

Opinion

Who's driving that truck...

In 2006, Bertie County native Carroll Daniels published *What Kind of Truck Does He Drive?*, a collection of stories from his childhood (copies available through the Albemarle Regional Library system).

Having known Carroll as my children's math teacher at Hertford County High School and his wife, Joan, as a poet, I was especially interested in the book.

One of my favorite stories is not in but about the book. Carroll's sister was reading some of his accounts that involved her, and she informed him she did not remember them the same as he had. Since he is the one who got them in print, his version is the one that will last.

We all have those situations in which our mind shapes a memory into what we wanted something to be, not necessarily what it was. But we also simply have those situations in which different persons have different memories. It is all a matter of perspective. It's a matter of who's driving that truck?

College instructors generally undergo regular evaluation by students. I recall one administrator's telling me he early on learned not even to look at the evaluations. Whereas I fully understood his point, for one reason or another, I always did look at them, and I generally had to wonder if the students were sitting in the same classroom.

What one student criticized, another praised; what one student found missing, another found present, and another found it present too much. Ultimately, such evaluations become useless; unless one can consider the perspective, what can one take from them? It all depends on who's driving that truck.

I have found the same to be true in this day of cyber shopping. If one reads enough reviews of products, one usually finds them contradictory. If I really want to buy the item, I generally ignore the reviews entirely, but I do find them amusing at times, again wondering if these people have received the same product, just as I used to wonder if students were receiving the same instruction. It all depends on who's driving that truck.

And so it is with the current vaccine rollout.

Have you talked to people who have gotten one or both shots? Have you read Letters to the Editor in newspapers regarding the experience? The same questions apply about those trying to get the vaccine, especially those unable to do so.

Some have found the experience noteworthy by its efficiency and some just the opposite, whether attempting to get the shot or actually getting it. Perhaps these people differ from the instruction evaluators and product reviewers in that they are not having the same experience. It may not just depend on who's driving that truck but where it's being driven.

For anyone I know who has received the vaccine through the Albemarle Regional Health Services, the experience has been positive. Mine certainly was. Yes, it was time consuming, but I thought of it as an investment. Spending three hours to affect the rest of my life - how many ever hours that may be - seemed like a good return.

I know people who have spent more time and people who have spent less; the extremes I have heard (locally) are more than seven hours and fewer than twenty minutes - somewhat miraculous with an observation time of fifteen minutes needed, but again, it depends on who's driving that truck, where it's being driven, and when it's being driven. The time somewhat depends on timing.

It would seem it has been a good time to live far from the maddin' crowd, that our being in a rural area, being a part of the Albemarle Regional Health Services has been to our advantage. Kudos and thanks to them and all the others working with them to vaccinate us. The sooner the more of us are vaccinated, the safer we will be.

