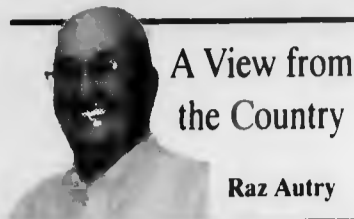


# VIEWPOINTS

## Should a writer embellish or not?

All people as they get older have trouble with their knees, so it is now time for my wife, Ireni, to suffer from that experience. She said to me recently, "If I was a horse with knee trouble you would shoot me." Not so, as I have tried to tell her, knee trouble comes along with other ailments, most of it is associated with age. Unfortunately, most women aren't interested in talking about age.



**A View from the Country**  
Raz Autry

I'm very sorry that I forgot your birthday last week. It would serve me right if you forgot mine next Tuesday."

Grandfather on airplane: Have I told you about my grandchildren?

\*\*\*\*\*

Since one famous writer from the New York Times has been accused of copying other folks work and making up stories I have decided I had better check my sources before I put them on paper. It is not going to be nearly as good reading as it was before; those stories other folks tell can be embellished some which make them more interesting.

Having said such, I will give credit for the following, Over The Hill and On a Roll by Bob Phillips. No one would ever know the difference as much as I talk about my grandchildren. Nevertheless, here goes: Grandchildren from any age can always make their grandparents happy just by saying, "I'm hungry."

They say grandchildren brighten up the home — That's right — they never turn off the lights.

Among the things that are quite easy, even simple, for a child to operate are the grandparents.

A little boy wrote this letter to his grandmother. "Dear Grandmother,

Ola Rae Tucker, who I am proud to call a friend, can spend a tale with the best of them. She was talking to me about her sister's husband. According to Ola Rae, he simply would not go to a doctor, regardless of his condition. He went through a spell of fainting, as us country folks call it "passing out." His wife continued her nagging trying to get him to go to the doctor and find out the cause of his weakness. All to no avail. She came home from church and sure enough there he was stretched out lizard length on the floor, (for my northern brothers that means he had fainted).

Once she got his head cleared and he was seated on a couch, she began to tidy up the room by arranging the curtains, she further gathered sev-

eral chairs and placed them around the room.

Naturally all of this fuss got his curiosity. He asked, "What are you doing?"

She replied, "I am making plans for the viewing of the body."

"What body?"

"Yours, if you don't go to the doctor, you are going to die and I want people to be comfortable when they view your body."

He dashed out the door like a young man and headed for the doctor.

"There are some means which will get people's attention. Ola Rae added to the story by saying the doctor told him he only had three months to live.

His answer, "Doctor, I can't make enough money to pay you in three months."

"Then," replied the doctor, "In that case I will give you six months."

These doctors expect to be paid.

My parting thought: Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride wearing white?"

"Because white is the color of happiness and this is the happiest day of her life."

The child thought about this for a moment and asked, "Then why is the groom wearing black?"

Editor's note: Raz's peach and ice cream stand will open July 4.



## We Get Letters

### Politicians owned

To the Editor:

Rarely does an American citizen enjoy the opportunity to read as much profound truth in one editorial as I read in D. G. Martin's June 25, 2003 'One on One' column. For example: "Big money for political campaigns is usually given and raised by those who know that 'their candidate' can help them — economically." Columnist Martin's emphasis on the words, "their candidate," reminds us that in today's political climate, candidates are bought and owned by special interests, which can afford them.

Using the fact that presidential candidate Senator John Edwards raised \$7 million in campaign funds as an example, Mr. Martin pointed out that "presidential campaigns are more about money than they are about

polls." And wrote: "Sadly though, the base of Edwards' money comes, not from us, but from a group of professionals who know that Edwards will work for their interests in opposing any limits on court awarded damage awards for personal injuries."

Using President Bush's "fund-raising machine" ability as an example, Mr. Martin wrote: "The President's millions of dollars came, not from ordinary citizens, but from those whose millions will bring them back hundreds of billions if the President is reelected and continues his program of tax reduction." Not to mention deals such as Halliburton's no-bid Iraqi oil contract!

Columnist Martin pointed out that "the exploding dependence of political candidates on big money" creates a willingness to "auction them-

selves to the highest bidder in the community of special interests." And wrote: "Campaigns finance reform is not a magic answer. For instance, the 'matching funds-campaign spending limits' program for presidential campaigns 'proved' for a time that it could give us reasonably balanced, fair presidential campaigns." Until "George W. Bush showed us in 2000 that he could run a better campaign without spending limits. He avoided them by declining the matching funds and raising even more on his own."

The bottom line to the simple fact that special interests are creating a monopoly on government that will allow them to monopolize business and industry when it is complete. And their monopoly will be completed if American citizens, blindly devoted to the major political parties which sold us out long ago, do not wake up, stand up,

and vote for candidates who will not "and auction themselves to the highest bidder in the community of special interests."

Think about it, please!

Robert C. Currie Jr.  
Laurinburg

### Wagons move on

To The Editor:

This year marked the 40th year of the Hoke County Wagon Train. Thanks to everyone who made it a success.

To LaFayette Ford for the new lead truck; Home Food, our super sponsors; and all of the other sponsors, too.

Also, staff members and wagon masters for the hard work to make it successful.

