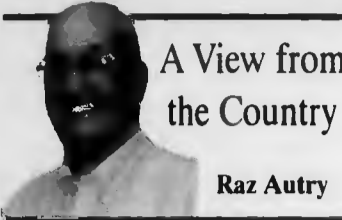


# VIEWPOINTS

## Tough love didn't work for dad

My next door neighbor, the Yorkie man who has 25 little rat-size dogs, is a friendly fellow to be a Yankee. Folks love those Yorkies; they must — a heavy price is attached to the little rascals.



A View from the Country  
Raz Autry

what I say. They replied, "If our friends aren't welcome, we will not stay in your house, we will leave."

He invited them to do so. Without waiting for further talk from him, I remarked, "They were probably back in 30 minutes."

"No," he replied, "It was six months before I saw them and only then when the sheriff called and asked me to come to his office." Once there he was informed that his sons were charged with breaking and entering and he was responsible for their misdeeds because they were only 16. The only way he could get out of the charge was by rounding them up and

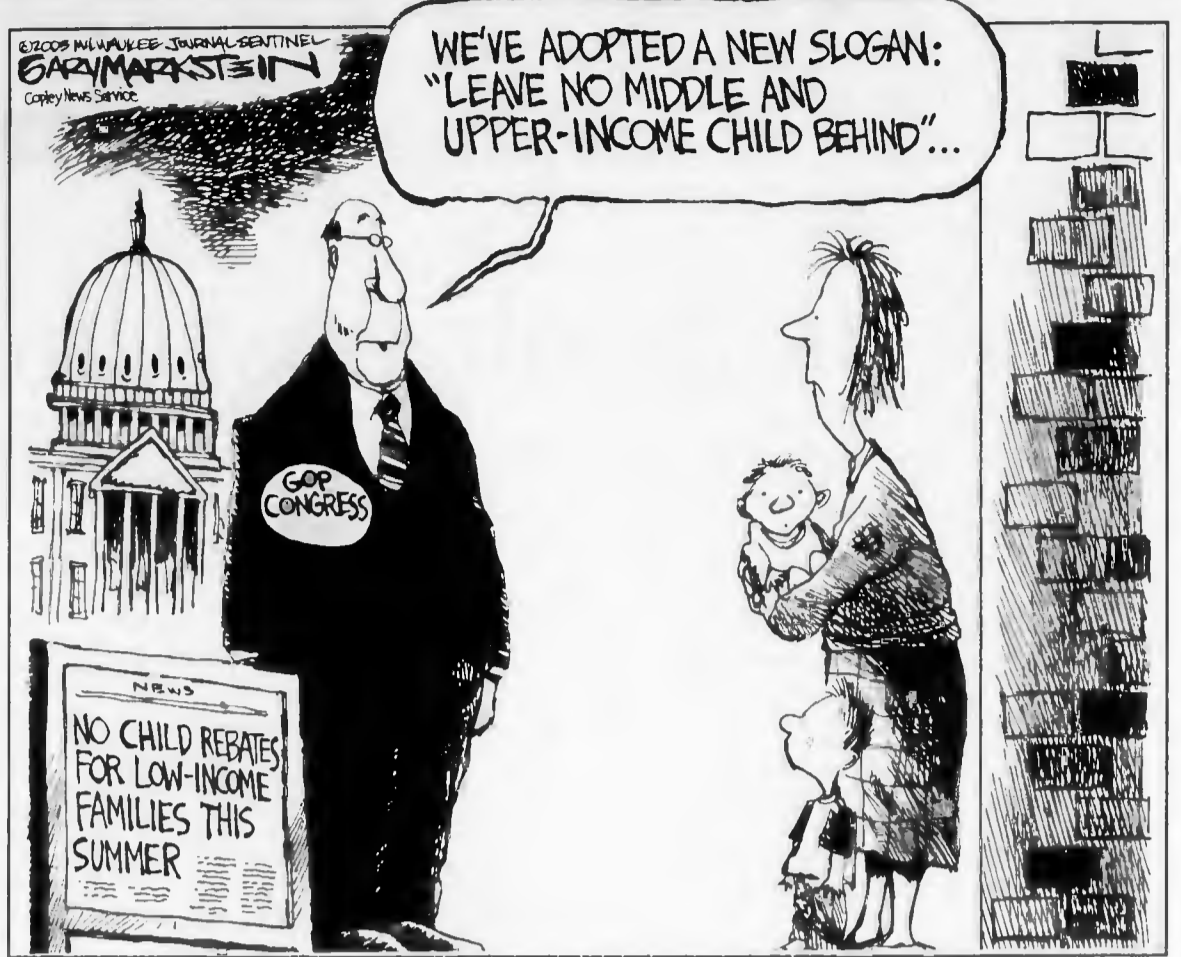
bringing them to the station. This he did because he knew where to find them. The sheriff informed him after he had brought them in that he needed to get a paper signed releasing him from responsibility; if not he would be held liable until they were 18. I decided once again I would play the Dr. Dodson role. I bet they turned out to be good men. How old are they now and where are they?" I can ask a lot of questions in one sentence.

