

Opinion

Our View

Hardships still

The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by the Pilgrims in 1621 at Plymouth Colony. Following a winter of great hardship, the colonists invited their Indian neighbors to share a feast. The assemblage made do with four turkey from the wild and various vegetables they had grown, and though the fare was meager, there was much to be thankful for. They had survived for over a year and were well on their way toward establishing a foothold in their new world.

Americans, this Thanksgiving, find themselves faced with hardships, as did their forefathers. Again, there is much to be thankful for. Good health and an abundant life is certainly worth celebrating. This Thanksgiving Day, however, finds many Americans poised on the brink of war in the Middle East. Our men and women in the armed forces in Saudi Arabia, will have to spend these holidays in a foreign country away from their families and homes. They are making this sacrifice so that those of us at home can remain safe.

As we sit down to the traditional meal, it would be good for each of us to remember our countrymen so far from their loved ones, and give thanks for their safety.

Let people decide

Governor Martin seems to be setting us up for a hefty tax hike. Several months ago, there was a budget shortfall of something like \$300 million. Now, according to Martin, that shortfall may be as high as \$1.2 billion.

The Governor indicates most of this will have to come from new taxes rather than the cutting of existing programs. Specifically, he has tapped the sales tax as the likely source of new revenue.

We suggest it is time for the state to bite the bullet and establish a lottery, with the revenue being earmarked for education.

Most states are getting into the lottery business. Neighboring Virginia is siphoning off a significant sum of money from this state, because North Carolinians want to take a chance, so they are crossing the border and purchasing tickets in Virginia.

At least our lawmakers should put the lottery to a vote. Louisiana voters approved a lottery on October 7, becoming the 33rd state to do so. Since 1964, just one state, North Dakota, has voted down a lottery in a referendum.

People are going to gamble. According to Gambling and Wagering Business Magazine, \$290.1 billion was spent on legal and illegal gambling in the U.S. in 1989.

Gambling was a favorite pastime of Colonial Americans. The settlement of Virginia was largely financed by lotteries to raise revenues. The proceeds helped to establish some of the nation's most prestigious universities--Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton and William and Mary, to name a few.

The Continental Congress even went so far as to approve a lottery to help finance the Revolutionary war.

It is time for the state legislature to stop constructing a patchwork tax structure. The obvious answer to short revenues at this particular time is a state lottery.

What is wrong with letting the people decide?

About the draft

During the Viet Nam War, there was a group of people, peaceniks they were called, or pacifists, who howled bloody murder every time the draft was mentioned. Many burned draft cards and some fled to other countries.

The so-called anti-war faction was on the evening news each day telling us how unfair it was to conscript young citizens and ship them off to war against their will. It was a clear-cut case of old men sending young men off to die, was their rallying cry.

Today, our armed forces are made up strictly of volunteers so what are those same people yelling this time?

Now they're telling us it is unfair to send young Americans to war without a draft. The armed services, they're saying, is made up of mostly the disadvantaged. Those who were unable to get kpbs elsewhere. We should be drafting the sons and daughters of Senators, Congressmen and billionaires, they scream, in an effort to promote hysteria.

These people will just have to understand the debate is over where a military draft is concerned, and it was largely their own doing.

First they pushed to do away with the draft, now they want to re-establish it.

It simply cannot be both ways.

A WORD OF THANKS - The State of North Carolina, and especially the people of Kings Mountain and Cleveland County, owe a great debt of gratitude to Ollie Harris.

Harris was defeated in the recent election after spending 18 years in the North Carolina Senate. Prior to that, he served 24 years as Cleveland County Coroner.

During that time Harris was a part of what was one of, if not the strongest delegations in the state. He carried a lot of political clout in Raleigh and was a champion in the area of health legislation, especially in mental health.

