

VIEWPOINTS

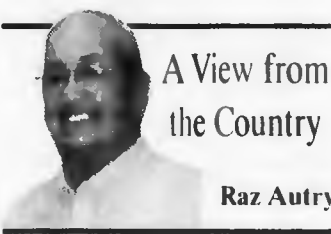
Of teeth that stay put and cats that don't

There is a new adventure in my life everyday. My wife called me at the peach Orchard and said, "A lady called from Hardee's said you had left your teeth there and your cell phone."

I replied, "That was nice of her. I haven't been to Hardee's and I have my teeth in my mouth and I am talking to you with my phone. I don't know whose teeth they are, but I am sure they are missing them. It is possible the teeth could have been left in one of those doubleburgers." Regardless, those lost teeth are sorta like the man who hated his wife's cat and decided to get rid of it. He drove 20 blocks from home and dropped the cat there. The cat was already walking up the driveway when he approached his home.

The next day he dropped the cat 40 blocks away but the same thing happen. He kept increasing the blocks but the cat beat him back home. At last he decided to drive a few miles away, turn right, then left, past the bridge, then right again and another right and so on until he reached what he thought was a perfect spot and dropped the cat there.

Hours later the man called his



A View from the Country

Raz Autry

wife at home and asked her, "Lynn, is the cat there?" "Yes, why do you ask?"

Frustrated the man said, "Put that cat on the phone, I am lost and I need directions."

If those teeth are lost, sooner or later they will show up.

The political signs are beginning to appear. Which means the election is only a few weeks away. Everyone running will have a program that is better than the folks in office. If you doubt that is true, just ask them. I have been well pleased with our county commissioners. Their decisions, in my opinion, have been positive and moving the county forward.

They have built a new health building and are in the process of building a new jail, which is not a popular decision. Popular or not, it has to be done. The present commissioners have stood tall in

facing the issues. If those who are not now in office and think they have the solution to the jail overcrowding problem and it doesn't include a new jail, good luck.

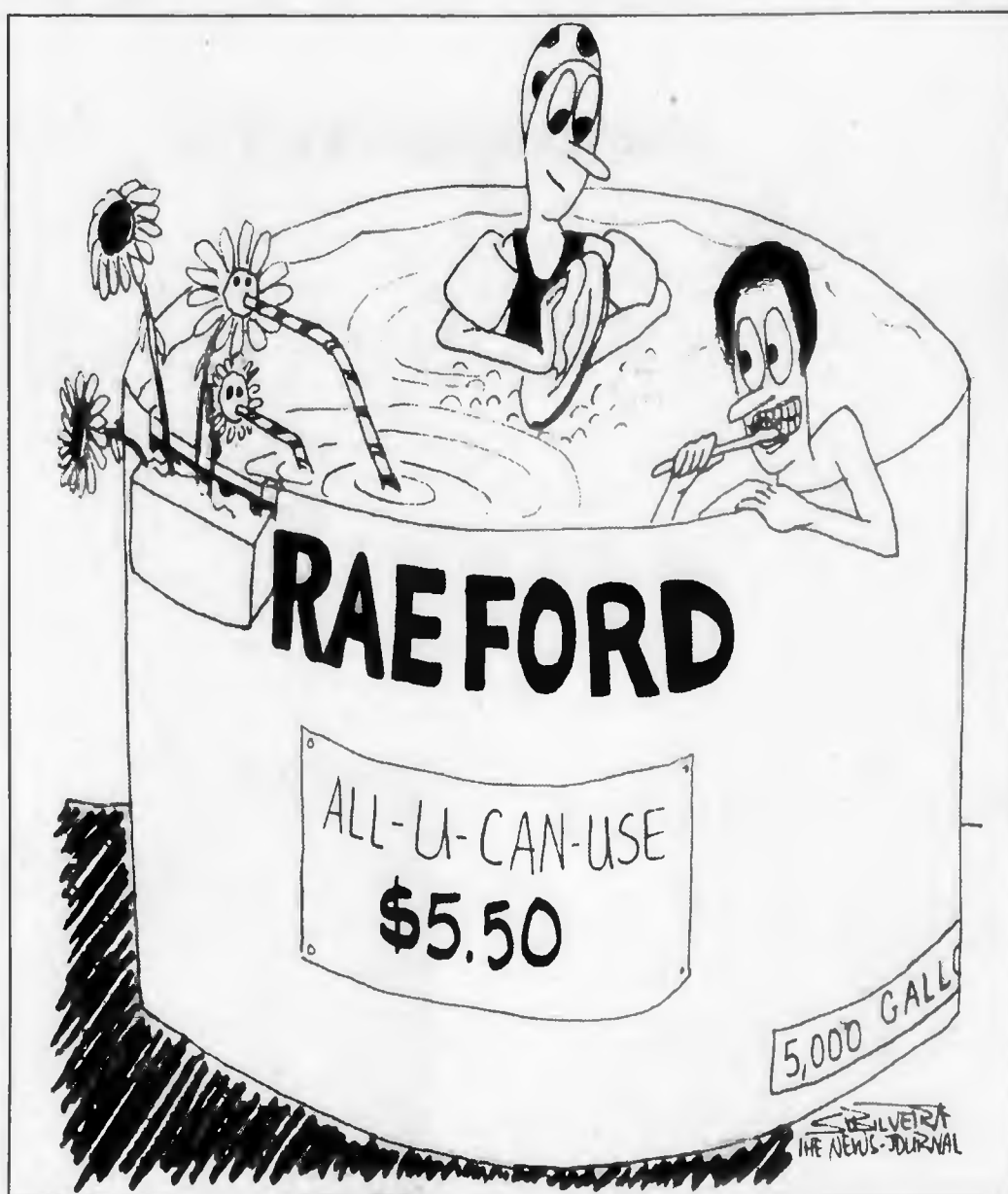
My parting thought. "A preacher one night was traveling alone. Darkness caught him and he found a vacant house and decided to spend the night. He built a fire, and sat in front of it with a newspaper. While reading, he heard a noise and said, "There ain't no such thing as a ghost."