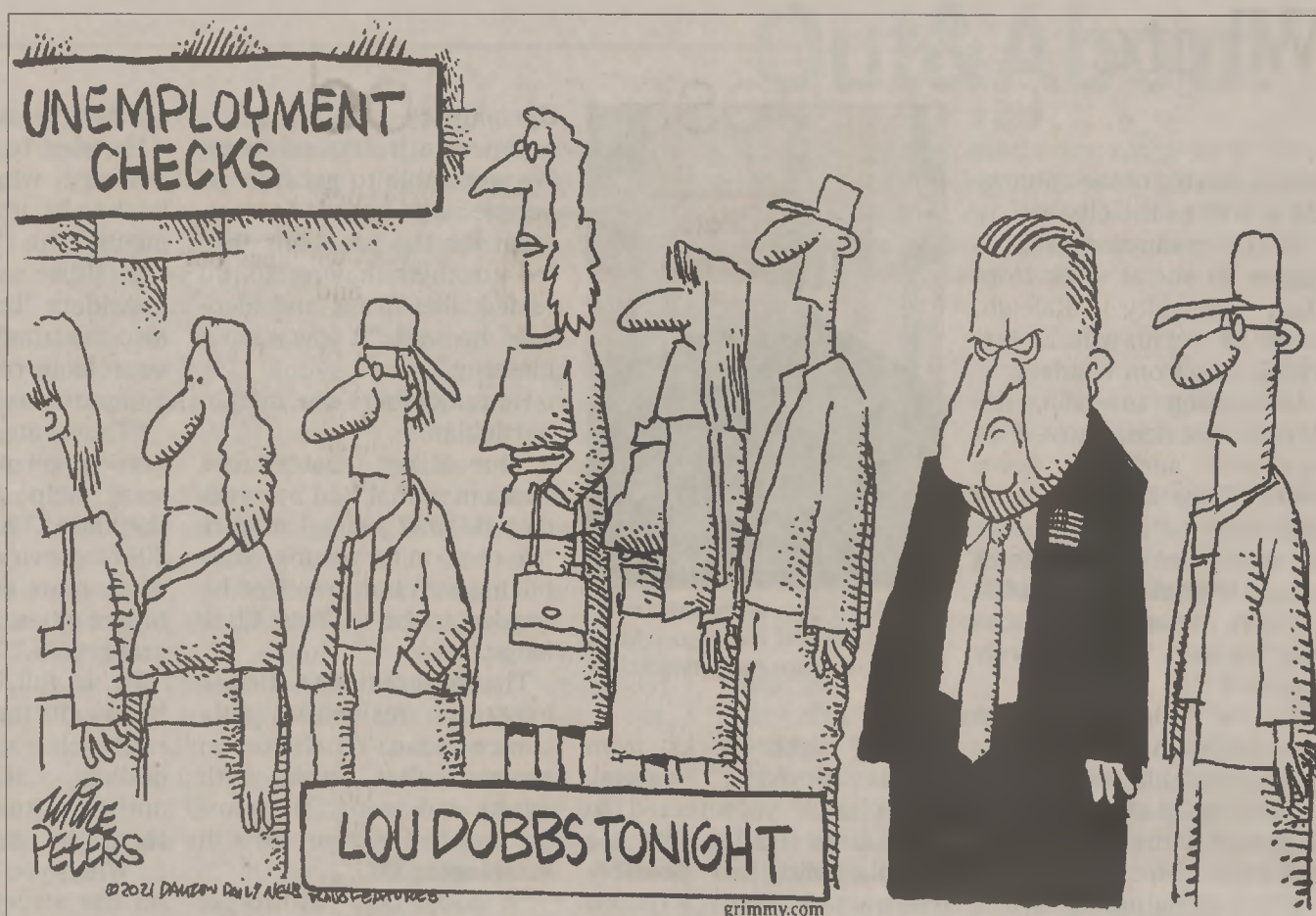
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SARAH DAVIS

Far from the madding crowd

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832



Stories behind the photos...

Recently I was out and about when someone I knew stopped me and told me how much she enjoyed my concert photographs in *Eastern North Carolina Living Magazine*.



JIM GREEN

Around Here

She commented that she had no idea I had been doing concert photography, so I explained I started in the early 1990s at *The Attic* in Greenville. It kicked up when I moved to Clayton in 2000 when I was able to photograph national acts in Raleigh, Greensboro, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Wilmington, Myrtle Beach (South Carolina), Hampton, Richmond and Virginia Beach (Virginia) and near Washington, D.C.

Decidedly curious, she asked if I could tell her a brief story about each of the photographs that were published, so I will do the best I can.

Here goes:

• **Eddie Van Halen (Van Halen):** This was shot in 2015 in Raleigh on what turned out to be the band's last tour. Normally photographers are allowed to shoot two or three songs, but this time,

we got to shoot six songs. They are memories I will always treasure because Eddie passed away on Oct. 6, 2020.

• **Chris Daughtry:** Chris is from our magazine's coverage region, so I thought it would be neat to include him. This was taken in Greensboro in 2008. He always puts on a wonderful show.

• **Taylor Swift:** Taylor is one of my favorite artists, and not just because I have photographed her several times. She's just a great performer and puts on an awesome show. This shot was taken on her "1989 Tour" in 2015 when she played PNC Arena in Raleigh.

• **Jon Bon Jovi (Bon Jovi):** This one was shot during the band's "Lost Highway Tour" in 2008 in Raleigh. Another great live band.

