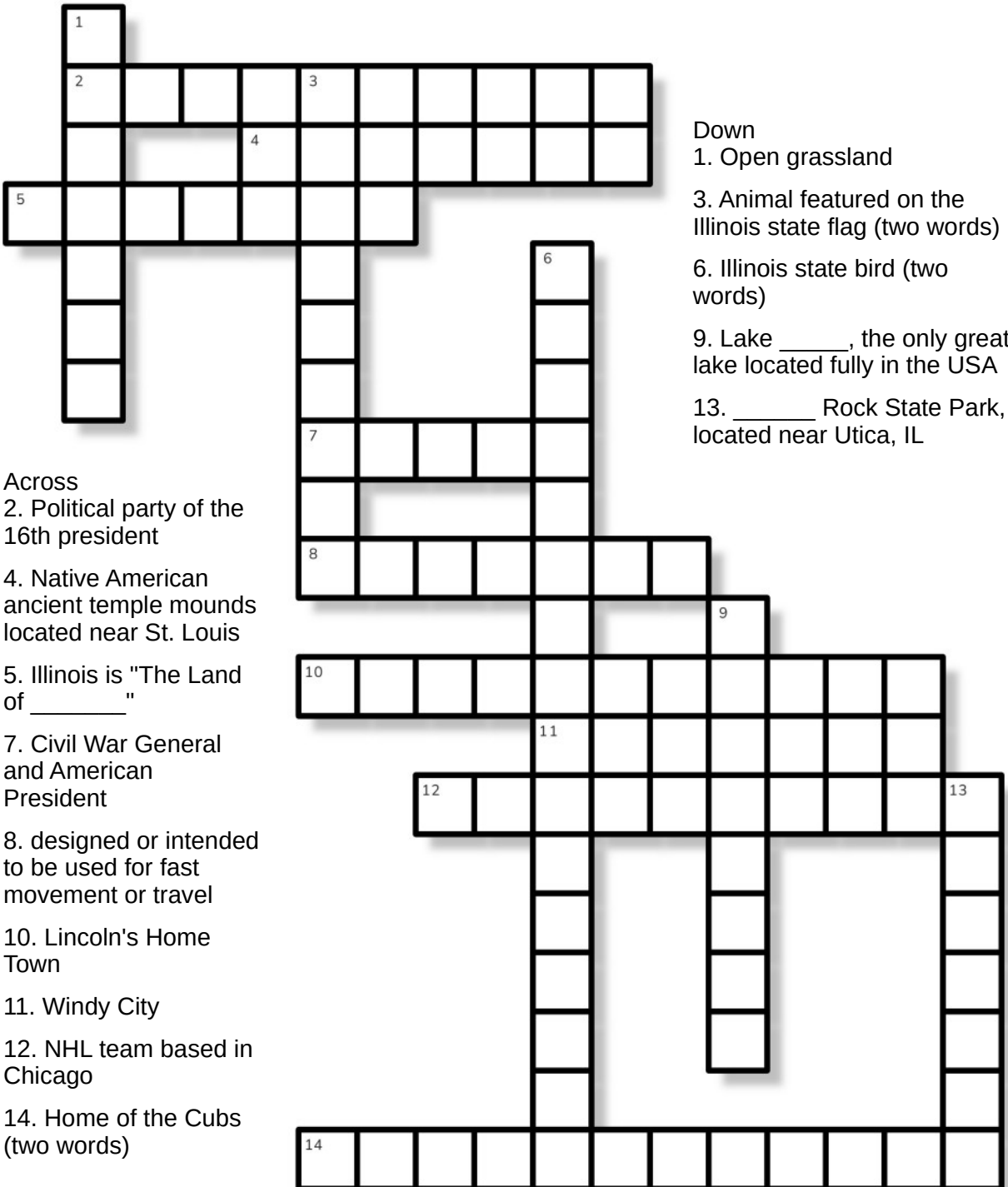


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104 W Comanche Ave, Shabbona

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Across

- 2. Political party of the 16th president
- 4. Native American ancient temple mounds located near St. Louis
- 5. Illinois is "The Land of _____"
- 7. Civil War General and American President
- 8. designed or intended to be used for fast movement or travel
- 10. Lincoln's Home Town
- 11. Windy City
- 12. NHL team based in Chicago
- 14. Home of the Cubs (two words)

Down

- 1. Open grassland
- 3. Animal featured on the Illinois state flag (two words)
- 6. Illinois state bird (two words)
- 9. Lake _____, the only great lake located fully in the USA
- 13. _____ Rock State Park, located near Utica, IL

Shabbona Express

Progress on Purdy Park

By Joshua Snyder

Purdy Park is one of the first major projects being undertaken by Building Shabbona Together (aka "BST"). BST is a 501c3 organization founded to help promote, develop, and create economic development in the Shabbona community. The park is located next to the fire station on the corner of Navaho and Pontiac. While the plans are still in the preliminary state and are subject to change, I have attached the latest set of plans on the next page.