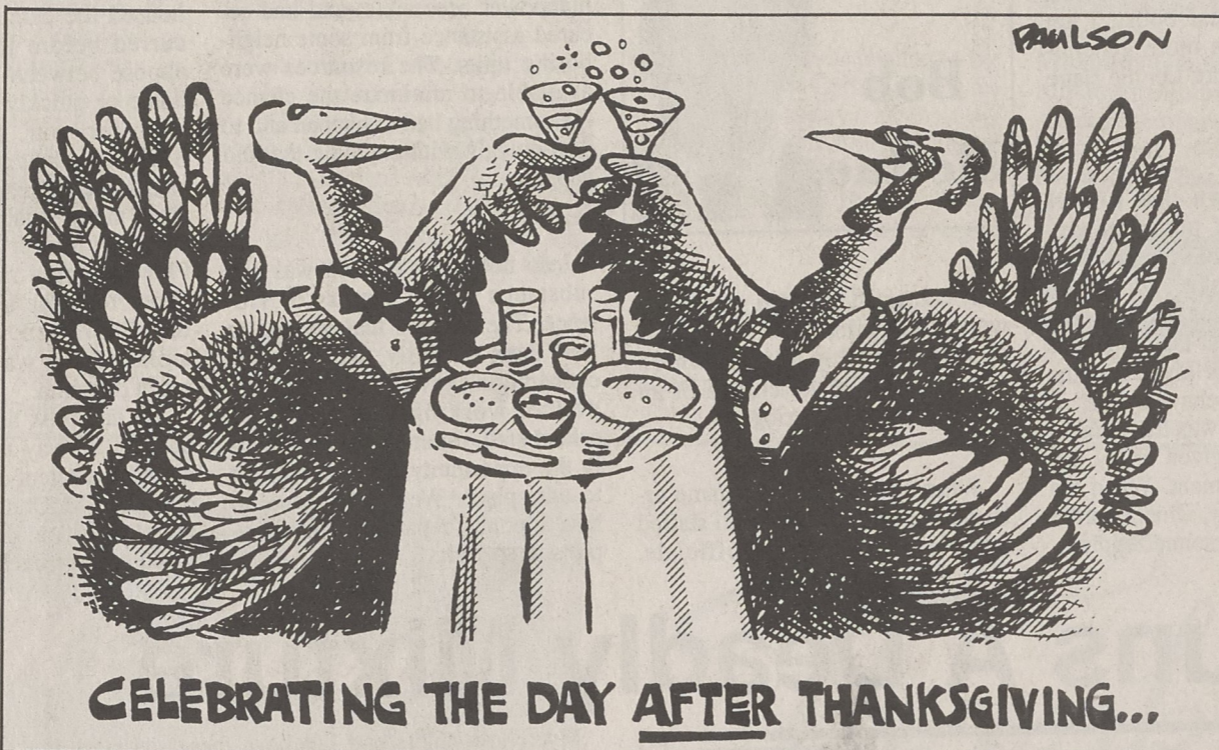
During the past election, which Harris had hinted probably would have been his last anyway, he fell victim of voters' recent trends to vote against anyone currently in office. That must be the case because one would only have to look at his record of service to know that he has been a great legislator.

But, like the gentleman that he is, Ollie took defeat gracefully, knowing that he had represented the district well and that his efforts were appreciated by his home county. Despite running fourth overall in the six-person race for three seats, Ollie led the ticket in Cleveland County.

Harris says he won't run for State Senate again. And we can certainly understand that. But we have a feeling Ollie Harris is not through as a public servant. You don't do something for 42 years and then just walk away from it. He may not be holding an elected office again, but we're sure he will continue to do whatever he can to help people. He has the contacts and knows how to get things done and, more importantly, he cares about people.

Raleigh's loss may just turn out to be Kings Mountain's gain.

Cartoonitorial



Your Right To Say It

The rights of teenagers

In 1965, two Iowan teenagers were suspended from school for peacefully protesting the American involvement in Vietnam by wearing black armbands. They challenged the suspension, taking their case all the way to the Supreme Court. Then, in 1969, the Court overruled the school district's decision. In the majority opinion, written by Justice Abe Fortas, the Court set a precedent by stating that students (teenagers) have the same constitutionally protected rights as adults, including (as in this case) the right to peaceful protest.

It seems unfortunate to me that this precedent set in 1969 has not often been followed in recent times. It is becoming increasingly more common to see state and local governments, as well as school districts, methodically chipping away at the basic rights of teenagers.

To begin with, the rights of teenagers are being abridged in the name of lowering crime rates. Despite the efforts of law enforcement officials, crime rates continue to rise steadily. In their quest to find a quick solution to satisfy their constituents, city lawmakers in some U.S. cities have passed or are attempting to pass ordinances and laws that impose upon the liberties guaranteed to United States citizens under the constitution.

For example, in some cities it is unlawful for a teenager to be outside on public property (sidewalks, streets, places of business, etc.) past a certain hour. Typically, the designated times are late, such as 11:00 p.m. or midnight, but some city-imposed curfews are as early as 10:00 p.m.

