

Iredell's diary provides look at man of character

With the onset of winter, the routine slows down and there is a bit more time for reflection, perhaps even opportunity to write a diary or a journal. In the winter of 1773, James Iredell kept such a record; "bound in heavy yellow board, it is written in a small neat hand on thick eight by six inch paper." Don Higginbotham, editor of The Papers of James Iredell explains, "It, at times at least, represents a kind of 'stream of consciousness...' Yet parts of it are carefully and deliberately

written, little essays on philosophical or religious subjects." It is "very revealing of a young man and his social world," and a unique part of Edenton history. Only 21 years of age, Iredell was very serious. He feared that he spent "too much time in an unprofitable, idle manner." A bachelor, Iredell ate out with the gentlemen, and called on many married couples and their families. One Sunday, Iredell "went up town to Mrs. Blair's, whence I walked with the young ladies to the boat, which was

lying at the wharf." The young ladies were Jean Blair's sisters, Ann and Hannah Johnston, who were returning to their home at Hayes by boat. Hannah and James would marry later in the year, and much of this journal records their courtship. Some entries were clearly written to be read by Hannah: "Tho' when my dear Hannah comes to this paragraph



Mary Ann Coffey

she will perhaps think, it may do well enough for an excuse..." Iredell recently had been admitted to the practice of law, and he made note of the law books he was reading, and recorded the time he spent on business. Yet, his principal work was still as comptroller of customs for the port of Roanoke, in Edenton. Iredell reports that, after dining at Hayes, he was "obliged to come

over just after, expecting to clear a captain out, and when I was in town, he was not ready. This disappointment made me spend a very dull afternoon and evening, during which I staid at home, unable to apply myself to anything." Iredell was responsible for checking cargo, insuring that the papers were in order, and the fees paid before a ship left the port. Iredell was second in command, with the position of collector held by his kinsman, Henry Eustace McCulloh, who

spent most of his time in England. McCulloh paid a visit to the office in January 1773: "...We had a very happy, cordial Meeting — Dined with him at Hornblow's and spent the afternoon and evening with him at Mr. Hewes's." McCulloh remained with Iredell for the week, during which time they called on friends, including Colonel Buncombe, who lived across the Sound. In 1774,

See COFFEY On Page 5-A

Governor did not do enough, Dornan says



Paul O'Connor

John Dornan didn't built the Public School Forum into North Carolina's most effective private educational foundation by being acerbic in his criticism of Jim Hunt, the supposed "education governor."

The melodious toned Forum executive director has always chosen to criticize in gentle, constructive bones - something usually foreign to these column inches.

Viewed through the prism of Dornan's gentility, therefore, the best description of his December column in "Forum Report" is as a blistering appraisal of Hunt's failure to lead.

Dornan focused his column on the coming year and the anticipated release of Hunt's "First in America Initiative," a supposed blueprint that the next governor and future legislatures can follow to make North Carolina's schools the best in America.

Dornan wonders whether the initiative will focus on a number of crucial education issues that Hunt has never embraced or tackled, despite holding enormous power for 20 of the last 28 years. Dornan praises Hunt for his "short list" - or focused agenda - of Smart Start, higher teacher pay and accountability. But he says that a "short list" is not enough for a system with so many needs. He specifies four:

