

No flu season in history equals 1918 epidemic

Flu is still a dreaded disease, but today's concerns cannot match the panic of the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918. "It is possible to go to almost any cemetery in the world and find...a cluster of graves from the fall of 1918," wrote Malcolm Gladwell in *The New Yorker*. "Between September and November of that year...an extraordinarily lethal strain of influenza swept the globe, killing between 20 million and 40 million people."

One out of four Americans contracted Spanish flu in less than a year, and "more Americans died of the flu...than were killed during the First World War, the

Second World War, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined," Gladwell wrote.

The first known case of "the deadliest virus that the world has ever known" was reported in March 1918, at Fort Riley, KS, near where I was reared. Soldiers deployed to Europe in the summer of 1918 took the disease with them, according to Gaylynn Childs, museum curator, writing in a Kansas paper. The flu swept across Europe to Spain, where it killed eight million people and picked up the erroneous moniker "Spanish flu."

The entire campus of the University of North Carolina

Edenton HISTORY



Mary Ann Coffey

at Chapel Hill was quarantined, as the flu "raged throughout" the student body, especially among the young men in the Student Army Training Corps, according to James E. Wood, an Edenton boy enrolled in the

program. "Soldiers were dying faster than they could obtain coffins for their bodies," Wood wrote in his book, *Coming Around the Mountain at Ninety*. Edward Kidder Graham, president of the university, died, as did his successor, former dean of students, Bill Stacey. "Mothers came to nurse sick sons, and they died, too," Wood reported.

Influenza struck Norfolk in late August 1918. George Tucker wrote in his column in *The Virginian Pilot*. Another city in "the midst of an unprecedented expansion brought on by World War I," Norfolk's crowded conditions facilitated the spread of the

disease. There was little to be done for victims. A Norfolk health officer simply advised citizens "to cover their faces with handkerchiefs or gauze masks when in crowded places." Within days, the hospitals were full, and the sick were taken to schools. All public facilities - schools, theaters, churches - were closed, and other services were cut to a minimum.

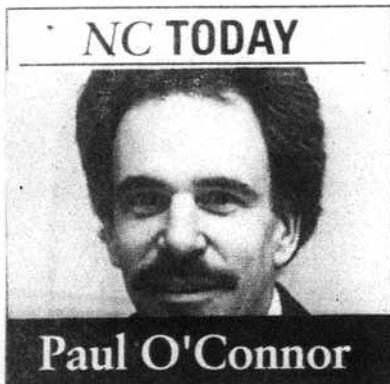
"This was not the flu as we normally think of it," Gladwell explained. Most people apparently died of "the secondary bacillary pneumonia," or the diphtheria and encephalitis that struck after the disease. Patients could not breathe,

and were, literally, drowning. Medical personnel learned to gauge the severity of the disease by the discoloration of the body: the more the lack of oxygen affected the tissue, the less the chance of recovery.

This strain of flu, unlike most, killed the young, who usually have high resistance to illness. In the United States, men between ages 25 and 29 died at several times the rate of men ages 70 to 74. A doctor of the era concluded the disease simply reached more men because of mobilization for war. But most researchers still wonder "why this flu was so

See COFFEY On Page 5-A

Assembly session haunted by failures



Paul O'Connor

If you picked up the paper over the Halloween weekend, you no doubt saw two stories.

One decried the demise of the trick-or-treating tradition as kids play ghost, goblin and spookmeister at the mall rather than in their neighborhoods.

The other consisted of quotes from the local legislators claiming what great strides the 1998 session of the General Assembly made.

