

Opinions

JIM HEFFNER

Columnist



I went out to mow the front yard yesterday. Looking at the grass, fairly long from the recent rain, I thought, "Why am I doing this? I'll just have to do it again in four or five days. I just cut it last week and it obviously didn't take."

I had a sneaking suspicion I was just wasting my time.

Once, when my son was young and his mother told him to make his bed, he asked, "Why, I'll just mess it up again tonight." How do you argue with logic such as that?

The neckties you bought last year are either too wide or too narrow this year. Those you purchase today will be out of style in six months. Women's clothes, it seems, go out of style before they get home to try them on.

When you go shopping this week, don't buy soap powder. Next week the same product will be new and improved. It will tell you so right on the box.

Don't be too quick to condemn Saddam Hussein. Next week the government may be shipping a fleet of new jets to him.

All of this is by way of saying nothing is permanent anymore.

Why do we tolerate the temporary nature of everything around us? Not only do we tolerate it, we endorse it, or so it seems.

A few years ago I went out and bought a new central air unit and a new furnace, searching diligently for the most fuel efficient available. Two months after spending thousands of dollars I discovered the same company that manufactures the units I purchased had come out with brand new equipment that was "new and improved."

Everything seems to come complete with a built in obsolescence package.

We bought a new micro-wave with a five year warranty on the magnetron. The magnetron is the power package that makes those things work. The microwave went bad in five years and one month. Guess what the trouble was? Right--it had a burned out magnetron.

Last February I purchased a brand new 25 inch color set with remote control. The picture tube had a 90 day labor warranty. It took a full 95 days for the picture tube to go bad. Whereas, the tube had a one year warranty, I still had to pay the labor charge to have a new one installed.

I'm afraid I don't have any advice for the temporary state we find ourselves faced with. If I did it would probably be outdated tomorrow.

I have thought seriously, though, that maybe we should stop taking baths. After all we're just going to get dirty again.

I have a friend in Miami, a feisty little raven-haired lady named Pennie Mones. Pennie has a miniature schnauzer named "Derf" (read it backwards), to whom she is devoted. She signs her notes and letters "Derf's Mom." Pennie takes Derf to a restaurant every Saturday that caters to dogs as well as to their masters (mistresses?)

The restaurant has a doggie menu that includes people crackers and a doggie cocktail, which consists of water, a twist of orange and a little umbrella. She and Derf each have a strawberry milkshake and Derf sits at the table with Pennie. It surely is a sight to behold.

I guess Derf is work it. Pennie's mother was walking the dog one day and two neighborhood canines tried to start trouble with them. The lady picked Derf up and held him out of the attackers' reach, so the perpetrators promptly bit her where she sits down. Lawsuits followed and Derf was awarded \$25,000. The charge against the other dogs? Instigating a dog fight. Honest.

Any way, Pennie likes to fish and recently she went out with an experienced charter captain and hauled in a 20 pound barracuda. A fish almost as large as she.

Sam, the captain, told Pennie the fish in that area would bite almost anything, and to prove it, he tore an old T-shirt into strips and baited his hook. He caught a good sized Rockhind almost immediately. Pennie says she liked the idea so she joined in. Old T-shirts are less expensive than squid or shrimp as bait. By noon, says Pennie, they had filled an ice chest with fish, and by 1:00 p.m., were at the dock unloading.

When bystanders asked what they had been using for bait, Pennie deadpanned, "Fruit of the Loom."

Your Right To Say It

Who sets standards?

To the editor:

Our American government has closed dairies...selling "too much milk," they say! Then they are paid to keep the dairies closed, to cut down or cut out the commodity produced, to raise less corn or no corn, to produce less and less grain or cotton. But one of the problems is that our nation is using millions of tons of grain and fruit in making liquor, wine and beer -- with men and women driving drunk on our highways, fighting in their drinking places, tying up hospital emergency rooms while good, sober people wait for necessary care. Many of these drinkers end up abusing their own families, overloading the court systems and jails.

If our country really must pay someone not to produce any commodity, let them "pay" the distillers and brewers not to make the alcohol that has caused so much destruction on the highways and in our homes. When innocent people are being killed by the thousands and doctors' offices are overrun and medical bills into the millions of dollars unpaid--it's time we put a stop to producing a thing that causes so many problems!

