

Opinions

Nostalgia Corner

Jim Heffner
Columnist



What's next?

One of comedian George Carlin's characters is called Al Sleet, the hippy dippy weatherman. He always comes on with, "Hey man, what's happenin'?"

I've asked myself that several times this week. It all started last Sunday at Carolina Beach. My keeper's brother and his spouse were kind enough to lend us their condo last weekend as it was our 34th wedding anniversary.

There's just one entrance to the place and it has a sliding door. The condo is equipped with a modern safety device called a stick, which is placed in the track after the door is closed and locked. I have no idea why the stick is necessary, but Ann would back an elephant up to the door if she knew where one could be rented.

Anyway, as we were about to leave, she was closing the door, and I spotted the stick lying on the edge of the track. "Wait!" I shouted, but it was too late. She slammed the door, and the stick rolled neatly into place. I spent an hour trying to get back in, but couldn't. The only window is small and two stories high. It is locked too.

I don't think Ronald and Jane Stroupe were too happy with that development, but so far they haven't come calling. I plan to be out of town when they do.

Later in the week, I was calling on a new restaurant about to open at Franklin Square in Gastonia. They were cleaning the place after some construction and the windows were polished to invisibility. As I was leaving I tried my best to walk through one of the glass panels beside the door, missing the exit by a good two feet. If my nose had been a silly millimeter shorter I would have sustained a severe concussion. One of the workmen looked at his buddy and said, "That's the fifth idiot to try that so far today." I thought about making a smart-aleck retort but my heard hurt.

From there I went to the Book Warehouse in the same mall. As I left there I stepped off the curb. The only thing was, I didn't see the curb. I came close to spraining an ankle or worse.

I wonder if it's possible to sue people who put up glass panels and curbs without clearly marking them?

SMALL WORLD DEPARTMENT - On the way back from the beach, we stopped at a fast food place in Hamlet, N.C. After chomping down a hamburger I went to the bathroom. There was a tall, silver-haired man already using the facility who looked vaguely familiar. We chatted for a minute, agreeing that a paper towel is a whole lot better than those hot air machines in bathrooms these days. When I was leaving the parking lot I noticed his car was from Gaston County, and had a National Guard license plate, as well as a Jim Forrester bumper sticker.

"I think that's State Senator Dr. Jim Forrester," I told my wife.

"Nah," she said, "that would be too much of a coincidence."

I wonder if Dr. Forrester was in Hamlet last Sunday? I think he was but I can't prove it. I've never met him before.

You gotta admit, a bathroom 100 miles from home is a strange place to meet your state senator.

MY SISTER THE WRITER - Dione Pearson of Gastonia is my older sister, well, not much older, but still senior to me. She has been employed by Gaston Memorial Hospital for years. A while back she decided to become a writer. I admit I had misgivings, but I underestimated her.

Last year "The State" magazine accepted one of her articles, although, as it turns out, they didn't publish it. On Thursday, she received her second acceptance from "Sisters Today," a Catholic magazine based in Collegeville, Minn. Ironically, the editor wrote a note advising her that one of the assistant editors once lived in Gastonia.

Believe me when I tell you, folks, both those publications are tough markets for a free-lance writer. Way to go, Sis, I'm right proud of you.

Herald Letter Policy

The Herald welcomes your letters to the editor for publication in each week's paper. Please follow these guidelines:

Keep the letters brief and to the point. Type or write them legibly. All letters must be signed and include the complete address and telephone number of the writer. Unsigned letters will not be published.

The Herald reserves the right to edit the letters for spelling, slanderous or libelous statements, 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, 28086. Hand-delivered letters will not be accepted.



BUSHEL AND PECK OF VALUE - This window dressing was done in 1948-49 by Richard Barnette, who now owns Cooper's Inc. on Railroad Avenue. Thor wringer-type washers and ironers were the big sellers 43 years ago. The washers sold for \$99 and the going price for ironers was \$89.

Renee Walser



Pilate gave in

I went to see an unusual play last week at First United Methodist Church in Gastonia. The drama group of the church presented and produced the play, "The Case of Humanity vs. Pontius Pilate." The setting was a modern courtroom and the jury was chosen from the audience members. Pontius Pilate was on trial for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Pilate, played by Richard Schultz, requested the trial to clear his name, which has been dragged through the mud all these years.

Witnesses included Joseph of Arimathea, Esther (Joseph's daughter), Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene, Salome, Annas (High Priest Emeritus), Caiaphus (High Priest) and Claudia Procula (Pilate's wife). And, of course, Pilate took the stand in his own defense.

