

# Opinions

## OUR VIEW

### Playing With Fire

The Gaston County Board of Commissioners is playing with fire. Gaston County voters, in November, turned away a \$34.8 million bond issue designed to build a downtown jail and courthouse. And they voted it down resoundingly. The Commissioners obviously did not get the message. They are considering a 10-cent tax hike that would fund a proposal to lease, with buy option, a jail and courthouse. The cost would be \$40 million and presumably would be constructed in the downtown area. That amounts to an end-run around the taxpayers. The message to the Commissioners should have been: use space already available or come back to us with a better bond plan. Commissioner Joe Carpenter's comment that the matter wouldn't have to be put to another bond vote if the lease-purchase plan were agreed upon shows an utter disregard for the wishes of the public. Porter McAteer, who has been around local politics long enough to know which side his bread is buttered on, believes the public should be consulted on an expenditure as large as this. Mr. McAteer is correct. Those officials who seek to bypass the public will, usually, end up looking for ways to utilize their spare time after the next election.

### A Little Humor

The following sentences were taken from actual letters received from mothers and wives of men in service during World War II. They were either making or correcting applications for government allotments: (Spelling was left uncorrected to add to the humor).

My husband has worked on shift for about two months, and now he lift and I ain't had no pay since he has gone or before either.

Please send me my elopment, as I have a 4 months old baby and he is my only support and I need all I can every day to buy food and keep him clothes.

Both sides of my parents is poor and I can't expect nothing from them as my mother has been in bed for one year with the same doctor and won't change.

Please send my wife's form to fill out.

Please send me a letter and tell me if my husband made application for a wife and baby.

I have already wrote the president and if I don't hear from you I will write to Uncle Sam and tell him about you.

I have already had no clothing for a year and have been regularly visited by the clergy.

This is my eighth child. What are you going to do about it?

I can't get my sick pay. I got six children. Can you tell me what this is?

Sir, I am forwarding my certificate, and two children, one of which is a mistake as you can see.

Please find out for certain if my husband is dead, as the man I am living with won't eat or do anything til he nose for sure.

I am annoyed to find you branded my child illiterate. It is a shame and a dirty lie, as I married his father a week before he was born.

In answer to your letter, I gave birth to a boy weighing 101 lbs. I hope this is satisfactory.

I have no children as my husband is a truck driver and works day and night.

You changed my little girl to a boy. Does this make any difference?

In accordance with your instructions, I has given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope.

I am told that my husband sets in the Y.M.C.A. every night with the piano playing in his uniform. I think you will find him there.

Unless I get my husband's money soon, I will be forced to lead an immortal life.

I want my money fast as you can send it. I have been in bed with the doctor, but he don't seem to be doing me much good.

I am glad to day that my husband, who was reported missing, is now deceased.

## Cartoonitorial



### The Truth About Law Man Wyatt Earp

The other evening I saw a movie on Home Box Office that intrigued me. It was a story about Hollywood in 1929, Tom Mix and Wyatt Earp., according to the movie, was hired by a producer to act as technical advisor on a Tom Mix Western. Mix, played by Bruce Willis and Earp, portrayed by James Garner, ran around Beverly Hills in a Duesenberg automobile beating up or shooting people and just wreaking havoc in general. The time was supposed to be 1929. I knew the story couldn't be based on fact but I'm a student of history, and especially Western history, so I decided to do a little checking. Much to my surprise, Wyatt Earp did act as technical advisor on several movies and so did Bat Masterson. Earp, in fact, was living in Los Angeles when he died, ironically, in January of 1929. He was 81 at the time. Masterson became a New York City sportswriter after his stint in the wild West.

There are, living in and around the Boone, N.C. area, several ancestors of the Earp brothers. I was lucky enough to meet Johnny Earp many years ago. Johnny was a great-nephew of Wyatt and he remembered the old marshal well. Unfortunately, he had no photographs or memorabilia, but he was an interesting old gentleman and I enjoyed the afternoon I spent with him.

For the record, Wyatt Earp was not the savior in a white hat he is often depicted in the movies and on television. Nor did he carry a brace of six-guns around his waist, tied down to his thighs to precipitate a fast draw. He was an extremely careful lawman, always making sure he had the advantage. That's why he lived so long, I guess.

I hate to spoil the myth, but Wyatt Earp kept his pistols in his coat pockets, he actually coated those pockets with oil so he could get his guns out as fast as possible. When he found it necessary, he stalked his prey with a double-barreled shotgun. And he had no qualms about shooting first and asking questions later.

