

VIEWPOINTS

We Get Letters

'Life Can Be Hard'

You know daily life can be hard at times. But if you have the love of God in you it can make difficult times so much easier.

Do you draw closer to God when life is good, or when troubles come your way? People can really be heartless and it is very hard to comprehend at times how people can be cold to one another. God teaches us to love one another. And I guess what is so hard for me to understand is how much something small could influence someone down and out. Whether it be sickness, financial problems, work related issues, whatever! Why is it so hard for people to ask, "How are you feeling today?"

"Are you doing alright?"

Or "I am here if you need someone to listen!"

Just a quick phone call can give someone that lift they may need. Of if someone is sick or suffering in other ways, a gift basket or just a card in the mail. I try to grow spiritually by reading my Bible and reading "Our Daily Bread." We all need to improve in certain areas of our personality. But first we all need to work on being kind and thoughtful of others. Smiles are contagious and nine times out of ten if you smile someone will smile back! Keep the Faith!

Susan P. Baker

No criticism shortage

To The Editor:

By the time you read this, all the candidates' forums will be history. I commend the Woman's Club and Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring these events. I've talked to four of the five candidates for sheriff, and I know where they stand and they know what I will do when elected. I have called the other candidate and he did not return my call. Oh well. Three of the candidates have also invited me to campaign events and I do attend. I've been criticized for this and that's okay. There is no shortage of criticism in Hoke County — some constructive, some not.

In February I publicly said I would go anywhere, any time to speak to anyone who is concerned about how our county is run (www.petecamp.com) I will continue to do that.

There are eight Democrats in the primary race for commissioner. Although eight is not a record, it's a strong indication that a lot of people want change. We certainly need it. Two of these candidates had campaign events on August 17th, and I stopped in at both to wish them the best.

The primaries will soon be history also. If we want change in our county, we will have to vote for change. I believe we deserve county government that does the right thing, at the right time, every time. If you want county government that is small, efficient, accountable and responsive to you, vote for me on November 5th. That's my political philosophy in a nutshell. If you want business as usual, well, just take your pick of the others. I'm going to continue to stand up and speak out, to all the people and all the candidates, whatever criticism I get. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

Pete Camp

Reelect Charles Daniels

To The Editor:

The 2002 election of county commissioners is very important to all citizens of Hoke County. Some taxpayers have a problem paying their taxes.

We must elect and reelect competent people who will be sure our tax dollars are not stolen, but are spent wisely and every dollar accounted for to restore faith and trust in our county government. This must be done.

When *The News-Journal* was denied access to public records from the county offices, any taxpayer with the mentality of an idiot thought that something crooked was going on in county government. We are now told some records are missing. How convenient!

We have two commissioners who are first rate — Daniels and Wright. Now let's take a look at the other three that control the board.

Out of four bids for the county to be audited, these three accepted the highest bid. Why? And they accepted travel pay of \$500 per month. This

was recently reduced, but after all, this is election year. Travel pay for Sampson County, the second largest county in the state is \$250 per month. Special meetings by commissioners in Sampson County are \$30. Don't Hoke Commissioners get \$100 per meeting? One county employee hired by these three makes more in salary than the governor of Arkansas, Nebraska and Maine. Aren't they just brilliant at wasting the taxpayer's money!

Hunt and Leach voted to raise the salary of the Register of Deeds \$15,000 per year. Any county employee who is not satisfied with their salary — resign and work some place else. Hoke County does not have a million oil wells producing income. Hunt and Leach do not understand good sound county finances.

In closing, we have some good candidates who are running for commissioner. Let's reelect Daniels and two new ones to put faith and trust back in our county government. Vote!

Willard Page

In the dark, not stupid

To The Editor:

Who is Bernice McPhatter taking the fall for? Who is she shielding? Why is she so silent? Who is behind this scam? With that much money allegedly missing, why didn't she skip town? Take a new identity? Who is the big movement behind this so-called embezzlement since 1994?

Seven years and just uncovering/discovering this shortage from this p-o-o-r county? Who else was not doing their job? Give me a break!

We have been in the dark, it's true, but we are not all stupid. Why did this come to a head right at election time? Are they trying to convey a message to one group of Hoke County not to trust the other group running for office? Ho! Ho! Ho! Uncle Tom still exists in this day and time. People pointing fingers have to answer to a higher court one day, so they better watch their ditch digging.

I am praying that my people will come to their senses and see the handwriting on the wall.

Peace Out.

Mother Evelyn C. Price

We can start anew

To The Editor:

I recommend one-stop voting because I became aware I could vote now for my choice of candidates at the Board of Elections office instead of waiting until September 10. I could not sit still and wait until September to cast my vote at the primary race. I am very glad to know I cast my vote that will right the wrongs that I created back in 1998 when, unfortunately, I voted for the Sheriff that is serving in Hoke County today.

I also am glad to right a wrong regarding a county commissioner who has crushed my beliefs and trust in a person, telling me that he promised this and promised that. When he got in as a county commissioner chair-

man, he let me down to my knees and beyond. I am referring to Commission Chairman Tony Hunt. His lack of leadership and qualifications leave me a whole lot of room to choose from more honest candidates in the upcoming election, and I know who his replacements ought to be.

Yesterday in Scotland County 45 people voted on one-stop voting; 30 voted in Moore; and it was very impressive that in Hoke County 110 people voted. I proudly voted as #153 voter on Friday. By these large numbers in Hoke, it tells me as a community that we are definitely not satisfied with the leadership of the county — especially the leader we have placed in the highest office — which is the Sheriff of this county.