We say that our American way of life is one that other nations ought to imitate -- well, let us clean up! Unless we do get back to a sounder use of our natural resources, we are going down the broad way of corruption and destruction. The Bible said there would come a time of "crying for the wine in the streets" (Isaiah 24:11). All mirth or happiness would be gone. The Bible also warns that when a nation (or an individual) loses its vision, the people will perish. Time is running out for America, unless we repent and turn this evil perversion around.

*Our health care systems are breaking down and confused;

*Our highway systems are inadequate and breaking down;

*Our public education system seems to be in utter confusion;

*Our homes are breaking up -- nearly half of all marriages fail;

*Our morals are not just breaking down, but are already gone;

*Nearly half of the school-age children are in one-parent homes.

What is the answer? There is no fear of God in this land! "No fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:18). "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of men" (Eccl. 12:13). Of the people who never become reconciled to God, it is written: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17).

Listen: "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." (Read Phil. 4:13). The sober, God-fearing people of this land need to arise and seek to reverse a moral standard which allows all of this abuse to go on. Saved people know the grace of God, and the grace of God that saves us is also "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:11). I pray that we will come to our senses and that we will see a day in America when our standards will truly be measured by the Word of God.

G.D. Fulton
Blacksburg

Write service people

To the editor:

My son's godparents have a son on the USS D.D. Eisenhower, which is presently on station near the troubled area in the Middle East.

As a mother, and former member of the Armed Services, I have a tremendous need to do my part to help support all our boys over in this area. Besides flying the flag every day from our front porch, there must be more we can all do to lend our support.

I would like to share Matthew's address with everyone, and perhaps if someone who might read this who has someone over there, they might share that address also. Mail from home is so very important to the men and women who serve in our military. It's the least we can do to show them that we care, and support them.

I will enclose Matthew's address. People may also want to write to others by putting it to the address of the ship, and perhaps the commander of the ship will see that the mail is forwarded to someone who doesn't get much mail, or perhaps has no one to write to them. It's such a small thing to do. Even if you send a post card, anything--I'm sure it will be appreciated.

Thank you for reading this and I hope my idea will be accepted. I only wish there was more I could do. If I could, I would stand beside them to do my part, but Uncle Sam says I am too old now, so I must do my part, however small, to express the pride and patriotism I have for my country, and to support the sons and daughters who are there for me. I can say with my heart that they are all my sons and daughters, and I care for every one of them.

Sincerely,
Travis Teague

Matthew's address:

A03 Matthew Christopher
G/4 Division
USS D.D. Eisenhower CVN 69
FPO New York 09532-2930

Thanks, United Way

To the editor:

On behalf of the Youth Assistance Program of Cleveland County's Board of Directors, thank you Kings Mountain United Fund for funding us for one more year.

YAP, a Governor's One-On-One Volunteer Program, is dedicated to recruiting adult volunteers to serve as positive role models to youth involved with the court system or at-risk. The volunteers are asked to spend an average of four hours per week for one year with a youth. Adult volunteers are desperately needed to work one-on-one with a youth as we continuously have a backlog of youth to match.

Thanks to Kings Mountain and the United Fund, YAP can continue to serve youth by providing positive role models.

Help us, help them and together we'll be there.

Sincerely,
Melanie McDaniel
Executive Director

Clean up property

To the editor:

I am writing to you for the citizens of Bennett Drive.

I hope the mayor and members of the board will take time and read this.

The house behind which is 500 Phenix Street has been torn down. It is grown to be a jungle behind my house. The field has snakes of all kinds, gofers, and big rats. I have already killed two big snakes, one which was in my yard and the other in the house in front of me. The snakes were 30 inches long and big.

Thank you,
Bobby Rathbone

Letter Policy

The Kings Mountain Herald welcomes your letters to the editor for publication in each week's paper. We ask that you follow these guidelines when submitting letters:

Keep the letters brief and to the point. Type and double space them, if possible, and sign them in ink stating your name, address and telephone number for verification purposes. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

The Herald reserves the right to edit any letter for spelling, good taste, libel, slander or any other reason, and reserves the right to reject any letter for any reason.

Mail your letters to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, N.C. 28086. Hand-delivered letters will not be accepted.



Uncle Josh

Dear Editor:

The start of school brings back some more memories of Billy Roy and his brothers.

When the pop group came out with the song "Charlie Brown" several years ago, they had to be thinking about Billy Roy. You know, "Fe, Fe, Fi, Fi, Fo, Fo, Fum, I smell smoke in the auditorium....."

