

## Letters to the Editor

## A Christmas tree made a difference back then

Dear Editor,  
It was the early 50s in Brooklyn, New York. It was two days before Christmas, but it was a Christmas different from others. There were no decorations and no Christmas tree. I was about 13 at the time. My two brothers were in the military, somewhere overseas. My sister was engaged to be married. My father was not himself. The living room, which was primarily used for parties, had a bed in it for my mother.

I was told that she was sick and could no longer walk the stairs. The truth of the matter, she had cancer and was dying. Back in those days everything was a secret. It was felt if we didn't talk about it, it wasn't happening.

I took it upon myself, which was a family tradition, to go out and get a Christmas tree. I had over \$3 and a Christmas tree would cost about \$2.50 depending on how much you bargained.

My brothers would carry it home and I would walk in front of the tree. But now it was up to me to do it all. I was willing to accept the challenge.

On entering the marketplace, to my dismay they were either too expensive or not good enough. I walked approximately a mile and found another place selling trees.

They were also too expensive, except for one tree that was called a pine tree; never blooming properly. Out of

desperation, I settled for this one. The problem was getting it home. A gentleman who just purchased his family tree offered to take me and my tree home. I accepted his offer and on we went.

Reluctantly I stood outside my home unable to bring my sorry excuse for a tree into the house.

I managed all the courage I could muster and walked into the house with the tree. My mother's eyes lit up for the

first time in a long time and she said, "Thank God. I haven't seen a tree like that since I left Ireland. I am so grateful to see a real Christmas tree." Through the grace of God the angel of death spared her until after the New Year.

I guess the lesson I learned from this, sometimes you don't know what you're looking for until you find it.

Joseph Campbell  
Hertford

## What do you know about candidates?

Dear Editor,  
Wanna get some nice stuff for Christmas then you'd better answer these questions correctly.

It'll be the difference between lots of goodies or a lump of coal in your stocking. Who of the Republican candidates is an alleged philanderer with police character children and a penchant for mass murderers and wants to be your fearless leader?

Hint: he aided and abetted Orlando Bosch's escape from justice. You remember Orlando, don't you? He's the one that Dick Thornburgh called an 'unrepentant terrorist' for bombing a Cuban airliner back in 1976 killing all 73 people aboard.

Get this one right and you'll get a little

extra in your stocking. Who's the quiet, slow talking, scripture-spouting former Princeton Debate champion that Brett Baier skewered last Wednesday on the immigration issue? You should have seen it. Mr. in-control cool guy got a little antsy when the questions got hot. Baier played tapes from 2013 that disputed Cool Guy's lying past. I think Brett put the kibosh on Mr. Cool for keeps.

Here's a head scratcher for most folks. Who of the Republican candidates are Constitutionally ineligible to be president under Emer Vatell's most defining treatise, 'The Law of Nations' which the framers used to construct the rules governing presidential qualifications? Another hint:

At least three not counting one from the last election.

Which candidates had fathers who supported Communists causes?

Last question. Which candidate named the wrong town where his mother was born and there's absolutely no record of her birth there?

Hint: A foreign country claims both parents and the candidate. Lastly, none of the questions apply to Donald Trump.

Finally, Mother Jones has the answers if you know how to get there.

Merry Christmas, everybody!

Calvin Lacy  
Hertford

## Service doesn't mean you're right

Dear Editor:

Joseph Hoffer wants to be a county commissioner. I applaud his willingness to serve this community, just as I honor his military service to this country. The question now is not about his willingness to serve, but about his qualifications.

I have never met Mr. Hoffer, so I can't claim to know him personally. But I can infer a great deal about him from his frequent letters to the editor of this newspaper.

In all his writings Mr. Hoffer has been a steadfast, even obsequious supporter of President Obama. He has praised ObamaCare by citing the number of enrollments as a proof of success, this in spite of that number falling far below expectations, not to mention the disastrous roll-out, the failures of so many state exchanges, the ballooning premiums and deductibles, and the millions in losses by insurance companies, all of which have resulted in an overwhelmingly negative opinion of the program.

Mr. Hoffer has credited Mr. Obama for the falling gas prices. This, as Bob Bose pointed out in a rebuttal, is laughable. President Obama has been an obdurate opponent of fossil fuels, preferring to waste billions on renewable energy sources that fit his climate change agenda. He deserves no credit whatsoever for low fuel prices.

Mr. Hoffer also does not seem to object to the president's destructive economic policies, his job-killing regulations, his unconstitutional executive orders, and his failure to enforce the law on illegal immigration.

Even scarier, Mr. Hoffer does not agree with 80 percent of Americans who think that Obama's foreign policy of weakness and appeasement poses a grave threat to the security of our country. Incredibly, Mr. Hoffer still blames Bush for the rise and spread of Islamic terrorism.

In view of all this, I question Mr. Hoffer's ability to make critical judgments based on facts rather than ideological bias. Joseph W. Hoffer (Lt Col, USAF-ret., as he never fails to remind us) may have been a competent officer, but military service does not inoculate him from error, nor is it a cure for his ignorance.