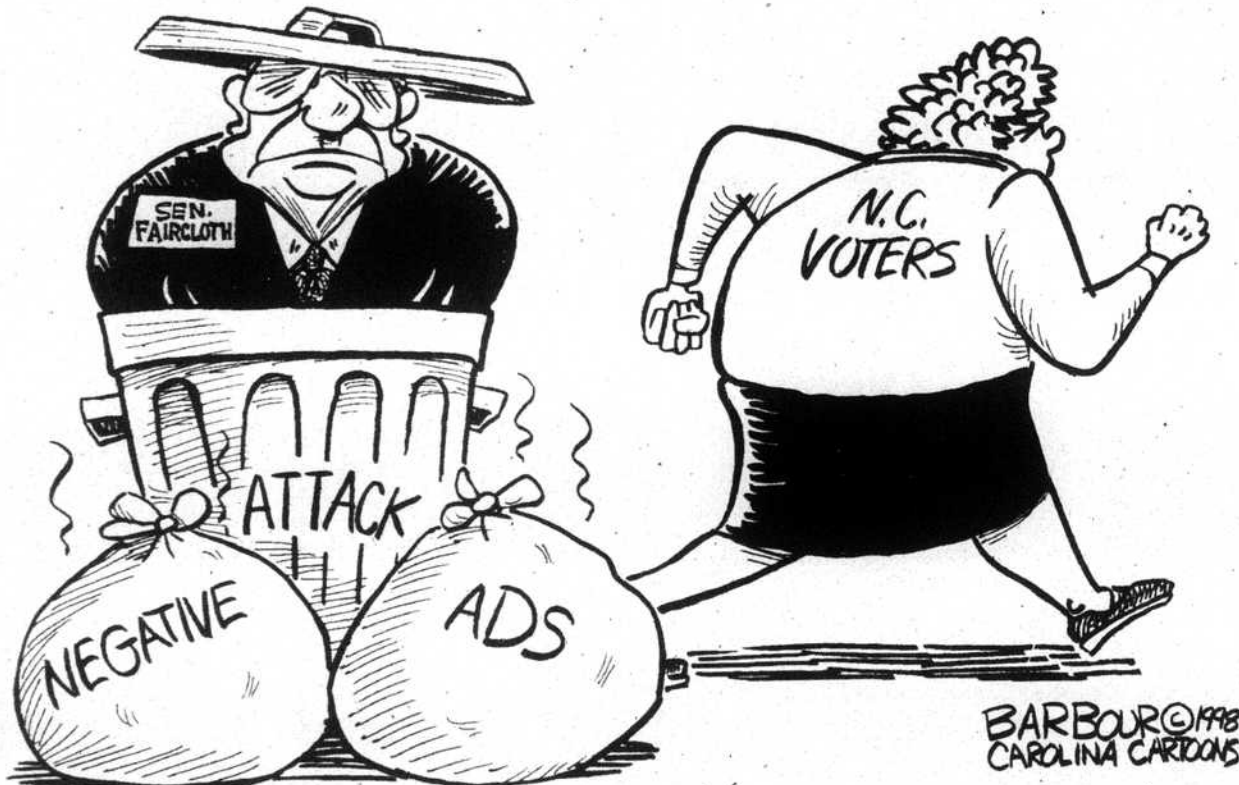
Before this columnist chronicles the good that came from the just passed 1998 "short session," he's going to tell you just how spooky the future might be due to actions taken this session. The ghosts of sessions past, mostly the 1997 and 1998 sessions, could haunt us for sessions to come.

Those ghosts are three: Missed opportunities, stressed finances and a full-time legislature.

Government rarely reforms itself without a crisis first. Only when things are very bad will a political entity discard a failed, but comfortable, process for one more democratic, open and equitable. The General Assembly had that opportunity this year with the state Board of Transportation, but did not take it.

The state's biggest newspa-

See O'CONNOR On Page 9-A



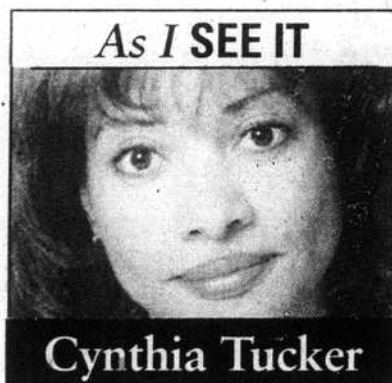
Right-wing extremists cannot justify acts as concern for kids

In the dens, swamps and dark caves where right-wing extremists plan their cultural war against the rest of us, there is a smugness about the cold-blooded, premeditated murder of Amherst, NY, obstetrician-gynecologist Barnett A. Slepian, who, among other routine medical procedures, performed abortions.