The current design will have the park serve multiple uses and be an area to host events such as live music and other festivals. The plans include a band shell shelter, pickleball courts, an area for food trucks to park during events, and off-street parking along the railroad. While the plans show two pickleball courts, it may be reduced to a single one to make room for other sports such as basketball.

There currently is no hard timeline on when the park will be built and BST is still working on securing funding. They will be seeking grants for the bulk of the funding, and the Village of Shabbona just assigned a \$20,000 grant they received in the past to go towards the project.

As a fan of pickleball, I'm personally eagerly awaiting the courts completion and plan to organize a community wide pickleball group in the future.



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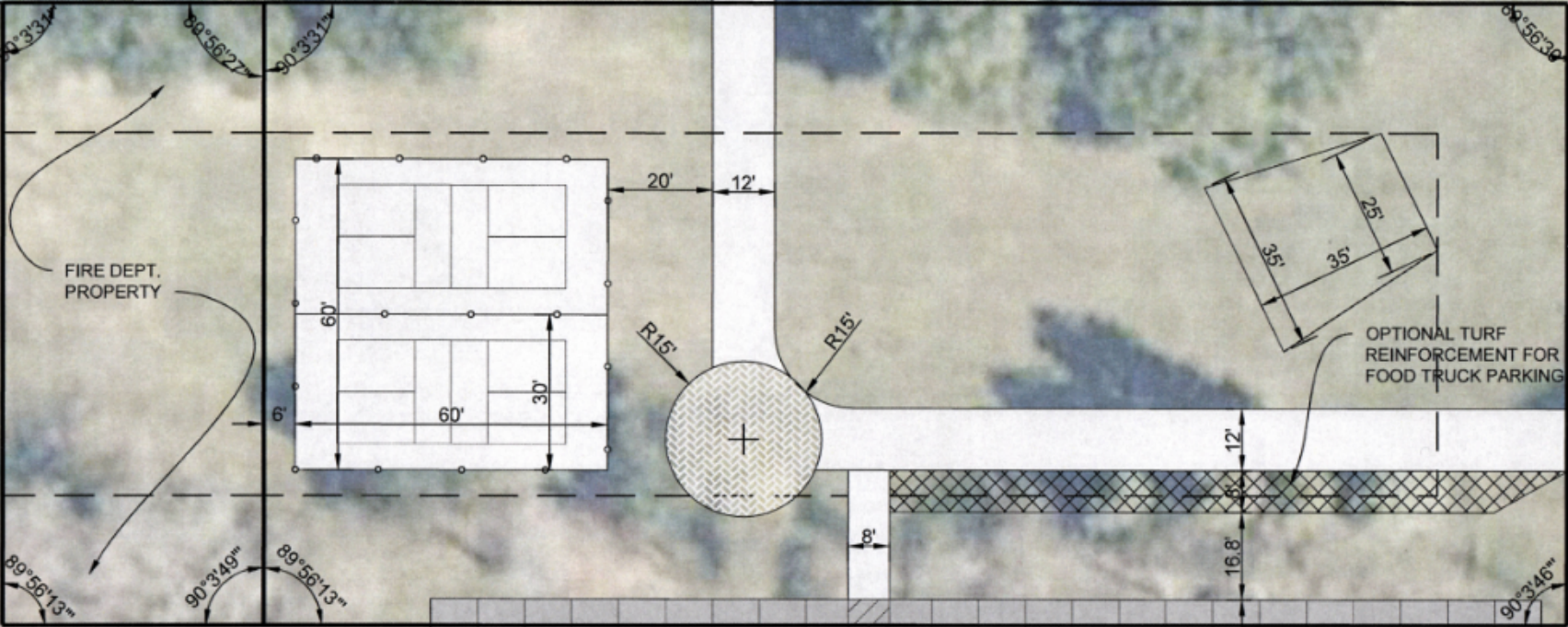
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8' ALLEY?

Shabbona Express

On Ordinance Enforcement and Adjudicators

By Joshua Snyder

The village expressed it is having issues with enforcing ordinances. The village doesn't have its own police department, so the DeKalb County Sheriff's department is in charge of enforcement. When it comes to collecting outstanding fines the Village has limited options including sending the fines to collections or taking the offenders to county court, but often the hassle and expense of doing so is more than the fine.