Claude Milot  
Hertford

## N.C. Christmas trees are outstanding

Dear Editor

My wife and I moved into Albemarle Plantation on June 7, 2008. Prior to our move I had lived within 125 miles of New York City for my entire life of 70 years. Also my wife had lived within 125 miles of New York City for her entire life of 66 years with the exception of six months. From 1973 to 2008 we lived in Annandale, NJ within four miles of Route 78, a major interstate highway. When we moved in in 1973 the road we lived off was a dirt road. There

were three working farms within two miles and the milk truck went by our house every morning. We had our own well for drinking water and our own septic tank.

We were ready for the rural environment of Hertford. One of the greatest surprises for us came at Thanksgiving Week. We journeyed to Planters Ridge and selected a 12-foot Christmas tree. The tree was full and upright. Over the next month the tree "dropped" almost no needles. My New Jersey trees "dropped

" many more needles. I would both water my New Jersey tree and vacuum up needles on a daily basis. North Carolina Christmas trees are outstanding.

Last year we traveled to Asheville to attend a wedding of a former neighbor's son. We rented a small cabin. We saw several Christmas tree farms in the area. Our tree had a seven hour ride to Planters Ridge.

Milton Ludwigson  
Hertford



## Winner in SC will gain the momentum

WASHINGTON — With the South Carolina Primary coming up on February 20, all eyes should be on the South Carolina debates scheduled for Jan. 14 and Feb. 13, because far more is going to be settled in that state than in either the Feb. 1 Iowa Caucuses or the Feb. 9 New Hampshire Primary.

We're going into a two-week holiday lull, but then the horse race politics that the polls feed on will explode into frenzy, much like the last lengths at Belmont or Pimlico. Trump has lost his lead in Iowa to Sen. Ted Cruz, Tex., whose father is an evangelical pastor, and whose hard right politics (father and son) have put him ahead in the first contest.

New Hampshire is a different breed of politics, and it's unlikely Cruz' angry conservatism will prevail in the "live free or die" state, where Trump holds the lead. The New Hampshire primary is just 8 days after Iowa, and voters there like to show a measure of independence. Governor Chris Christie, N.J., could win, maybe Sen. Marco Rubio, Fla., maybe even Jeb Bush.

New Hampshire voters are more traditional than Iowa voters, who in the last two cycles chose religious conservatives,

Rick Santorum and Mike Huckabee.

The first two contests will get lots of press but the more definitive event will be South Carolina, third in the lineup and scene of the bitter battle between George W. Bush and John McCain in 2000. McCain had won New Hampshire, and Bush fought his way back with some pretty unsavory campaign tactics.

Trump is ahead in South Carolina, and if he can hold onto that lead, that would set him up for Super Tuesday, when most of the Southern states vote, and where Trump is strong.

Alternatively, South Carolina could be Trump's Waterloo. This is not your grandfather's South Carolina. The state is becoming a mecca of sorts for retirees from the Northeast and Midwest seeking to trade harsh winters and high taxes for Southern sunshine and lower taxes.

The increased migration is changing the demographics of the state, with older, more educated seniors voting Republican. Trump's base is non-college educated voters, blue collar types who used to

## COLUMNIST



DOUGLAS  
COHN

be Democrats back in the day when unions ruled and high-school graduates could make a decent middle-class living.

A more educated electorate may turn to a more Establishment candidate, and because of extensive polling, every twist and turn will be magnified, and every candidate will get his or her 15 minutes as the potential alternative to Trump.

At the risk of over-simplification, Iowa Republican voters are too far right and religiously motivated to be representative of their party more broadly.

New Hampshire voters are a microcosm of small town America and its values, and they're more secular, which puts them to the left of where many anti-Establishment Republicans are today.

If Iowa's too right and New Hampshire's too left, South Carolina is just right, the sweet spot in GOP politics. Whoever comes out of South Carolina as the winner will have serious momentum. For those seeking to stop Trump, if he's not stopped in South Carolina, it will be too late.

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## Donations brighten Christmas time

Dear Editor,

Your local chapter of the Salvation Army wishes to thank all who supported our recent Christmas Bell Ringing Campaign.

We would like to offer our thanks to all of those who rang. We would also like to offer a special thanks to Nancy Escherman and Pam d'Emery and the generous people who live at Albemarle Plantation, several exceptionally generous donors and the hundreds who donated to make this year's campaign such a success.

Perquimans County has once again proved to be one of the most generous counties in all of northeastern North Carolina.

We would also like to offer our gratitude to Keith Sanderlin of Food Lion, Marsha Jones of Family Dollar, Christal Stringfield of Dollar General and of course Charles Woodard of Woodard's Pharmacy who permitted us to ring the bell outside their establishments.

All together you, with the help of these special people, have made this Christmas a brighter season for many of the less fortunate in our area.

Skip Matthews and Todd Tilley  
Salvation Army Board Members

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