Most impressive for me was a man who attended every single county commissioners' meeting, except for one when a serious illness occurred in his family. That commissioner is Charles Daniels. My first mark on the ballot was cast for him because he cares about this county. I know that it took lots of guts and integrity to stand up and blow the whistle on things that needed to be exposed, and that person is Charles Daniels — who deserves the credit.

We can now start afresh and go forward with rules, regulations and guidelines in place that will not embarrass us as a county like in the past several years. I cast a vote for Charles Daniels in the last election and did also in this election as a one-stop voter.

When Charles Daniels' hands were tied by other members of the board who would not cooperate to seek the truth, he went to the most influential persons and resources he knew to bring to the attention of Hoke County people improprieties that were going on in the county's business. That would be *The News-Journal* staff.

Without the newspaper's help and their sticking their neck into a lawsuit — that sometimes people say failed — we would not have had anyone to reveal to us the corruption that existed in Hoke government. *The News-Journal* staff did not fail. That lawsuit to seek public records' information was instrumental because of people like Pat Wilson and Victoriana Summers and the work they do daily. Without their truthful reporting, the local government's wrongs would never have come out. People do not realize the work that goes into daily reporting at that newspaper. Sometimes they (Wilson and Summers) do not have any friends but their computer, but let it be known when they print the truth and facts, the people who read it will always be their friends. I am referring to the taxpayers of Hoke County who were cheated by the alleged county embezzlement and appreciate the newspaper's investigative reporting.

In closing, if you do not go vote this time and you watch this county be run into the ground again, do not complain. Go whether you have one vote and one vote alone. Cast that vote. It could make a difference in this election.

Charles Patterson

Many fought and died so we would have the right to vote

To The Editor:

The greatest air-sea battle of all time — This Destroyer battle at Okinawa began on March 26 and 27, 1945 when five destroyers fell victim to Japanese kamikazes. The battle did not end until July 28/29, 1945 when four destroyers were crashed into directly.

The battle took place 40 to 75 miles northwest of Okinawa on the main flyway from Kyusu, Japan, where the U.S. destroyers intercepted Japanese suicide pilots.

Day and night without rest or sleep U.S. destroyer men faced this insanity — eye to eye. This is and probably always will be the most harrowing duty Navy fighting men have ever faced. In groups of 1 to 3 destroyers we stood alone. The destroyers became known as "The Sacrificial Lambs" who fought like lions. One hundred-forty-eight served on the Okinawa Picket Line. One hundred-twenty-two — 80 percent — fell victim to kamikazes and 43 were sunk, scuttled or scrapped. Kamikazes did not come over at even rate. They often came in swarms — like bees. Blood and gasoline mixed freely on our decks and small harbors quickly filled with destroyers that were battered beyond recognition.

Young Americans stood face to face with kamikaze pilots. Each kamikaze pilot faced death only once, but young Americans faced their death over and over for weeks, months, like a recurring nightmare. "We looked them in the eye to stand and die." I know because I was there.

My ship took her place on picket station #15 on the evening of May 19,

1945 as we hid under the blanket of smoke screen all night and at battle stations we could feel the heat from the planes flying over us. Most of the men didn't move all night scared to death.

The planes came out of the sunrise; scores of planes poured over the horizon headed for my ship — the USS Evans. For 73 minutes more than 100 planes swarmed over my ship. In a few minutes Evans gunners had shot down a dozen planes, a total of 23 planes shot down in 60 minutes. Then four suicide planes penetrated the fire from Evans' guns. Violent explosions rock the Evans as the planes hit. In a few minutes she was dead in water with one-tenth of her crew killed and many wounded.

The Evans became the Champion Kamikaze Killer of World War II. Some crew members won many medals plus the Presidential Unit Citation for all crew members. We buried our dead, took care of our wounded,

patched up and towed the Evans 8,000 miles back home at 12 miles per hour.

While being repaired to fight again, thank God they dropped the bomb. Just imagine what it would be like if we had not won World War II and other wars since. There would not be a Hoke County, home and family, as we know it. You would not be allowed to complain about things you know or think are not right.

The freedom and the measure of peace we have known did not come cheap. Next Veterans Day, thank all our veterans and next Memorial Day honor the ones who have paid the price. One way you can honor them is to get out and vote because that is one of our freedoms that did not come cheap.

By the way, I was discharged on Christmas Day 1945.

Art Watson

Crew member and torpedo man
The USS Evans Destroyer #552.

Corrections

We have two corrections to make from last week's issue.

First, we misquoted sheriff's candidate Hubert Peterkin in a front page story on the public forum. Peterkin did not say he was the only candidate in the sheriff's race with a law enforcement certification. He said he was the only Democratic candidate with a law enforcement certification.

Our apologies to candidate Peterkin for that mistake.

Also, a letter from Pete Camp that was printed on our Viewpoints page was not the one he brought to us but a previously published letter. We are not quite sure how that happened but apologize to him and our readers for that mistake and any embarrassment it might have caused him.

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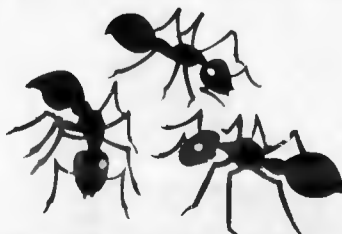
We are too. Because of the severe ant problems this year we have come up with a treatment that gives immediate relief and lasts for 3 months.

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