Billy Roy and his brothers were the type to do the same kind of things Charlie Brown did, except theirs were usually worse. I mean, calling the English teacher Daddy-o was nothing.

Back in those days, schools weren't nearly as fancy as they are now and you usually had one teacher per grade, regardless of the number of students it had in it. The principal and the janitor were the only male employees and the principal also doubled as teacher and coach.

The year Billy Roy was going into high school we had a new principal. He was fresh out of college and introduced a new game to the boys called football. Being from the country, none of the boys had ever heard of football and the Professor, as they called the principal, hadn't either until he went to college.

Anyway, the only place to play was out on the old dirt and gravel road entrance to the school yard. It was about 100 yards long--the length of a football field, but it was only about 25 feet wide.

Billy Roy and his brothers, Billy Joe, Billy Bob, C.W. and Bruce, came walking up one morning and Professor had some of us out there trying to teach us to play football. Billy Roy, as you know, was as fast and elusive as a greased pig, so Professor thought he was an excellent choice to run the football.

Billy Roy thought it would be fun, so he said he'd play. The Professor showed him exactly where to stand to receive the "hike" and showed him the imaginary goal line 50 yards down the road. The side ditches, of course, were the out of bounds.

The center snapped the ball to Billy Roy and he let out toward the other end of the road. The only problem was, the Professor had failed to explain to him that half of the guys out in the road that day were going to try to stop him from getting to the other end. He got about 20 yards down the road and was at top speed when a couple of the big guys headed him off and tripped him up by the ankles and he went sliding head first down across the gravel, tearing up his knees, belly, and thighs. If he'd had skates on his behind he'd still be rolling.

Well, suffice it to say, that was the end of Billy Roy's football career.

On another occasion Billy Roy and his brothers (you know, the practical jokers who turned the outhouse over with Billy Roy in it) decided to have a little fun at the expense of the school.

They spent hours dis-assembling an old wagon and, during the wee hours of the morning when they thought no one would be awake, carried it piece by piece to the school house. They placed a big wooden stepladder up the side of the auditorium and carried that wagon, one piece at a time, up to the top of the auditorium and re-assembled it.

They were so proud of that piece of art! But, while they were on top of the building they didn't realize that they had been heard and seen by a neighbor down the road, and he called the Principal. When Billy Roy and the boys came down the ladder, there stood the Professor with his arms crossed and he made them go right back up there and tear the wagon back down again.

Billy Roy was forever being disciplined by the Professor for all the shenanigans he got into, especially for trying to love the girls and fight the boys, but in his senior year Billy Roy finally did something to make the whole school proud.

Billy Roy had been called into the principal's office for putting a live rat in the teacher's desk. Not wanting to kick a senior out of school, Professor took him around behind the building to where there was an old dirt road and were huge piles of gravel and sand which the Highway Department used to fill holes in the road. He gave Billy Roy and shovel, rake and wheelbarrow and told him to start filling holes and smoothing them out and that he'd be back in an hour or so to check on him.

Well, Professor got tied up and forgot about Billy Roy. About 5 o'clock Billy Roy came walking into the office and asked the Professor when was he ever going to come out and inspect his work? The Professor went around behind the school and found out that Billy Roy had gone to a neighbor's farm and borrowed a front end loader and had built him one of the nicest roads he'd ever seen.

Yours truly,
Uncle Josh from Jackson



Sidewalk Survey

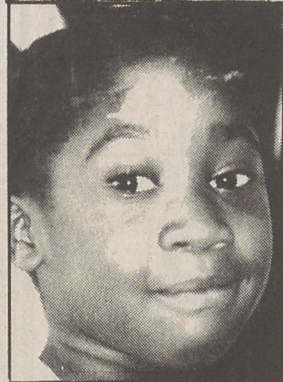
What do you like best about school?



MILES SUMMERROW
I like going outside and playing.



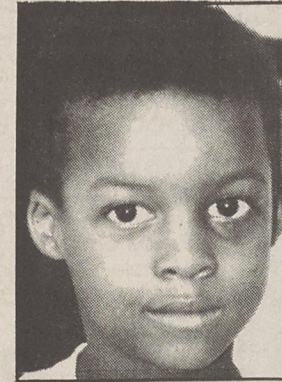
TYLER McDANIEL
I like Spanish. Uno means one.



KEYYONA SHIPP
I like working on my math book.



CATHERINE GORDAN
I like learning to read.



JORAM YOUNG
I like playing in Centers.



ABBY HANCOCK
I like going to P. E.

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