To The Sheriff's Department and the City of Raeford for helping to make it a safe one; The News-Journal for the pictures and write-ups. To Luke McNeill for the VCR tapes — they were super and very enjoyable to watch.

Let's look forward to next year.

Thanks  
Hoke County  
Wagon Train members

### Need school adjustment

To the Editor:

It is about time that the people of Hoke County wake up and demand that their so-called school and county leaders start doing more than just showing up for their

monthly meetings and pretending to be concerned about our county and school kids. Until we get the leadership off their butts and make them earn all the money they are getting from the people of Hoke County.

Let's start from the top: school superintendent. I went to high school at Hoke County High and never in the years that I attended did we need as many assistant and

assistant to the assistant as we have now.

When Dr. Raz's ran things in the school system you never had to look far to find him — or Mr. Steed; they were always somewhere to be found, I have went to the Board of Ed plenty of times to speak with Mr. Strickland and always got the same old answers: He's out right now, no matter what time of day it is.

If the system is short of money than we should start from the top and make adjustment from there.

What we have now is people coming to Hoke County using it for a stepping stone and moving on. These so-call leaders are even forcing our local home grown teacher to leave Hoke and seek jobs in other counties, if you don't believe it, just take a trip to the other counties and see how many Hoke folks will run into.

Look at how many principal and assistant we are losing this year so where are the leadership going?

Freddie McPhaul

## More about his favorite TV program

My favorite TV program begins a new series this Sunday at 5 p.m. on UNC-TV.

If you read this column regularly, you already know the program—North Carolina Bookwatch. It is the only statewide TV program about North Carolina books and authors. You also know the reason that it is my favorite is because UNC-TV lets me be the host.

We are finishing up the taping of the new 12-part series that will air in July, August, and September.

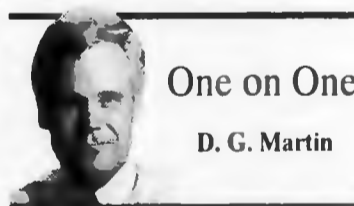
The new series will feature a new group of diverse, talented, and interesting authors.

Let me give you a quick preview.

For the first time, we will feature a science-fiction writer. Orson Scott Card, who lives in Greensboro, is known throughout the world for his compelling stories. His interview about Shadow Puppets shows him to be a compelling character in his own right.

Another first is a featured children's book author, Carol Boston Weatherford, who tells us about her book for children, Princeville: The 500-Year Flood. She also shares insights on the craft of children's book writing and publishing.

The new series features four important nonfiction books about North Carolina topics: Appalachian State University professor Timothy Silver's new book about Mount Mitchell and the Black Mountains, Duke University professor Robert Durden's book about tobacco magnate James B. Duke, David Cecelski's book about pre civil war life in North Carolina entitled The Waterman's Song, and A



**One on One**  
D. G. Martin

Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina by Catherine Bishir and Michael Southern. (I have written previous columns about three of these books and would be glad to send copies if you will send me an e-mail request. dmartin13@nc.rr.com.)

Three of our authors have written poignant books about adult women returning to their hometowns, struggling to renew their relationships with their parents and friends, and to find meaning in their lives. Pamela Duncan's Plant Life focuses on a North Carolina mill village. Haven Kimmel's The Solace of Leaving Early features a troubled common well-educated woman trying to get her feet on the ground in a parochial Midwestern town. Gwendoline Fortune's Growing Up Nigger Rich presents the complex challenges of an African American woman who returns to her Carolina hometown after spending many years "up north."

Another novel is set in the mountains near the North Carolina-South Carolina border. One Foot in Eden by Ron Rash is a murder mystery, lovingly told by an award winning poet.

Virginia Hillman's interview about growing up and dealing with her mother's severe mental illness can bring a reader to tears. So will her interview. Her book is Rescuing

Patty Hearst.

Finally, one of our most exciting interviews is with UNC Chapel Hill soccer Coach Anson Dorrance. His new book The Vision of a Champion is aimed at young women soccer players. But his views on teaching and inspiring young athletes provide lessons in leadership that will challenge everyone who reads his book—or watches his interview.

I hope that you will add some of these books to your summer reading list—and mark Sundays at 5:00 p.m. on your television viewing schedule this summer.

The complete North Carolina Bookwatch summer schedule follows:

• July 6: Ron Rash, One Foot in Eden

• July 13: Virginia Holman, Rescuing Patty Hearst

• July 20: Timothy Silver Mount Mitchell & The Black Mountains:

An Environmental History of the Highest Peaks in Eastern America

• July 27: Gwendoline Fortune, Growing Up Nigger Rich

• August 3: Orson Scott Card, Shadow Puppets

• August 10: Robert Durden, Bold Entrepreneur: A Life of James B. Duke

• August 17: Haven Kimmel, The Solace of Leaving Early

• August 24: Catherine Bishir/Michael Southern, A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina

• August 31: Carole Boston Weatherford, Princeville: 500 Year Flood

• September 7: Pamela Duncan, Plant Life

• September 14: David Cecelski, The Waterman's Song

• September 21: Anson Dorrance, The Vision of a Champion

For more details, check the UNC-TV web site at the following address:

http://www.unc.tv.org/nbookwatch/episodes.html

## Worth Repeating

Archie McDiarmid, after obtaining his fourth leader dog: "When you live with them, they become part of your family."

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