

Viewpoints

Pork barrel money not all bad

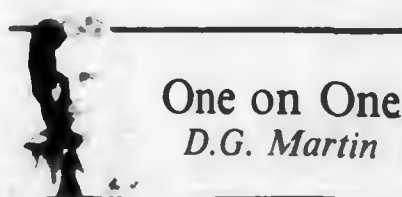
The pork barrel. Will anybody say anything good about the pork barrel?

How about you? Can't you think of anything nice to say about the Legislature's process that lets each House member designate \$30,000 (and each Senator, \$60,000) of state money for local projects?

No. You probably take the "high road." I can hear you now. "Pork barrel politics is bad. I don't want any part of it. I want our legislators looking out for the common good. They should not be spending our scarce tax dollars on their pet projects."

You may be right. You probably are right, but...but...but there are some good words to say about the pork barrel. Here are a few of them:

Libraries, schools, volunteer fire departments, community centers, shelters for the homeless, historic preservation projects, Hospice, help for victims of domestic violence, YMCA's, hot meals programs, crisis centers, performing arts groups, senior centers, outdoor dramas, recreational facilities and programs,



One on One
D.G. Martin

alcohol and drug treatment programs, rehabilitation of public buildings, services for the blind, rape crisis centers, nurse recruitment programs, public radio, programs for the mentally retarded, mental health projects, rescue squads, senior citizens nutrition programs, youth employment programs, day care for children, services for Alzheimer's victims, water quality research, Headstart, low income ownership programs, experimental programs in child development, services for the hearing impaired.

A few good words -- programs, services and projects that would not have been funded if it were not for the so-called "pork barrel." Most legislators designate their share of this money for such purposes and do

it in a responsible way.

You still may not like the idea of individual legislators making their own decisions about how to spend state money. But if you study the matter, you will have to admit that most of the money goes for worthwhile programs.

The money is not wasted. You could even argue that the state's taxpayers get a better bargain in services from the pork barrel money than they do from all the money that is allocated in the regular budget process. If that is true, maybe it is because some legislators are better in touch with the needs of people in their own districts than they could ever be with the most pressing needs of the entire state. They may do a better job as individuals than they do as a group.

However you feel about all of this, don't criticize your legislator for participating in the pork barrel process, and then tell him that he didn't bring home enough bacon. At least, don't make that criticisms in the same breath.

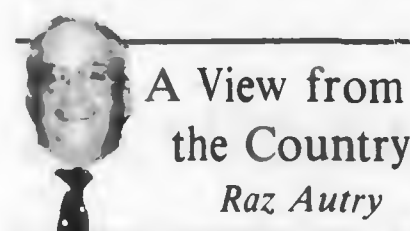


That was no time for a wedding

Whether they admit it or not, everyone sooner or later is going to pull a bonehead. I have always managed to muster up enough courage to admit mine. If confession is good for the soul, lily white is the color of mine.

My latest case of dropping the ball of wax came about when my friend and golfing buddy Sam Morris announced the upcoming wedding of his daughter Sarah. I received an invitation and felt honored to be included among the guests.

I must admit 2 p.m. on Sunday seemed a strange hour to have a wedding. It began to occupy my mind to such an extent that I asked some of the Methodists in church Sunday if they knew the hour of the wedding. Most of them gave me a strange look, but that wasn't anything to fret about -- Methodists always give strange looks. There was one in our group who worked at *The News-Journal*, so I decided to look her up. Surely she would know. Naturally, Becky Jones decided to skip out when I needed her most.



A View from the Country
Raz Autry

As Ireni and I were leaving the church before the sermon was delivered, I suggested we circle the Presbyterian Church to check the bulletin board. She put a damper on my spirits immediately by saying, "Everyone wasn't invited; you know it is not listed on the board."

Next I decided I would go by Sam's house and get the information first hand. Not a car or living soul was in sight. I remarked to no one in particular, "He is having his last fling with his daughter."

It was necessary I eat a fast lunch because time was wasting. Starting to the bedroom to dress, I passed a phone. Instinctively I decided to check and see if anyone was left at

the Morris house. Perhaps someone would be late getting to the church. Lady luck was on my side. My golfing partner answered the phone. "Sam, the wedding is at 2, is it not?" I inquired. "It was at 2 yesterday," he answered.

After picking myself off the floor and mumbling the best apology I knew, it became abundantly clear that I need a keeper. However, with that realization I will now announce to my fellow human beings no man need apply. When I can no longer function, I want my future to rest with a good looking woman.