Flip Benham, whose Operation Rescue descended upon upon Amherst with its hateful crusade a few years ago, could not bring himself to condemn the attack, instead attempting to cast it as God's will: "Our problem is with God himself. We have shed the blood of the innocent in the womb, and we are now reaping it in the streets."

The right Rev. Donald Spitz, the founder of Pro-Life Virginia, went further, describing Dr. Slepian's killer as a "hero" who ended a "bloodthirsty practice."

"We as Christians have a responsibility to protect the innocent from being murdered, the same way we would want someone to protect us," Spitz said.



Cynthia Tucker

"Whoever shot the shot protected the children."

For too long now, these murderous extremists have been allowed to get away with portraying their villainy as a crusade to save children. Their success in painting themselves as holy warriors may have so far shielded from arrest Eric Robert Rudolph, who has been charged with four bombings, including a fatal attack on a Birmingham abortion clinic in January 1998. Police say residents of the North Carolina wilderness area where Rudolph is believed to be hiding may have aided him out of sympathy for his alleged commitment to

saving the unborn.

What nonsense. Dr. Slepian was shot, according to local police, through the kitchen window of his home as his wife and one of his four children stood nearby. The bullet ricocheted into the living room, where the other children were watching TV. The coward who shot Dr. Slepian gave no thought to his kids, who might have been killed as well.

But Benham, Spitz and their cohorts are up to something else entirely. They are waging war on women, leading a jihad to bring back an age when women's choices were severely restricted and many were forced into marriage and child-bearing for lack of economic or social options. They couldn't care less about crack babies, babies who are HIV-positive, babies burned and battered by their parents, homeless babies, or babies whose parents lack the resources for basic medical care. Babies outside the womb hold no interest for them.

The misogyny in the ranks of

See TUCKER On Page 9-A

Election results will have strong impact on lottery prospects

What does this month's election mean for North Carolina?

You've already heard and read the opinion of the experts. You know about the "victory" of the Democrats and the "missteps" of the Republicans - at least according to the pundits. You saw what happened to Speaker Gingrich. You've heard the speculation about the impact of the elections on President Clinton's future. You are watching for the struggle for leadership among the Democrats in the North Carolina House - and maybe hoping that when the fight is over, they won't be too "black and blue" to govern.

But there is something else about the election that I bet you haven't realized.

This month's election results pretty much guarantee a lottery in North Carolina.

"But," you say, "the lottery question wasn't even on the ballot here."

You are right. In fact, it wasn't a big issue in most of the legislative races. And there was no big drive for a lottery vote in this year's legislative session.

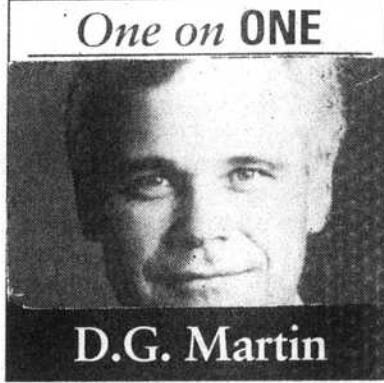
So, a lot of us had put the lottery question in the far back of our minds.

It was not North Carolina's election that sealed our fate. The critical election was in South Carolina.

In that state, the governor's election turned into a referendum on the lottery and legalized gambling. The pro-lottery candidate won, defeating an incumbent Republican governor who earlier in the year looked like a sure winner.

The results of the South Carolina election just about guarantee that the resistance of North Carolina's political leaders is going to melt away. Here is why.

As soon as South Carolina



D.G. Martin

puts its lottery in place, life in the 15 North Carolina counties that border South Carolina is going to change. Lots of their citizens will be driving into South Carolina to buy lottery tickets - and to buy gas, beer, milk, magazines and all the other stuff folks buy at convenience stores. Some folks in Charlotte, for example, can get to South Carolina in five minutes.