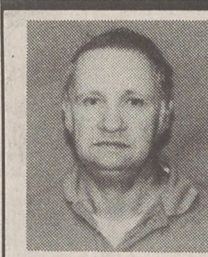
I read a biography of Clay Allison a couple years back and Allison, it seems, met Earp on one occasion. Allison, a fast-shooting rowdy himself, had tracked a cattle thief to Tombstone, Arizona where Earp was the marshal. Now Clay Allison was nobody's coward and he could shoot with the best of them. Some say he used to get drunk, go into the streets and shoot the boot heels off some of the local cowboys. You've probably seen that TV commercial for books of the old West, the one where the guy tells you Clay Allison used to call himself a "Shootist." That's exactly how he referred to himself.

At any rate, Allison was accosted by Earp on the street. Wyatt told him to leave town with all dispatch, that Tombstone was his domain. All the time he was delivering his edict, he had a cocked shotgun pointed at Allison's stomach.

Clay Allison skedaddled and considered himself lucky he was able to keep breathing.

Don't get me wrong. Wyatt Earp was an expert enforcer of the law. He did clean up the rampant lawlessness in Tombstone, Arizona and several other Western towns as well. He was exactly what those towns needed at the time. But he certainly was no knight in shining armor, and his methods, most assuredly, wouldn't fly today.

Thinking about Boone, N.C. reminded of another story.



Jim Heffner

Those of you who are acquainted with Darrell Austin, our vaunted General Manager, know he never saw a morsel of food he didn't like. I'm talking championship caliber eating here. Well, I recall a day when Darrell, hold onto your hats disbelievers, got enough to eat.

Darrell and I traveled together as salesmen for several years, covering about half the counties in North Carolina.

One morning, in Boone, Darrell and I went to breakfast, along with another friend, Cliff Myers, at Kirk's Restaurant. Kirk's was adjacent to the ASU campus, and Mr. Kirk and his family served up extra good vittles.

Darrell ordered as I recall, eggs over easy, sausage, grits and toast. I'm here to tell you Kirk's didn't skimp in those days. We all dug into large platters of good breakfast. When we finished, Darrell said, "man that was good, I believe I could do that again."

Cliff and I expressed our disbelief so Darrell ordered the same again. It was delivered again and he ate it again. We were sipping the last of our coffee, when Darrell said, "I think I could do that one more time."

"No way," I said. And Cliff echoed my sentiment. Darrell kept insisting he could eat another breakfast, so Cliff and I agreed we would pay if he would do it again. So he did.

Darrell and I were working together that day, and when we left the restaurant, I noticed he was a little pale around the corners of the mouth.

Big "D" likes to talk almost as much as he likes to eat, but we were working together that day and he just rode and kept silent for the most part. I knew he wasn't up to par, and every time we made a stop he headed for a bathroom. Along about noon, I pulled into a small sandwich shop on the outskirts of Boone and turned to Darrell. "Let's get a sandwich and a big piece of strawberry pie," I said.

I swear to you Darrell's face turned vivid green. "No thanks," he managed to choke out, "I'm not very hungry."

Update - Last week I mentioned that Clint Eastwood's former live-in, Sondra Locke, has filed a palimony suit against him. Comes work Sondra is asking for half of everything Clint has made for the past twelve years. Can't you just picture Dirty Harry telling the judge, "go ahead, take my pay."

I read a piece in one of those big city newspapers the other day that Texas scientists have found a way to help mice hold their liquor better. I kid you not—mice. Researchers at Texas A&M University report that by injecting a chemical found in the brains of rodents, humans and other mammals, they can prevent the mice from becoming intoxicated when guzzling large amounts of alcohol. As soon as I can find out where these mice are doing all their drinking I'll pass the work along to you.

## Your Right To Say It

### 'Citizen Alert' Is A Shame

Dear Fellow Citizen: Have you seen the most recent "Citizen Alert" publication. If not, please get a copy and read very negative comments about our City Government and personal attacks by name on Mr. George Wood and Mr. Gene White.

This group would have you believe that higher water and sewer rates were unexpected and a surprise. A serious campaign was waged for successful passage of the Utility Bond Referendum in February 1989 and these increases in rates were widely publicized by the Herald and the brochures used by the committee that led the campaign.

Reference is made that was critical of the City's proposed plan to provide uniforms for a portion of city employees. The amount of the cost used by them is more than double the projected true cost. No mention was made that this has always been done for the police and fire departments, and recently for meter readers. Also nothing was said about part of the cost being paid by the employees. My belief is the wearing of uniforms will instill pride and boost morale. Improved efficiency in services rendered will more than pay for the additional cost. There would also be some safety assurance for mothers and children at home to be able to identify a city employee who is rendering a service and has a right to be on the property. Very few towns our size do not have uniforms for their employees.

To attack Mr. Wood and Mr. White as they are doing is shameful. We are privileged to have them both. Mr. Wood's accomplishments are many and very visible. It is the nature of his job to be in the forefront. Mr. Gene White has toiled quietly and effectively for years. He served Mayor Moss with skill and dedication and has been invaluable to Mr. Wood since his coming.