During the last board meeting, the village attorney, Keith Foster, brought up the idea of setting up an administrative adjudication system to handle the ordinance violations and provide a more cost effective method of enforcement. An adjudicator would be an impartial judge that citizens could plead their case with when facing a violation or fine they don't agree with. I believe this is a great step in the right direction. It provides a local way to settle disputes and makes it easier for both the village to enforce and for citizens to petition when the enforcement is not warranted. Currently, the only way to fight the fines and impose judgments is through the county courts which is expensive for both parties.

One concern I have with this system is the fact that the adjudicator is an appointed position. The adjudicator is supposed to be an impartial and fair judge, but there's an inherent conflict of interest when one side gets to appoint the adjudicator. It doesn't seem very just when the very people who are issuing the fines are also responsible for picking the person who decides whether or not the fines are legitimate.

While I'm not a lawyer, I did a bit of research into the matter. It appears that under state law an adjudicator must be a licensed attorney for at least 3 years and undergo some training to be qualified. This narrows down the possible pool of people qualified to be an adjudicator.

I would like to propose a two tier approach to minimize the risk of corruption between the adjudicator and the village and reduce the cost even further. Instead of having the citizen with the alleged violation plead in front of the adjudicator they first can plead to an elected board of say 3 to 5 individuals who can act as a sort of jury. They would determine if the violation is legitimate and then the case would continue to the adjudicator for the final judgment. But if the board determines that the violation is not warranted, the fine is removed, and the village no longer needs to pay the adjudicator any fees.

I believe this or a very similar solution would fill the Village's need for a more cost-effective method of enforcement while providing the most just system for the citizens.

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The Real Reason Everything is Getting Worse - And No One is Talking About It

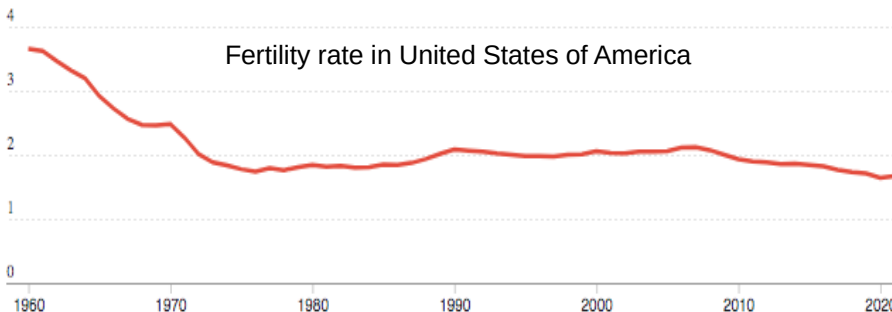
(This article is a continuation of the article published in February of the same title)
by Kallan Welsh

Up to the 1960s, the U.S. had a healthily growing population. The fertility rate of the country fell off a cliff shortly thereafter, but trended around replacement level of approximately 2.1 for multiple decades. Recently, it's seen another drawdown, and we've seen the lowest birth rate in the history of the country at 1.64, a dismal rate that means the native population is declining rapidly. Unfortunately, this trend shows no real signs of reversing. To make this point concrete: Between 2010 and 2020, the native population of America fell by almost 10%. In other words, if not for immigration, the population of the country would be over 30 million less now than in 2010. That rate of decline is so rapid, that if the trend held, there wouldn't be anybody left in the country in a mere 100 years.

I don't believe it's an accident that the 1950s and 1960s are considered to be an idyllic time in American history, where it seemed like everything was going great. We were growing economically, people's houses and cars were getting bigger, we were winning the cold war, and we were surely going to put a man on the moon. The 1970s, on the other hand, are maligned by just about everyone who lived through them. I don't think it's an accident that the U.S. fertility rate was high during the former period and low during the latter. There is a conception that bad economic times lead to people having fewer children, but, if anything, the opposite is true: Poorer countries tend to have a higher fertility rate than richer countries. On the chart below, the trend holds for the U.S. as well. The fertility rate fell dramatically, and then the hard times began in 1973 when the first stagflationary recession hit.

I realize there are many factors at play in the 1970s era, and this article is not meant to be a history of that time. I merely wish to point out that the times people call "good times" correlate strongly with child-rearing shortly before. The effect may be even more immediate: studies have shown that interacting with babies and young children in any way correlates with better mental health.

This problem isn't unique to our country either. It's true of almost every single country in the world, including developing countries.