Officials have said that these measures will not only lower crime rates, but reduce the amount of potential delinquency by limiting the after-dark hours teenagers have in which to be out unsupervised. I think this is ridiculous. It appears to be only an excuse for more government intervention into the lives of private citizens. Not only does this abridge teenagers' rights, it imposes upon their parents also. First of all, no government can shelter and protect its citizens from the real world until they are "legally mature" and then thrust them out on their own, expecting them to suddenly take on responsibility when they've never had a chance before. You have first to be given enough credit to make your own decisions before you can be expected to be a responsible, contributing member of society. These character traits evolve over time; they won't miraculously appear at the age of 18 or 21.

Secondly, curfews are private aspects of family life that should be discussed and decided upon by the family themselves. Only a minor's parents know his or her maturity level, and they can make rules accordingly. Curfew laws are discriminatory and unconstitutional, in that they interfere with an individual's right to privacy--the parent's right to personally decide what is best for his or her own child.

In America, we are fortunate to have a democratic government and a constitution designed to protect our individual liberties. Our entire system is based upon respect for the privacy of individuals, and nondiscrimination under an impartial legal system.

Our own Supreme Court has ruled that teenagers are guaranteed the same basic rights as adults. It is the duty of lawmakers under the United States Constitution to protect, not hinder, the liberties of U.S. citizens. The system has worked for over 200 years, and it would be a shame to see it changed because of a few narrow-minded people who would have us believe they are working for the good of us all. Nothing that stands in the way of liberty will ever benefit the citizens.

Melanie Dixon

(Melanie Dixon is a student at Kings Mountain High School.)

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.

What's the world coming to?

Sometimes I wonder about law enforcement procedures.

All the hullabaloo about James Worthy set me to thinking. Does the Houston Police Department have so little to do that they must resort to advertising to get people to commit crimes? From everything I've been able to find out, Houston is a high crime rate city. Yet they advertise in the yellow pages of the telephone directory in an effort to entice people to solicit for prostitution. I am aware that the ad was probably not placed by the Houston Police Department, but they certainly must have arranged to have the telephone number, listed in the ad, routed to them.

I'm not trying to excuse James Worthy, I just question those tactics. You'd think that with the drug problem eating at the very vitals of this country, law enforcement officers would concentrate their time and energy in that area as opposed to playing games with, generally, law-abiding citizens.

Down in Columbia, a week or so back, a nightclub dancer was put on trial for "exposing her body in an obscene manner," a misdemeanor that carries a maximum punishment of six months in jail or a \$500 fine.

The two male police officers who made the arrest didn't just testify in court, they demonstrated the act for the jury and the spectators.

According to news reports they shook their pelvises, wrapped their legs around a microphone stand, got down on all fours and shook their posteriors at the jury to mimic the dancer.

After the jurors stopped laughing, they turned the dancer loose. As far as I'm concerned, the demonstration by the two cops was obscene.

I don't know what this world is coming to.

SHORT AND SWEET

Maria Maples, Donald Trump's girlfriend, is angry at Vanity Fair magazine because they used a picture of Cher on the cover instead of her. Maples should know better than to tangle with journalists. The Vanity Fair editors had a logical reason for their choice of covers.

"In light of the Gulf crisis," they said, "we thought a brunette was more appropriate."

Huh?

I see where the Soil Conversation Program is back in full swing. It was put on hold for a while during the budget crisis. No problem no though. The Agriculture Department has sent down orders to issue checks totalling \$1.6 billion in rental payments for taking cropland from production. Meanwhile, people are starving all over the world.

Boy, that was some football game they had in Houston a couple of weeks ago. Texas Christian and Houston University went at it, and when the smoke had cleared Houston came out ahead 58-35.

TCU substitute quarterback, Matt Vogler, threw 79 passes and completed 44 for 690 yards, a new NCAA record.

The Houston quarterback, David Klingler, tossed the ball 56 times and completed 37 for 583 yards. Seven of Klingler's went for touchdowns, while Vogler threw for five.

That was an air raid if there ever was one.



JIM HEFFNER
Columnist

I flew into Charlotte from Miami last Thursday, and as I got up from my seat to leave the plane after landing, a lady was opening the overhead bin to retrieve her carry-on bag. "Watch your head," she said.

I thought to myself, "now how am I going to do that?" Watch my head, I mean.