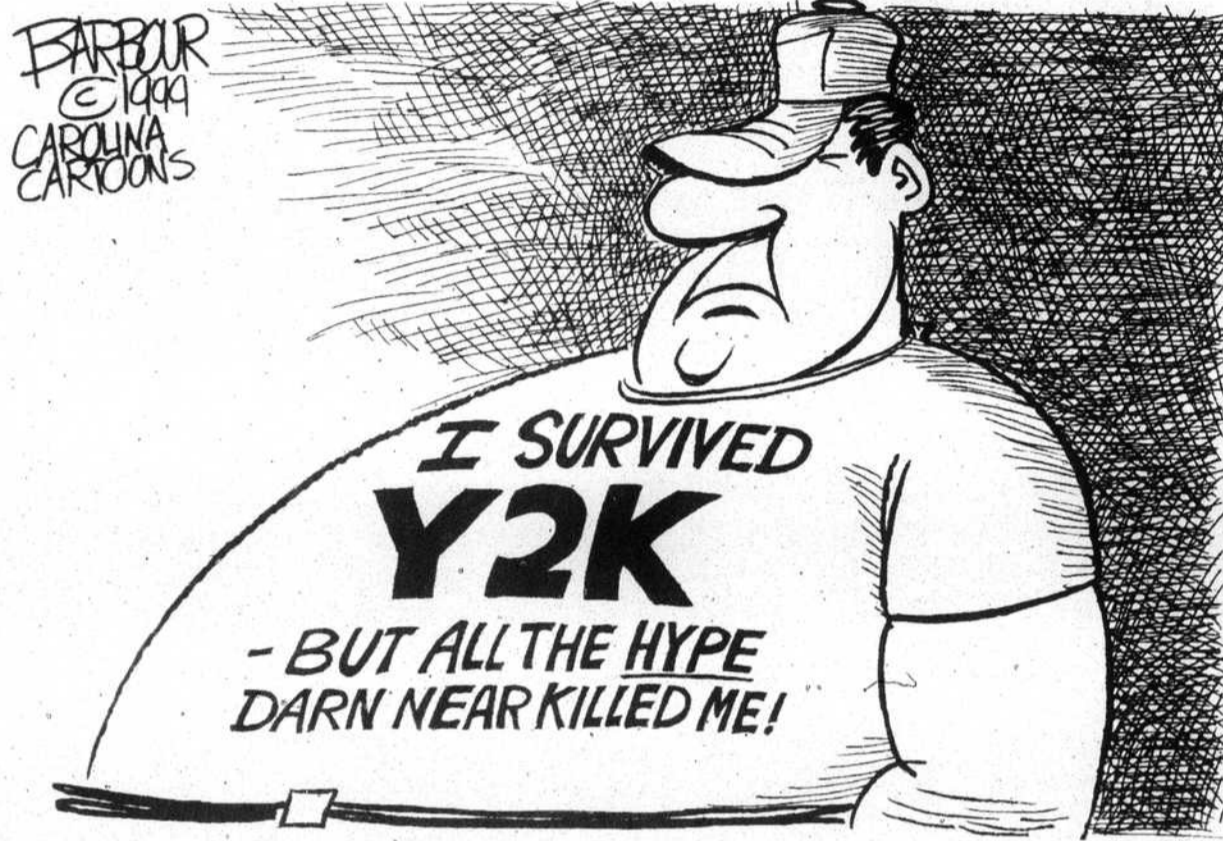
(1) North Carolina school districts have an enormous disparity in resources, but Hunt has been absent in this debate. "With only one year to go before tougher promotion standards threaten to leave tens of thousands of low-income and minority students behind, it would be the right time for Governor Hunt to address this issue," Dornan writes.

(2) JobReady, the state's effort at preparing youngsters for the world of work faces a loss of federal funding next year. "Ironically, while Governor Hunt has preached the connection between education and economic development for three decades, he has never been a public champion of this issue."

Someone needs to find the money to continue this program "but the leadership for sustaining the initiative is lacking," Dornan says of Hunt.

(3) Hunt has championed higher pay for teachers, but "he has not coupled higher salaries with plans to give young people more educational opportunity or to give teachers more opportunity to receive quality

See O'CONNOR Page 5-A



Policy changes are needed to make NC more progressive state in 2000

While NC may be known for its economic growth, low unemployment and natural resources, our state is also recognized for its hog waste, low unionization, and lack of mass transit. Policy changes could reconcile NC's political contradictions and improve citizens' quality of life in the new millennium.

(1) Establish public financing of campaigns.

A few wealthy individuals and special interest groups control elections in NC. Only 1% of NC's population contributes 90% of all campaign donations. As the cost of campaigns escalates, political power becomes increasingly concentrated in the hands of an elite few who can contribute heavily to campaigns or themselves run for office. The average NC House winner spent \$53,099 in 1998; the new Senators averaged \$112,172. In the past three elections, the top-spending legislative candidate has won 84% of the time.

Citizens are beginning to tire of big money's influence on politics. The 1996 Carolina Poll indicated that 75% of North Carolinians surveyed thought that corporations and wealthy interest groups have too much influence on politics. The poll also revealed support for public financing of elections. A Clean Elections Act would allow registered voters to make small donations through their income tax returns to candidates who pledge to take no special interest money and accept strict

spending limits. Public financing would safeguard democratic elections and only cost less than two-tenths of 1% of the total state budget.

(2) Shift the tax burden from the working poor to corporations and the wealthy.

Public financing of campaigns is also important because, as long as corporations and the wealthy can give large sums of money to political candidates, policy makers will continue to reward them with special tax breaks. Two major tax cuts enacted in recent years, the repeal of both the inheritance and intangibles tax,

primarily benefited the affluent. Corporate tax loopholes allow industry to dodge several hundred million dollars in taxes each year. With the strain on the state budget after Hurricane Floyd, this is an opportune time to eliminate loopholes that allow corporations and the wealthy to greatly reduce the taxes they pay. Industry in NC has long enjoyed both unfair tax breaks and has long enjoyed both unfair tax breaks and corporate welfare programs while many citizens have paid more than their share of taxes and reaped few of the same rewards.