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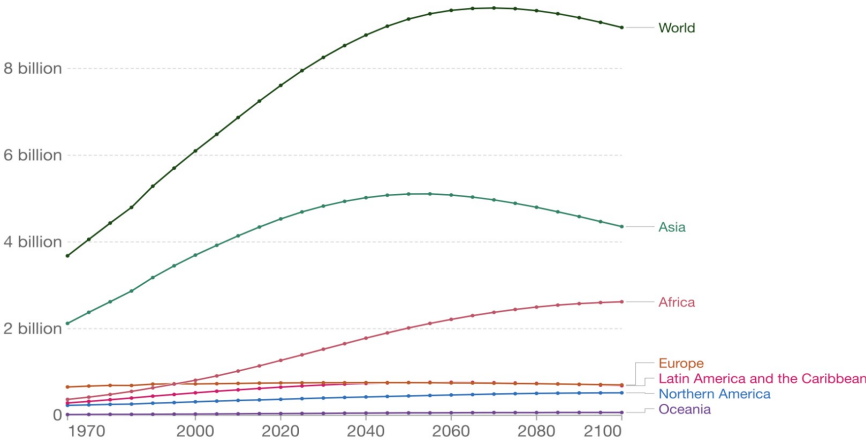
The Real Reason Everything is Getting Worse - And No One is Talking About It

(Continued from the previous page)

Projections of the world population by the Wittgenstein Centre, 1970 to 2100

Our World in Data

Shown is the SSP2 scenario which is the 'most likely scenario' of the various scenarios WC-IIASA produced. It is based on the medium fertility and medium mortality projections combined with the continuation of educational trends (GET scenario).



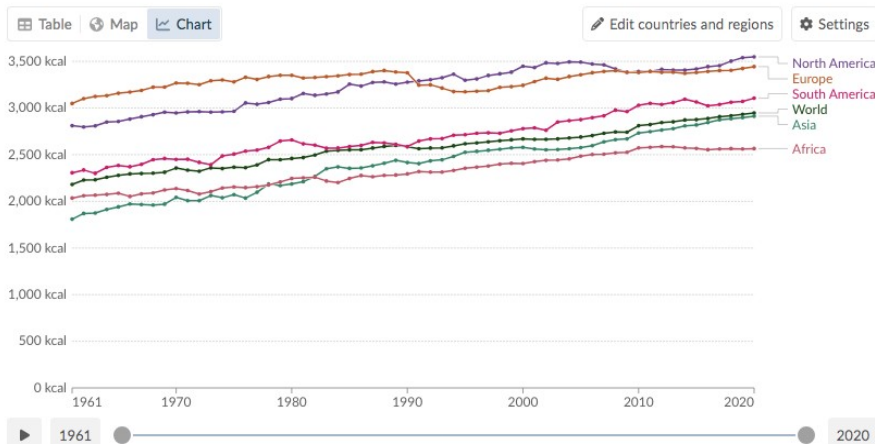
Source: Medium SSP2 - Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital OurWorldInData.org/future-population-growth · CC BY

The UN projects that the world population will peak within 40 years and begin declining thereafter. But isn't it true that resources on Earth are finite, and humans are using them up at a rapid rate? Therefore, isn't it a good thing that the population of Earth is falling? Well, no.

Per capita kilocalorie supply from all foods per day, 1961 to 2020

This measures the quantity that is available for consumption at the end of the supply chain. It does not account for consumer waste, so the quantity that is actually consumed may be lower than this value.

Our World in Data



Data source: UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) - [Learn more about this data](#)

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Despite less and less land being used for agriculture, world food production per person has been rising steadily for many decades. The growing size of the human population means more brains to figure out how to produce food more efficiently. Never underestimate the value of human ingenuity!

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Shabbona Express

The Real Reason Everything is Getting Worse - And No One is Talking About It

(Continued from the previous page)

But what about nonrenewable resources? Surely those must be running out, right? Famously, biologist Paul Ehrlich assumed this to be true, and wrote about it in *The Population Bomb* in 1968. In 1980, business professor Julian Simon was so confident in the power of human ingenuity mixed with market forces that Simon challenged Ehrlich to name any raw material and any timespan longer than a year. Simon would take the price and wager \$10,000 that at the end of Ehrlich's declared timespan, the price of the material would be less than at the beginning of the bet. In other words, that material would get more abundant, not less. Ehrlich, convinced that human society had reached peak production of most commodities, enthusiastically took the bet. Surely, humans would be competing over an ever-dwindling quantity of raw materials, given the fact of scarcity in the universe. To hedge, Ehrlich named 5 separate commodities over a 10 year timespan, and Simon agreed.

After 10 years, Simon won resoundingly. All five commodities - copper, chromium, nickel, tin, and tungsten fell in price over the 10 year timespan. The reader will find that over the vast majority of given time periods, Simon will always win that bet. Humanity will always find new ways to access resources. Should something become very scarce, the price will rise, and incentivize new ways of extraction or recycling it. When it comes to minerals, the Earth is a big place, and we haven't even begun to scratch the surface of the crust of the planet in extraction. Eventually, perhaps, we will mine asteroids for minerals, but that is many centuries away from making economic sense (probably!).

(The final installment of this article will be published in the April issue)

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