He gave me a look which said, "You poor fool." "Yes, indeed," he replied, "They are now 27 years old. They turned out well, both of them are in jail."

Just goes to show Dr. Dodson cannot be right all the time.

My parting thought: A badman rushed into the barroom shooting his pistol and shouting, "All right, all of you bastards clear out of here."

Everybody broke for the door except one fellow who stood nonchalantly drinking and said, "There shore was a bunch of them wund't there."



## We Get Letters

### Disaster support needed

Because of their pure dedication and concern for the safety of the citizens, I have always had the utmost confidence in the ability of Hoke County's first responders (fire, rescue, law enforcement, and EMS) to handle emergency response. However, while serving as the Hoke County Emergency Services Director for nearly six years, I have continually expressed my view that Hoke County Government needed to support a more proactive disaster preparedness program.

I have resigned from Hoke County. I am now employed as deputy director of emergency management/fire services for Cumberland County.

As I look forward to my new job, on a personal level, I hope to finally spend more quality time with my family. I feel confident that I will have the manpower to effectively handle all phases of emergency management (in Cumberland).

I want to thank Hoke County's fire departments, rescue, FirstHealth of the Carolinas EMS, the Sheriff's Office, the N.C. Forestry Service, the N.C. Department of Transportation, the City of Raeford Fire Department, the Raeford Police Department, and all of the other state and local departments, agencies and individuals that supported me — both professionally and personally — during the time I served as the Hoke County Emergency Services Director.

I wish them well.

A special thanks goes to Ron Fairbanks, who served as my communications supervisor. Not only did he serve in that capacity for the past six years, but he spent many unrewarded hours assisting in emergency management. Much of the praise belongs to Ron for Hoke's new communication center. Many have stated it is one of the best in the state.

Additionally, Ron was instrumental in the development of the Emergency Operations Center for Hoke County, the training program for telecommunicators, professional certifications for the telecommunicators, the GIS mapping program at 911, and national certification as a Storm Ready County, the first county to achieve such recognition in the Raleigh weather service area.

I also want to thank the citizens of Hoke County for the opportunity to serve them during these past six years. I want them to know that the staff of dedicated telecommunicators and I performed responsibly and always had their safety utmost in our minds.

Additionally, I hope they feel that the additional services we provided along with the programs we instituted while I was county fire marshal, emergency management, emergency communications, and safety officer, helped to improve their quality of life.

AI Schwarzbher

### Words don't suffice

This letter is to all the people who participated in the Tony Graham Poker Run and Gospel Sing.

I would like to express a great big thank you to all of you. My prayer is that God will bless you and keep you safe as you ride your bikes and con-

tinue to bless your song ministry to God.

The donations that was taken up will be used wisely to pay for medicine and for medical bills.

My family and I appreciate everything people are doing for us. These people are really true friends. True friends are really hard to find but, when you have them you have peace of mind knowing that if you need something you can count on them.

Also, there are many friends that have given donations to my family and we just want to say thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Sometimes just saying thank you is not enough and it's really hard to find the right words to say how much I appreciate it all.

May God bless you and keep you in his protection.

### The Tony Graham Family

### Troops send love

To the Editor:

Grace and peace be with you. I am sending my greatest gratitude to all of those who support the American troops here in Kuwait and Iraq. We all send our love and say thank you to all who supported our efforts in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

I pray ye oh Raeford that you all show love to one another and appreciate the freedom that you have, and that we (American soldiers) have fought to protect. Let not your sons' and daughters' deaths and hard work be in vain.