• **Jay-Z:** I photographed the rapper in Greensboro. Pretty good show.

• **Bono (U2):** When the U2 "360 Tour" played Carter-Finley Stadium in Raleigh in 2009, I knew I wanted to photograph them. No direct light made it a challenge, but to be able to photograph one of my favorite artists of all time in front of almost 60,000 people was a real thrill.

• **Britney Spears:** This was photographed from the mezzanine level at the Greensboro Coliseum

in 2009. She was playing "in the round" (center) of the arena.

• **Paul Stanley (KISS):** My favorite band to photograph. One of the best stage shows ever in rock and roll and Paul (and Gene Simmons) always play to the cameras. This was taken in Hampton, Va. in 2009.

• **Angus Young (AC/DC):** Photographed in Charlotte on the "Black Ice" Tour in 2009.

• **Garth Brooks:** I photographed Garth at the Greensboro Coliseum in 2014, shakily perched atop a short ladder from the soundboard more than 100 feet away handholding a heavy 300 mm f2.8 lens. It's a wonder I didn't fall.

• **Lars Ulrich (Metallica):** Photographed "in the round" in Charlotte on the "Death Magnetic Tour" in 2009.

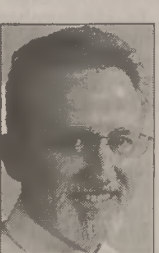
• **Usher:** Photographed at the Greensboro Coliseum in 2010 I believe. Very energetic and frenetic pace to his show.

• **Tom Petty:** One of my favorites, this was taken in Raleigh in 2010. Tom passed away in October 2017.

Jim Green is Interim Editor and Sports Editor of The Enterprise. He can be reached at jgreen@ncweeklies.com.

Stacked firewood is a backbreaker...

It's probably time to declare the stacked firewood too pretty to burn.



MARK RUTLEDGE

The Daily Reflector

There's a decorating trend that uses firewood to establish a rustic look. Cut logs tightly packed behind chicken wire make a nice half-wall or bar or restaurant booth.

I have one of those trendy wood creations stacked next to a metal barn, less the chicken wire. It's a look that nearly ruined my lower back, again.

I wrote about firewood during the fall, when I was chopping down a couple of dead emerald ash trees in the front pasture. The trees were already well seasoned since they'd been dead for years.

In order to complete the job, I had to take the old Stihl Farm Boss chainsaw in for some minor repairs. It's the second family Farm Boss in 45 years, which would be quite a testament to Stihl chainsaws had we been continuously sawing wood during all of that time.

When we moved to the country in the 1970s, we heated with wood. I was a teenager and it fell to me to fell the trees. We eventually learned that heating a drafty old farmhouse with wood was impractical.

But by the time my dad insulated the old house and had it retrofitted with central heat and air, I was fairly good at sawing, splitting and stacking firewood.

So whenever I crank up the old saw, it's no sweat for me to buzz through some limbs. The trouble is in loading the logs — especially the big ones.

Back in the day, I would swing a splitting maul to bust up the logs. Even at my advanced age, I can still swing a maul. But it's no good against rock-hard emerald ash logs.

I loaded up the largest of the logs and hauled them to my brother-in-law's place in Carter County for splitting. Kevin cuts more firewood in one season than I've stacked in 30 years, but he's too smart to swing a maul. He owns a hydraulic splitting machine.

Loading the giant logs onto the truck did not help my lower back. But it was the splitting that sent

me into months of heating pads and rehabilitation. I blame my sister-in-law.

Beth is a petite-yet-powerful, country woman. She set up the hydraulic splitter and proceeded to feed the massive logs to me as I fed them to the machine. It occurred to me that this was not her first day on a big firewood-manufacturing job.

Before I could finish the splits to one massive log, she would be standing there holding the next.

"Pace yourself, Beth!" I huffed over the drone of the splitter's engine.

Some of those logs had to have weighed nearly as much as my sister-in-law.

The idea behind the firewood was that we would install a wood-burning stove for heating the barn. That way, the kids could play ping pong and darts all year.

It's mid-February and the wood stove has not materialized. But the wood stacked outside on the porch at least creates that warm and rustic look. That might just be enough.

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