A little cat — just a kitten — passed by, followed by a big cat three or four feet tall. The cat looked at him and said, "Yes, sir, there is two of us tonight."

Preacher said, "Yeah, in a minute there will only be one," and he streaked out and ran. He got to a log by the creek and sat down to rest. The big cat sidled up and said, "We sure had a good race, didn't we?"

The preacher looked at that monstrous big cat and said, "Yeah, and we damn sure are going to have another one — right now."

Enough said.



We Get Letters

Some characters showed up in our town

To The Editor:

It was a grand performance with a cast of characters involving a group of very talented people of different ages and ethnic backgrounds who live in and around surrounding areas.

Watch out, candidates, if Billy Bold should ever run for sheriff of Hoke County! If Silas Scavenger ever brought his Medicine Show to town with his sidekick, Running Water and Theodor and her Dance Troupe, I'm sure many would go and probably end up buying several bottles of snake oil. People would clamor to stay at beautiful Dakota Melody's Hotel,

famous for her hand-made towels, and people would line up to eat at the restaurant run by the Harvey Girls which is right across from the statue of Captain Muttonchop. There would be deputized farmers, who keep peace in the town, always on the lookout for sassy Prairie Rose and her band of outlaws.

The drama, "Tied to the Tracks," written by Tim Kelly, was presented by The Raeford-Hoke Museum and performed on stage at Turlington School on March 3 and 4. This special project received support from the North Carolina Arts Council and the National Endowment of the Arts, which believes that a great state deserves great art.

The Board Members and Committee of The Raeford-Hoke Museum want to thank Jane Sellars, director of the drama, all the volunteers, all those who played an important part in the production of the drama, and last, but not least, the talented cast members. We thank all of you for your participation, dedication (and the many long hours you spent away from your families) that made the drama a huge success. We would also like to thank the many patrons who came to see the drama, for your interest and support for Raeford-Hoke Museum.

Jeni Smith, Vice Chairman Raeford-Hoke Museum

What does 'terrorism' mean these days?