I would also like to say hello and thanks to the following people:

My mother Constance D. Johnson, Tyrone Johnson, Kiaunia McEachin, Kenneth Lee McBryd, Arion Patterson, the Rev. Owners of Freedom Church and his house, the staff at Food Lion, Stephen and Tonya, and to all others that I forgot. I leave you with this Bible scripture, and hope that it encourages you the same as it has encouraged me.

Isaiah 54:17 - No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

God bless and God speed!  
SPC. Negetee Hawkins

### Lower county taxes

Dear Editor:

I am glad that the Hoke County budget for this next year provides a pay raise for county employees. That's the good news.

When the County Manager briefed the Commissioners on May 21st, there was a sigh of relief when they were told the budget was balanced and there was no need for a tax increase.

Clearly, the Commissioners have the wrong goal.

For Hoke County to attract new businesses and homeowners, our goal should be to lower taxes. Yes, lower taxes to bring business to our county and give our homeowners, particularly our seniors, some tax relief.

A tax decrease without the flim-flam shell game of property revaluation we are seeing now in Cumberland County (our property revaluation will be in 2006).

I have spoken out many times about our obsolete user fee schedule which places an unnecessary burden on taxpayers. If this schedule of user fees was more realistic we could easily have a two cent decrease in our tax rate

If you aren't a southerner you simply can't understand our language. We use mess for a lot of meanings, I messed up, I brought you a mess of collard greens and you keep messing around and I will tell your wife. Not hard for us to understand perfectly good English.

For some strange reason I can strike up a conversation with anyone. Such happened to me when I was gassing my truck. A fellow was on the other side of the pump I was using and naturally I started talking. We developed a pretty good friendship by the time the vehicles were filled. Still talking, while we were paying the bills, brought up another subject. Teenagers and their way of life rule the conversation, perhaps made more so, because a young man was in the store with an earring in each ear.

Both of us continued to try and figure out why teenagers are different today than when we grew up. Earrings are different, for sure. If I had worn an earring in my ear, my father would have taken the entire lobe off because he jerked so hard. Although that is an unrealistic statement. What could we have used to put a hole in the lobe?

Nothing around my house would have been suitable. Beside my mother would have boxed my ears if I had suggested I needed a needle to punch a hole in my ear.

My friends at school would have put a label on me and it wouldn't have been flattering. I told the gentleman teenagers in my time talked back to their parents, the one difference we made sure we were five miles away so they couldn't hear us.

He had a tale to tell, since I had the Dr. Dodson look. When his twin sons were 16, they began to bring some of their friends to the house. He said they were a seedy looking bunch, therefore he informed his sons that their friends were not welcome. It didn't sit well with the sons and the father calmly stated, "As long as you are in my house, eating my food you will do



### One on One

D.G. Martin

### Lesson in stereotyping

"Strong black women." It is a positive image, don't you agree?

Maybe. But University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Prof. Trudier Harris-Lopez's recent book, *Saints, Sinners, Saviors: Strong Black Women in African American Literature*, challenges that view.

I read her book to prepare for my interview with her on UNC-TV's North Carolina Bookwatch (broadcast last Sunday). I expected it to be a volume of unrestrained praise of heroic black women in fiction. I thought the author would pour out her admiration for these women who had overcome oppression and held their families, churches, and communities together.

I was wrong. Although Harris-Lopez's book is about strong black women as portrayed by important African American authors, she does not believe that this image of strength is a positive one. Instead, she asserts that the popular image of African American women as strong and resilient is so negative that it is a disease — a disease called "strength." They are "almost too strong for their own good."

(See MARTIN, page 3A)

## Letters to Editor policy

The News-Journal welcomes Letters to the Editor and encourages readers to express their opinions.

Letters must be signed and include an address and phone number. The street address and phone number will not be published, but are required so we may verify authenticity. The name of the writer and, in some cases, the town the writer is from will be published at the end of the letter.

We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar, as well as those that exceed 300 words. We will not publish letters that we consider to be in poor taste or slanderous. In some cases we may add an editor's note as a postscript when we believe a correction, explanation or amplification is warranted. We may also, at our discretion, limit the number of times an individual writer may submit a letter for publication.

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