I didn't have a mirror with me.

It says here that Governor Jim Martin is looking to raise taxes to compensate for the budget shortfall. So what else is new? I'm not surprised that Martin would raise our taxes. He has made that a pretty consistent habit ever since he was elected.

Hasn't he heard that George (RML) Bush has beat him to the punch? You can get just so much blood from a turnip.

I love these wealthy guys we continue to elect to public office. They really don't care how much they tax us, because increased taxes have little or no effect on their lives.

Ironically, Martin and Bush both consider themselves conservative. What a laugh.

I have come to the conclusion that it matters not one whit who we elect as President or Governor. They're all cut from the same pattern. We'd get better government from a dime store dummy.

An oldie but goodie that still fits the times:

There was a man who lived by the side of the road and sold hot dogs.

He was hard of hearing, so he had no radio. He had trouble with his eyes, so he read no newspapers.

But he sold good hot dogs. He put up signs on the highway telling how good they were. He stood by the side of the road and cried, "Buy a hot dog, Mister." And people bought. He increased his meat and bun orders. He bought a bigger stove, to take care of his trade.

He finally got his son home from college to help him out. But then, something happened. His son said, "Father, haven't you been listening to the radio? Haven't you been reading the newspaper. There's a big depression. The European situation is worse."

Whereupon, the father thought, "Well, my son's been to college. He listens to the radio, he reads the papers and he ought to know."

So, the father cut down on his meat and bun orders. He took down his advertising signs and no longer bothered to stand out on the highway to sell his hot dogs.

And his hot dog sales fell almost overnight. "You're right, son," the father said to the boy, "we certainly are in the middle of a great depression."

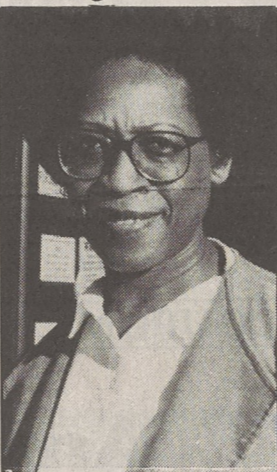
Sidewalk Survey

By Chris Nanney

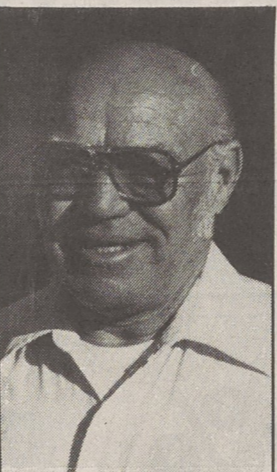
What are you thankful for this Thanksgiving?



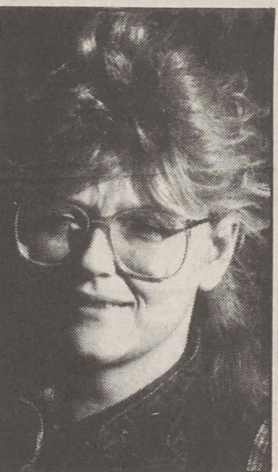
FAYE STACEY
My health, that I'm American. My family, especially for the boys over there in the Middle East. One thing to be thankful for is to be able to reach out to others.



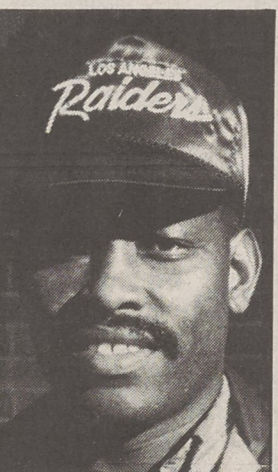
CAROLYN SHERER
My life, health, strength and my family.



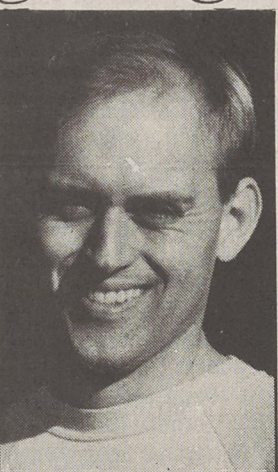
JACK YOUMANS
To be alive, my church and for Christ who died on the cross.



TAMMY RUNYANS
My son. I'm finally getting to spend some time with him.



DENORRIS BYERS
I thank the Lord for my health and strength. For my family to be healthy and happy.



DENNIS BOLIN
For my health and my family's health.