



point of view

BY BILL NIXON

Editor's note: Nixon, an Edenton native, is vice-president of Parker Brothers Newspapers of Asheville. His column appears weekly in a number of that group's publications.

During a recent visit with my mother, I was told by my brother Jerry that he enjoyed reading my column. It was good to know I have one avid reader.

However, Jerry said he thought I would be more interesting if I developed a column similar to that written for the Raleigh News and Observer by Dennis Rogers, and not so much political junk.

Well, I'm no Dennis Rogers, nor do I really want to be. But I do hear some funny stories once in a while, and there is one in particular I'd like to share with you.

Years ago, in the tiny Gates county community of Corapeake, there lived a man named Percy Lee. Percy Lee, a man of many talents, spent most of his time assisting my wife's grandfather in the operation of a country store in that community. He mostly waited on customers at the gas pump in front of the store and did what little maintaining the customer's needs as he was able. Percy Lee was good at those chores, but he had one slight problem. Percy Lee stuttered, so the story goes, very badly.

One day while attending to his duties at the store, Percy was confronted by a man wanting directions to a nearby town. Knowing exactly where it was, Percy was pleased to assist.

So, in the best way he possibly could, Percy began to direct the fellow. "You g-g-g-g-g, you g-g-g-g-g, you g-g-g-g-g."

Being in a bit of a hurry, the traveler figured Percy would never get the directions out, so he started his car and drove away, determined to find directions on his own.

Upset by the man's lack of patience, Percy replied in perfect English as the man drove away. "Go the hell on then, damn it, you'll get there before I can tell you."

Okay, Jerry, how's that? On to another subject, have you read all the press about Virginia's Ralph Sampson? After his winning basket in the final seconds of the Virginia-Maryland contest, many of his fans believe he is not less greater than God Himself.

What a shame. To be sure, Sampson is a remarkable in-

dividual, and there is little doubt that he has exceptional abilities as a basketball player. But as great as God? Never.

Americans become too involved with those that entertain us. WE are to blame for so many young men and women ruining their lives because of drugs or other means. We put so much pressure on them to be the great individuals that we can never be that they either burn themselves out or must find ways to hide their inner feelings when faced with defeat.

Most young people under 25 years of age have a hard time adjusting to normal life, much less the hype and stress of being a star. To expect them to react to our desires for excitement and entertainment and remain normal is often not possible.

Sampson and no other individual on this earth is God.

Agriculture Day, March 21

To the bulk of Americans, Monday, March 21 will be just another day. But to the entire population in the United States, the day should hold special significance.

Agriculture Day is March 21. And to the two per cent of the U.S. citizens who produce the food to feed and fiber to clothe the rest of us, it is a day of pride.

American farmers produce more food than ever before, feeding themselves and 78 others with their production; an accomplishment consumers may take for granted.

Agriculture plays a major role in the economy of both North Carolina and the entire United States, through production of goods meeting and exceeding domestic demand. Exports of agricultural goods cut the federal trade deficit in half in 1981, and farmers and grain dealers still had grain left over to place in storage. The dollar is strengthened through these exports, and as a result, Americans are in a better position to trade in the world markets.

Millions of jobs in the U.S. are affected either directly or indirectly by agriculture. One out of five jobs in the U.S. depends on agriculture to keep it going. For every three and a half acres a farmer harvests, one acre of that production goes into export channels. Across the U.S., 630,000 jobs are dependent on agricultural exports, and the

Sampson is only a very talented individual, talents given him by God. We would all do good to remember this...fans and Sampson.

In closing I'll leave you with this bit of wisdom: Building a good marriage and building a good log fire are similar in many ways. You build a fire with paper and kindling, and all at once it goes up in a brilliantly burning blaze. The primary blaze burns down and you wonder if the fire will fizzle out and leave you in the dark.

You blow on it and fan it for all you are worth. Sometimes smoke billows out and almost chokes you, but if the materials are good and if you invest enough energy and interest in maintaining it, soon the big solid logs catch, and your fire takes on new qualities.

number grows by 30,000 every additional \$1 billion we export.

Support industries benefit from increased agricultural exports in a big way. For every dollar earned from farm exports, and additional \$1.05 is earned by transportation, warehousing and financial industries. Then add the earned dollars back into the economy in the form of consumer spending and it becomes apparent how a strong farm economy, including a strong export program, boosts the American economy.

"Shrinking numbers in the farming communities means that fewer farmers are producing more and more, and that our agricultural population base is dwindling," pointed out Commissioner of Agriculture Jim Graham. This is due in part to the lack of recognition of the farmer as a businessman. Americans have enjoyed cheap food in comparison to our neighbors on this planet."

On a percentage basis, Americans spend less than 14 per cent of their income on food, while the Chinese spend 60 per cent and the Russians 31 per cent. And 71 per cent of the Chinese work in agriculture, Graham said.

"Americans owe it to the farmer to say thank you on a day set aside to call attention to agriculture," said Graham.

Seminars To Stress Communication Skills

The NCSU Division of Continuing Education will offer a three part series of day-long business management seminars in five locations across North Carolina in May. The seminars will focus on

employee relations and time management. The first seminar, "Dealing with Difficult Employees," will utilize the latest developments in behavioral change technology to

demonstrate methods a manager may use to deal with a problem employee. James P. Lewis of Professional Resources, Raleigh, will instruct the seminar. It will be offered in Asheville May 2, in

Charlotte May 3, in Greensboro May 4, in Raleigh May 5 and in Wilmington May 6.

"Communicating Job Standards and Expectations" is a seminar designed to give managers the skills necessary to communicate job standards and expectations effectively so that increased employee productivity might be realized. Ralph

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