Only one other time have I pulled such a bonehead. It was at the other end of the scale. I arrived at a funeral a day late. The spirits were the only company I had in the sanctuary as I waited for the body to arrive, which never did. If it had, I would have taken the same approach a student of mine took years ago when he was caught alone with the enemy at a football game. The wind would have done my talking.

N.C. gets glimpse of next senate

North Carolina got a glimpse of the future during June when a bill expanding unemployment insurance rights was passed by the state Senate. The state saw what its Senate is apt to look like for the next two to four years.

The bill extended unemployment benefits to workers laid off because of someone else's strike. The particulars of the bill are not as important to the point of this column as are the facts that the AFL-CIO wanted the bill and the state's business lobbyists opposed it.

The Senate has long been a bastion of conservation business power in North Carolina, but that strength began to weaken four years ago when Jimmy Green's term as lieutenant governor expired. Businessman Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan may have been just as strong a business supporter as was Green, but some of Jordan's supporters and thus the people he often had to put in important committee spots, are not.

In the 1987 session, business power was significantly reduced. That was due, in part, to the rise in the number of lawyer-senators. For the first time, business was defeated in the Senate on the issue of comparative fault insurance. (Oddly, comparative fault failed in the House when it had been supported on several occasions).



Watching
By Paul T. O'Connor

Three senators -- of various different political persuasions -- mentioned to this reporter after the unemployment bill passed that the vote marked a change in the direction of the Senate.

"Things seem to be moving in our direction," said Sen. Helen Marvin, D-Gaston, a liberal. "Those senators who have been making all the decisions don't seem to be prevailing."

Sen. Marshall Rauch, D-Gaston, a businessman and fiscal conservative, said, "Without a doubt, the Senate is more liberal than it was." But he added, "One battle a war does not win."

Sen. Tom Taft, D-Pitt, a lawyer who is a little bit of everything ideologically, said the vote was an important indication that Green's old supporters -- namely, Rauch, Sen. Ollie Harris, D-Lincoln, Sen. Monk Harrington, D-Bertie, and Sen. Harold Hardison, D-Lenoir -- were not getting everything they wanted

any longer. None of this is to say that the Senate is about to become a bastion of liberalism. That is highly unlikely. What is more likely, however, is that the Senate will no longer be the rubber stamp for big business, insurance and utility bills, and that it will no longer stand in the way of every measure proposed by consumer advocates and environmentalists.

Another four months must pass before voters decide who will run the 1989 Senate as lieutenant governor, either Republican Jim Gardner or Democrat Sen. Tony Rand, D-Cumberland.

Rand is clearly one of the leaders of the ascendant senators. But the shift in direction will continue even if Gardner defeats Rand in November. That's because Democrats are virtually assured of maintaining a big majority in the Senate and they have already lined up behind Sen. Henson Barnes, D-Wayne, as their candidate for president pro tem in 1989. Barnes and Rand are very much alike on the issues.

If Gardner wins, he may be stripped of his non-constitutional powers. But even if he isn't, it is unlikely that Democrats will give him everything Jordan currently has in terms of power.

The Senate of 1989 will be very unlike senates of the past.



Back rules with adequate research

By W.B. Jenkins
N.C. Farm Bureau Federation
In 1985, some environmental groups were very active in debate over federal farm legislation. The ranking minority member of the House Agriculture Committee is now saying that these groups are expected to be even more active next

time around. As a result, he said lawmakers will concentrate more than ever before on environmental issues during the 1990 farm bill debate.

Congressman Ed Madigan, who represents a sizeable agricultural area in his Illinois district, said the process of writing new farm legislation

will begin next year. He expects issues such as soil conservation, pesticide use, and other environmental issues to dominate the debate. Madigan said farmers and ranchers will have to work hard in the upcoming debate to obtain reasonable regulations.

Charles Benbrook of the National Academy of Sciences, agrees with Madigan about environmental interest in the next farm bill. While Madigan calls for increased research into certain agricultural practices to examine risk, Benbrook says good science won't make environmental problems go away. He says the sooner research happens, the sooner the regulations will be enacted.

If the federal government is going to increasingly tell farmers what they can or cannot do, it should have the right scientific evidence before making those rules.