Was it terrorism?

This question became, for a moment, an important subject of debate last week in Chapel Hill as students, faculty, and townspeople struggled to find a proper response to a frightening event in the center of the campus.

A recent Carolina graduate drove a rented Jeep Cherokee into the crowd of students that gathers at lunch time near the Lenoir Dining Hall. The car struck nine students and six were injured, none seriously. Shortly afterwards, the driver, Mohammed Taheri-azar, called 911 and calmly advised the authorities what he had done and where they could find and arrest him.

Reportedly, Taheri-azar asserted that he had intended to kill students in an effort to call attention to American treatment of Muslims. On his 911 call, he said: "It really is to punish the government of the United States for their actions around the world."

Police found evidence that Taheri-azar had been planning his action for months, but they found no indication that any other person was involved.

Taheri-azar is now in jail. At a preliminary hearing he told the judge that he elected to represent himself. According to a report in the student newspaper, The Daily Tar Heel, District Attorney Jim Woodall said that Taheri-azar was going to use the court proceedings to "explain the law of Allah."

In the days following the incident a group of students organized a rally to urge that the incident be labeled "terrorism" on the grounds that it was a violent act aimed at non-combatants. One of their signs read: "Terrorism: Violence directed at noncombatants for an ideology."

Other students objected to the rally and the use of the "terrorism" label because it would be divisive at a time when campus unity and calm should be a primary goal.

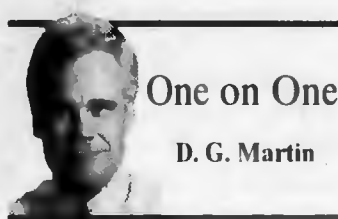
Some of us jumped to conclusions. Mine was different from most others. I thought Taheri-azar was mentally unstable and a victim of religious fanaticism. Of course, he had shown himself to be dangerous, but he was, in my mind, definitely not the kind of terrorist pulled of the events of September 11, 2001. Compared to 9/11 the incident at UNC-Chapel Hill seems minor.

An online poll conducted by The Daily Tar Heel showed that I was in a minority. The poll asked

Not necessarily so!

Opinions expressed by guest columnists on this page and elsewhere in this newspaper are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News-Journal.

Readers are invited to write in with their own opinions. Be sure to include your name and a phone number so you can be contacted for verification.



One on One D. G. Martin

These countries, he writes, while not perfect democracies, have developed accommodations between Islamic values, religious freedom, and representative government that are the antithesis of terrorism.

Malaysia, Boot writes, is "a bastion of religious liberty. Although the majority Muslim population is forced to follow the dictates of religious Sharia courts in family law, Malaysia has substantial minorities of Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Confucians who are free to worship as they please. Alcohol is available, and few women are veiled, at least in Kuala Lumpur. Some Muslim extremists who have formed vigilante squads to crack down on "sins, like teenagers necking in public have been arrested by police. Although tensions exist among different ethnic and religious groups, Malaysia has for the most part been a showcase of ethnic and religious toleration."

When I visited Malaysia last year, I was amazed at this general tolerance and how it contributes to a healthy and competitive economic climate.

My experience is certainly one reason I hope we can resist any tendency to make terrorism a code word for all things Islamic.

But I worry.

In a column recently reprinted in the Raleigh News and Observer, Los Angeles Times columnist Max Boot urged us to learn about the wide varieties of Islam as it is practiced by different peoples and in different countries.

Boot recently returned from travels in two predominantly Muslim countries, Malaysia and Qatar.

A free press

"An able, disinterested, public-spirited press, with trained intelligence to know the right and courage to do it, can preserve that public virtue without which popular government is a sham and a mockery. A cynical, mercenary, demagogic press will produce in time a people as base as itself." — Joseph Pulitzer, 1904

The News-Journal

Published every Wednesday by

Dickson Press, Inc.

Robert A. Dickson, President

Anne Dickson Fogleman, Secretary/Treasurer

119 W. Elwood Avenue, Raeford, NC 28376

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Letter to Editor Deadline, Monday Noon