

# One-Minute Editorial



IT'S INTERESTING TO NOTE passage of the Republican sponsored Medicare plan and to point out how it was timed just for the upcoming elections.

Any rejoicing will not come from seniors who, at best, come out with only a modest benefit, if they live until 2006. That's when the bill's provisions kicks in.

If seniors are being short-changed, what the drug companies and health care providers are getting has been described as a "bonanza."

The "simplified" bill, with its thousands of pages, is about three feet tall. Even lawmakers do not understand all of it but here's how seniors rate in its provisions.

- 1-Drug companies are on top of the list.
- 2-Health insurers.
- 3-Doctors.
- 4-Hospitals.
- 5-Other health providers.
- 6-Senior Citizens.

The first five big winners will receive huge federal subsidies and tax breaks. Who is number seventh on the list? You guessed it, John Q. Taxpayer who will be paying the estimated cost of \$400 billion over the next 10 years and a whopping \$2.4 trillion in the next decade!

This makes some experts wonder if Medicare can even survive under such a staggering debt.

If you're a senior citizen this is what you may save:

With an annual drug bill of \$600 you save—zero.

A \$3,140 drug bill you could save \$2,024.

On a year's drug bill of \$10,000 you may save \$5,735.

However, everyone expects drug companies will raise prices. If, or maybe we should say when, they do it will wipe out most of the savings provided in the new bill leaving seniors paying just about the same for their medicine.

But, then it will be 2006 and all the people who supported the bill will have been elected again and not subject to the wrath of seniors or care about the dismay of the poor taxpayers.

Now, all the seniors we've talked with, just wanted a little extra cash to help pay drug costs but politicians, with the endorsement of the AARP, have come up with a way to spend \$2.4 trillion and still not grant such a simple request.

If you're a senior citizen where does all this leave you? Still sixth, right down on the bottom of the list. What can you do?

VOTE and make sure your family and friends do, too!



## THE PASSING PARADE The Week in Review

**Under high security**—President George Bush flew into Baghdad to spend a couple hours enjoying a Thanksgiving meal with soldiers in Iraq.

**Shooter of President Reagan**—John Hinckley Jr. will be allowed to leave a psychiatric hospital for unsupervised visits with his parents.

**The Baltimore School System**—has given layoff notices to more than 700 employees. Officials warned of more cuts to come as the system tries to stay out of bankruptcy.

**Roller coaster employees**—at Disneyland were not told what to do if the ride started making unusual noises. One rider was killed because of improper maintenance.

**The U.S.**—will not guarantee \$289.5 million in loans for Israel because of illegal construction activities in the West Bank.

**A Commerce Department**—report says the economic picture is getting better but 14 states remain in recession.

**Scientific ink analysis**—supports the theory that the map of the medieval New World was made 50 years before Columbus sailed.

**A "superbug"**—the mighty microbe called "Coman the Bacterium" combines genes of two bacteria. The two genes, working together, may be able to clean up thousands of nuclear sites around the world, scientist believe.

**A U.N. resolution**—censured Iran for 18 years of secrecy about their nuclear program.

**To clean up the Neuse River**—officials have required strict controls on sewage plant operators, made farmers control the fertilizer runoff from fields and required buffers along creeks and streams.

**Concorde Supersonic jet**—now out of service, will be housed in the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in New York. The 88-ton aircraft

made its last trip, at snail-speed down the river on top of a huge barge.

**Chicken truth**—Kentucky Fried Chicken will stop ads that claim their finger-lickin' food is healthy. A consumer group complained to federal regulators.

**Two hundred fifty thousand**—copies of the five "Harry Potter" books have been sold. The books have been translated into 60 languages.

**Over the next six years**—the U.S. expects to spend \$375 billion to relieve traffic congestion.

**An anonymous GOP senator**—has blocked a bill which would ban the making of plastic firearms.

**A recent House bill**—would require doctors to give contact eye-lens prescriptions to their patients who could then shop for the best price.

**Deficit Band-Aid**—To cure our unemployment problem, the Bush administration has cut down imports of bras, gowns and knit fabric.