There is a correct way to oppose any level of government whether it be city, state or national. Issues are discussed openly and fairly with as much accuracy as can be humanly achieved. The half truths, exaggerations and personal attacks used in "Citizen Alert" is not the way it should be done. Kings Mountain neither deserves nor will tolerate this type of political activity. Worst of all is the lack of courage in failing to sign the publication or identify those who are responsible. Very truly yours, B.F. Maner

### Steve's Unique

To The Editor: After reading the article by Myrle King of Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church, we felt compelled to offer our opinion of Steve Barrett. We work 5 days a week with Steve, and find his personality refreshing and unique. He helps keep boredom from setting in. He is missed whenever he is not able to come to work.

We feel calling Steve the "church clown" was in itself a pretty nice thing to say. For it is the clowns of this earth that keep laughter in a world so full of the problems, both large and small, facing us every day. However, scraping the bottom of the proverbial barrel was the first of several remarks made by Mrs. King that, though thought to be commendable, turned out to be derogatory. So, he whispers in the choir, he at least uses the talents God gave him to praise Him. If the pastor must pray for extra patience, he must also have to pray a prayer of thanks for the contributions Steve makes to his church by his presence and dedication. So, Mrs. King, we are not exactly sure as to what your intentions were in writing this article about Steve. We, his fellow employees, do agree that we would rather you not write one about us.

Employees of Norick Brothers, Inc. (Ed. Note — This letter was signed by nine employees of Norick Brothers.)

### An Eye Opener

Dear Sir: I got my hand on one of your drug sections a couple of weeks ago, and I must say it was very good. Frankly, I've been a pot smoker since junior high. I'm 28 years old now.

I never realized marijuana had all those chemicals in it and that it stay in your body so long.

I have now stopped using that stuff and it was all because of your newspaper.

Thank you for making me see what I was doing to myself.

Please, if you print this letter, don't use my name. I have two little girls, and I wouldn't want them to know.

Thank you, (Name withheld by request)

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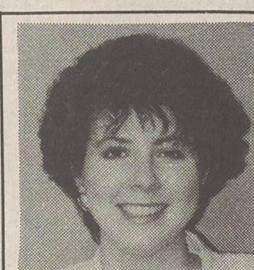
## Taxpayers Deserve Responsible Representatives

Senator Terry Sanford (D-N.C.) told the students of Kings Mountain High School recently that the federal budget deficit must be dealt with quickly and efficiently. He noted with great passion that, "We've got to have fiscal responsibility."

I agree. We, the taxpayers, demand responsible actions by government officials with our hard-earned money. But Sanford went on to say that the only way we can eliminate the deficit is by raising taxes. He stated unequivocally that there is no significant waste in the budget to cut and that expenditures on federally-funded programs cannot be reduced.

First and foremost, let's make an important distinction. When Sanford speaks of federally-funded programs, he really means tax-payer funded programs. That distinction is vital, as the federal government has no money aside from what we give it in taxes. With that explanation aside, let's see where our money is going.

According to a new Heritage Foundation and Citizens Against Government Waste report, "Slashing the Deficit", money spent on favors to special constituents adds some \$20 billion each year to the federal budget deficit. That's right - \$20 billion dollars each



Marty Hohmann

and every year. A sampling of where our tax dollars were spent in fiscal 1988 is as follows:

- \*Killer bee research (\$1 million)
- \*Construction of an access ramp to an Ohio amusement park (\$1 million)
- \*Construction of a Bavarian style ski resort in Idaho (\$6.4 million)
- \*Repairs on a privately owned dam in South Carolina (\$13 million)
- \*Maple syrup research (\$100,000)
- \*Funding for a Dunkin Donuts store in Lawton, Oklahoma (\$170,000)
- \*Research into taste aversion to beets and liver (\$100,000)

\*Construction of a harbor for private pleasure boats in Cleveland (\$11 million)

Now, it is highly unlikely that I will ever reap the benefits of any of this pork barrel waste my tax dollars are being spent for. I don't foresee going to buy donuts in Lawton, Oklahoma, nor do I plan to go skiing in Idaho in the near future. And whether or not I like the taste of beets and liver is my business. I don't need the federal government poking into my reasons for the aversion.

If this seems to be a ridiculous sampling of how our money is being spent, lets take a look at plans for fiscal 1989. Some of the "important" projects being funded for that period include:

- \*A national survey of American sexual habits and attitudes (\$2.1 million)
- \*Resource management related to arctic goose activity (\$400,000)
- \*Downtown revitalization of Ada, Oklahoma, population 16,000 (\$500,000)
- \*Peach research (\$400,000)
- \*Census Bureau project to count trees, shrubs and ornamental flowers (\$700,000)

See Marty, 8-A