These new "border" counties will join about 16 counties that border Virginia and three more that adjoin Georgia. Both states already have lotteries that attract North Carolina cross-border players.

After South Carolina's lottery goes into effect, most North Carolinians will live within less than an hour's drive away from places where dreams of winning a jackpot are sold.

Here are the arguments that will push the lottery over the top in North Carolina.

First, from the border county merchants: All my business is going out of state. My customers - my former customers - go over the state line to shop because they get their lottery tickets there. It is not fair. I need to be able to sell lottery tickets, too."

And, from a lot of others: "Why should we send North Carolina money over the bor-

See MARTIN On Page 5-A

The Chowan Herald
 (USPS 106-380)
 Telephone: (252) 482-4418
 PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY
 By Cox North Carolina Publications, Inc.
 Entered as a second-class matter August 30, 1934 at the Post Office of Edenton, North Carolina, under Act of March 3, 1879.
 E.N. Manning - Publisher
 Rebecca Bunch - Editor
 Sean Jackson - Staff Writer
 Pamela Virzi - Advertising Mgr.
 Susan Bunch - Office Manager
SUBSCRIPTION RATES
 ONE YEAR IN CHOWAN COUNTY: \$15.95
 One Year Anywhere Else in North Carolina: \$18.50
 One Year Out Of State (except for Zone 8) \$21.95
 Zone 8 (Zip Codes 21, 831-864, 889-999): \$22.95
 Subscription Breakdowns Available Upon Request
 10% Discount Available To Senior Citizens
 POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE CHOWAN HERALD • P.O. BOX 207 • EDENTON, NC 27932

Voters to Republicans: The party's over

BY ANDREW CLINE

In 1994, when Republicans won the North Carolina House of Representatives, GOP House leader Harold Brubaker called the election results "the dawn of a new day in North Carolina." Republican Rep. David Miner said, "This means North Carolina is never going to be the same. Everything is going to change."

In 1998, it was all over. Republicans lost five seats in the state Senate and six seats in the House, giving Demo-

Notice To Our Readers
 If you have something you would like to get off your chest, take the time to write the *The Chowan Herald*. All letters must include your current address, telephone number and signature of the writer. Deadline for the letters is 4 pm on Monday prior to each week's publication.



crats control of the General Assembly after just four years of Republicans running the lower chamber.

What happened? Where did the Republican Revolution go? Well, apparently it got lost. The revolution was embodied in the Contract with North Carolina, the NC GOP's version of Newt Gingrich's Contract with America. The contract outlined the GOP goals for governance. Running on this positive agenda and on negative attacks on Democrats who had just spent a \$1 billion budget surplus, Republicans won the House.

Upon taking office in 1995, House Republicans proceeded to implement their agenda. They achieved tax cuts one-and-a-half times larger than those they promised, watershed welfare reform, sporadic but significant education reform (charter schools, mainly), regulatory and tort reform, and veto power for the governor. Republicans completed about half their contract, but by 1996 they had virtually forgotten the contract altogether. The budget numbers bear this out.

In the two fiscal years before Republicans took control of the House, the state budget grew 10.9 percent and 12.1 percent respectively. In the first year Republicans had power, the state budget grew just 1.2 percent. But by the next year, the Revolution had already started to fade. In

1996-97 the budget grew by 7.7 percent. The next year it grew by 9.7 percent, and this year budget growth was up to its pre-Republican level of 10.9 percent. So within four years the Republican Revolution had disappeared.

Throughout the four years they were in power, House Republicans continued to fight for tax cuts. But instead of arguing for broad-based income-tax relief, as they had in 1994, they began to push tax cuts for small interest groups such as elderly homeowners, investors, and people who inherit property. Each of these taxes was worthy of being cut, and very little argument could be made for keeping them. But these proposals didn't capture the attention of the majority of voters because

See BEAT On Page 7-A