**A \$10 million U.S. bounty**—has been on Izzat Ibrahim al-Dhouri, 61, the highest-ranking member of Saddam's regime who is still at large.

**Same-sex marriages**—have been approved by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.

**The U.S.**—will try again for a U.N. resolution backing the war in Iraq.

**A free-trade area**—from Canada to Chile will be proposed by the U.S. as soon as agreements can be reached with Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Columbia.

**Bonafid Bush**—told a London audience the United States would not retreat from "a band of thugs" in Iraq.

**For Christmas?**—Asking price for a 103.38 carat diamond is \$8.42 million. It failed to bring enough money when auctioned recently in Geneva.

**It's a secret**—but Congress is believed

to have authorized \$40 billion to expand the government's power to demand business records on its fight against terrorism. Critics say the bill could undermine civil liberties.

**China is shocked**—at the U.S. textile limits saying it violated trade rules.

**Impotence pill**—Cialis, has been approved. It lasts 36 hours and is not affected by food.

**National Research scientists**—now question the FBI's bullet-matching methods. Hundreds of convictions have relied on such evidence.

**Bomb blast in Turkey**—killed 27 and injured 450.

# Up Coming

**Thursday, Dec. 4**  
The Town of Mooresville will once again have Live! Mooresville Christmas Scenes in downtown store windows done by our children from 6-7:30 p.m.

**Saturday, Dec. 6**  
If you like to give holiday sweets as gifts and don't have time to bake this holiday season, St. John's Lutheran Church has the solution for you. The church's annual cookie walk will be held from 8:30-11:30 a.m. at the church, 740 N. Carter St. Homemade cookies, candies, bread, cakes, and all kinds of good things to eat will be for sale. Cookies and candies will be just \$6 a pound and breads and cakes will be individually priced. Proceeds will be divided among Yokefellow Ministries, The Pregnancy Resource Center and Dove House. Come on out and buy your holiday sweets!

**Saturday, Dec. 6**  
Brookdale Coffee & Bages at 923 Dave Ave. hosts Statesville artist Lori Cheatham 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. who paints custom holiday mugs, paintings and murals.

**Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 8 and 9**  
The Iredell County Partnership for Young Children hosts a pre-Christmas fundraising event from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event will be held in the boardroom of the Partnership, located at 132 E. Broad St. Timely Treasures, Discovery Toys, Mary Kay cosmetics and local crafters will have their merchandise for sale and a percentage of the proceeds will be donated to the Partnership to help carry out services for children and families. For more information, please contact Denise Rogerson, 704-878-9880.

**Tuesday, Dec. 9**  
The 70-piece North Iredell Band will perform a Christmas concert at Plaza Apartments at 1 p.m. The concert will be held in the atrium area and will be standing room only. The concert can be enjoyed from any of the Plaza's four levels.

**Friday-Saturday, Dec. 13-14**  
The Humane Society of Iredell County is sponsoring a pet Santa photo shoot 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Petsmart located in the Brawley Commons Shopping Plaza in Mooresville. Half of all proceeds goes to the Humane Society and its Save-a-Pet adoption program. No appointment necessary.

## ACHS Madrigal Choir Plans Musical Program and Meal

Limited seating remains for the Alexander Central High School Chamber Choir's program at the Hiddenite Center Educational Complex Friday and Saturday evenings, Dec. 12-13 beginning at 7 p.m.

Under the direction of Ron Vannoy, the ACHS Madrigal Choir weaves music, drama, and a meal into an evening to take the audience to another time and place, that of the manor of a Lord and Lady.

"We are excited about the talented youth of Alexander County," said Dwaine C. Coley, executive director of the Hiddenite Center. "The Chamber Choir is a valuable tool

for training our youth, and I sincerely hope that the public will support this effort. Our youth deserve our support. This program is always a sell-out, so interested persons should call today to reserve seating."

Tickets for the evening are \$15 and can be purchased from the Hiddenite Center offices or by phone at 828-632-6966. Persons making reservations should be aware that they are responsible for paying for each reservation made. Cancellations will be taken only if there are persons on the waiting list to fill any cancellations.

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