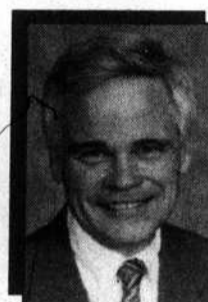
(3) Enact a statewide living wage law.

Working class families in NC pay more than their fair share of taxes while also earning wages that

Common SENSE

See Sense On Page 5-A

Your vote may not count in a key election



D.G. Martin

North Carolina's important state legislative elections this year will be a lesson in how undemocratic our supposedly democratic government can sometimes be.

I got this message from the information in the latest issue of "North Carolina DataNet," a publication of the Odum Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Political science professor Thad Beyle and several of his students prepare DataNet.

This DataNet issue examines the 1998 elections for the North Carolina state house of representatives and the prospects for this year's contest.

Using some of DataNet's information, I want to raise a couple of questions and try to answer them. But first let me give you my bottom line conclusion. Here it is.

Although this year's elections for the state house of representatives will have an impact on North Carolina government for years to come, your vote is probably not going to count for much.

Now for the questions—and some details to back up this pessimistic conclusion.

1. Why are the upcoming house elections so important?

Answer: Redistricting. The legislature elected this year will, subject to the governor's veto, put together a new set of legislative districts based on the 2000 census figures. Our state's population distribution has changed greatly during the last 10 years. So there will have to be a lot of changes in legislative districts.

There is one thing we know for sure about the redistricting process. The political party in charge of the legislature when the redistricting is done draws the districts to its advantage.

Here is how it usually works. If the Democrats are in charge, they try to corral as many Republican voters into districts that are going to vote Republican anyway. This gives Republicans "free rides" in these districts, but dilutes Republican strength in more competitive districts—thereby improving the Democrats' chances. If the Republicans are in charge, they do the same thing in reverse.

Just a few careful adjustments in the legislative districts can make a tremendous difference in the number of Democrats and Republicans who serve in the legislature.

See MARTIN On Page 7-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, 1870.

E.N. Manning - Publisher Emeritus

Jeb Caudill - Publisher

Rebecca Bunch.....Editor

Pamela Virzi.....Advertising Mgr.

Susan Bunch.....Office Manager

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One Year in Edenton or Tyler: \$15.95

One Year Anywhere Else in North Carolina: \$21.50

One Year Out of State (except for Zone 8): \$25.95

Zone 8 (Zip Codes 21, 831-864, 889-999): \$26.95

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

HERALD MAILBAG

Support Is Needed

Dear Editor:
Now that the new year is here, why not help someone by giving a pint of blood? Did you know, every two seconds someone needs blood. A single donation of whole blood may help three to four people.

Volunteer donors are the only

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 12 noon Friday prior to each week's publication.

means of maintaining an adequate blood supply. It takes less than one hour to go through the entire process and only 15 minutes of that time to give a unit of blood.

To ensure that there is enough blood for the community, the Red Cross must collect between 500 - 600 units every day.

At the blood drives in Edenton we only get 50 units per drive. With over 5,000 people in the town and county, you would think we could get a lot more. Think about it: if your parents, grandparents or your own child needed a pint of blood and you were told, "Sorry, there is no blood available," how would you feel?

What would you do? Please do your part. Come to Chowan Hospital on Jan. 11 and support the Red Cross Blood Drive.

Ralph Clapper
Red Cross Volunteer
for Edenton

Cooperation Needed

Dear Editor:
Recently our Edenton-Chowan Board of Education held two forums to gain input on the future configuration of our elementary school populations at White Oak and D.F. Walker. The information received was to be used to guide the Board in determining the best possible solution for our children's education.

Subsequently our two elementary school PTA's came together to foster dialogue and cooperation in an effort to explore all facets of the issues and stand ready to assist the Board in any way possible. Our Superintendent and our Board all need our understanding and support during these very important deliberations.

Meanwhile, a concerned group of businesspeople formed a group

whose aim is to promote a K-2, 3-5 grade configuration, the first at White Oak and the latter at Walker. A meeting took place Tuesday, Dec. 28, at COA where they stated that this was their aim and they intended to present this position to the Board.

We addressed these folks and expressed what is believed to be a majority opinion of not only County residents but further, City residents as well. This is that while a K-2/3-5 split is an option, it is far from the only one to consider. Another, of course, is to maintain the status quo, i.e., make no change.

A third example is: given that we have a brand new White Oak, which is centrally located (which from the very first was of primary importance when it was built), why couldn't an enlarged K-5 campus handle all of Chowan's elementary

See LETTERS On Page 5-A