Letter To The Editor

Autry 'Jackass' column draws reader response

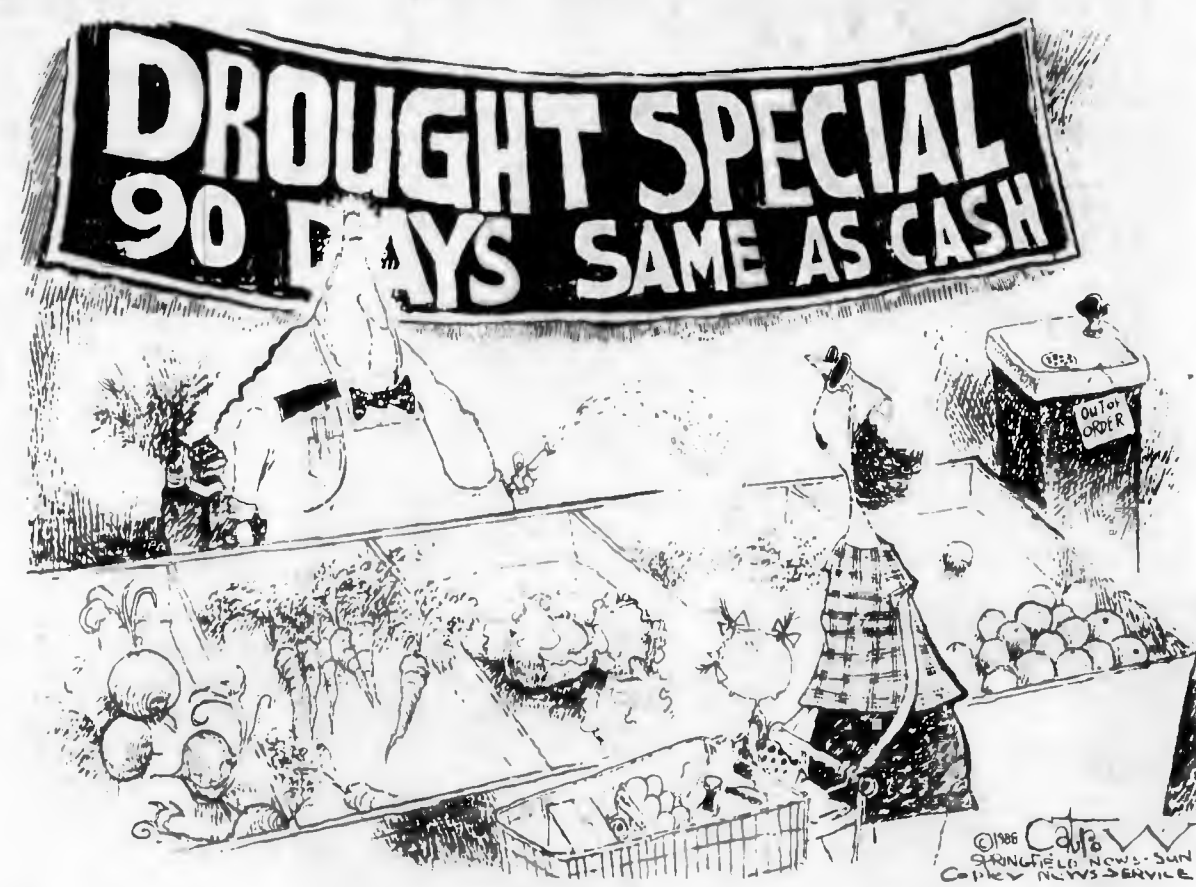
To the editor:

I couldn't help being amused at Raz Autry's June 22 "Jackasses present at graduation" column. It seems ironic that Mr. Autry should write this particular article, especially since the Autry family talked and laughed during the entire graduation cere-

mony—and even one member of the Autry family blew a whistle when their niece's name was announced to receive her diploma.

I agree with Mr. Autry—graduation is supposed to be a dignified ceremony. It is very unfortunate that some parents, friends, family members and graduates do not realize this.

Grace McDonald



The News-Journal



Published Every Thursday by
Dickson Press, Inc., Paul Dickson, Pres.
119 W. Elwood Avenue, P.O. Box 550
Raeford, N.C. 28376

Subscription Rates In Advance
In County Per Year—\$10.00 6 Months—\$5.00
Out of County Per Year—\$12.00 6 Months—\$6.00

LOUIS H. FOGLEMAN, JR. Publisher
KEN MACDONALD Associate Editor
JUNE LANCASTER Reporter
HENRY L. BLUE Production Supervisor
SAM C. MORRIS Contributing Editor
ANN N. WEBB Advertising Representative
PAM FREDERICK Advertising Representative

Second Class Postage at Raeford, N.C.
(USPS 388-260)