The prosecution's case centered around the position that Pilate could have saved the life of Jesus if he had wanted. He had the power to set the man free, a man who was not a criminal and had done nothing wrong. Prosecutor Richard Abernethy said that Pilate had hated the Jews and wanted to make them look ridiculous by killing their "king." And he was afraid of this man's power and words that God was the Eternal King and controlled the universe.

Pilate's defense attorney, Jesse B. Caldwell III, tried to shift the blame on the crowd, which called for Jesus' death when Pilate offered to free one of the prisoners. He said, and Pilate said on the stand, that Pilate liked Jesus and knew he had done nothing for which to be condemned. But Pilate was following his duty, and his duty told him that in order to prevent a riot, he would have to sacrifice Jesus to the crowd's demands.

In Pilate's defense, Caldwell claimed that Pilate did not know who Jesus was. The attorney also questioned Caiaphus and Annas, who were conspiring to get rid of Jesus. They, too, were scared of the power and influence of this man who claimed to be the Son of God.

At the end of the trial, the six jury members from the audience retired back stage to deliberate. Their decision had to be unanimous or the jury would be declared hung.

The night I watched, the jury brought back a guilty verdict. In fact, the three nights the show had run, each jury said Pilate was guilty. Not one juror voted not guilty.

Both the prosecution and the defense had strong cases, I thought, and I was surprised that no one had voted in favor of Pilate's pleas. I felt sorry for Pilate because he was just a pawn in the overall plan, it seemed.

So couldn't we bring in a verdict of guilty, but mercy in the sentencing is suggested? And forgiveness. For Jesus forgave them. "Forgive them, Father, for they do not know what they do." Should we do less?

Your Right To Say It

Column was insulting

To the Editor:

I was appalled at the editorial run this week by Jim Heffner ("Phoney baloney," April 16). It was not, however, the mindless dribble of cliché political criticism that upset me, but the deliberate assault on AIDS victims which was buried in the middle of this so-called political commentary.

Mr. Heffner's description of the "unfortunate" AIDS victim "crawling" to the podium and being "propped up" was without a doubt the most insulting, unprofessional statement I have ever seen in print journalism. It may be okay to take shots at those who voluntarily enter the political arena, but was it really necessary to drag those who unwillingly suffer this deadly disease into the ring as well?

The suggestions that we spend too much money on AIDS research, while misinforming, provides however an excellent example of why AIDS has become the killer plague it is today. Unlike cancer and heart disease, there are no survivors of AIDS. Just as government support of research in those illnesses lead to eventual treatment and cure, we must begin to recognize the impending devastation of the AIDS epidemic. Waiting until AIDS becomes the number one killer, which is just a few years away, to adequately fund research will be waiting too late.

It is obvious that Mr. Heffner still operates under the false assumption that AIDS is someone else's problem. It is estimated that within the next five years, everyone, including Mr. Heffner, will know someone with the HIV virus, within the next ten years, a family member. Please don't allow Mr. Heffner to speed the process.

Chuck Wilson

Thanks, volunteers

To the Editor:

The week of April 26 is National Volunteer Week and we are pleased to have the privilege once more to say thank you to all volunteers.

Volunteers enhance the quality of life for our residents. This has been done through volunteer efforts as a patient sponsor, through Operation Santa Claus, contributions to the patient cheer fund, clothing and other material donations, outing invitations, as friendly visitors, Big Brothers, or Big Sisters, group visitations and the many devoted caring hours given as a full time, part time short term or special project volunteer on a personal basis at Broughton Hospital in Morganton.

Each volunteer in special ways adds a little joy and happiness for another individual mentally handicapped and less fortunate. That makes you a very

special person.

Our thanks aren't enough, nor could words possibly express what your generous giving means to the individual recipients or to us. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by those here at Broughton, who come from the 36 county areas we serve. Thank you for caring enough to give of your best, yourself.

As the national hospital theme expressed, "Truly you, our volunteers, a Symphony of Service."

Volunteer Services Staff

Thanks, Littles

To the Editor:

In honor of National Volunteer Week, April 26-May 2, I would like to recognize the dedication of some outstanding volunteers in your community. Bob and Diana Little are International Exchange Coordinators for EF Educational Foundation for Foreign Study, a non-profit organization that promotes global understanding through student exchange. Through the efforts of volunteers like Bob and Diana, students from around the world have the opportunity to spend a year living with an American family. They also provide our high school students with the opportunity to spend a year studying abroad.

In addition to these fine individuals, I would also like to pay tribute to the other Kings Mountain citizens who have also made a significant contribution to furthering understanding between nations this year. Volunteer host families, as well as local high schools which have enthusiastically welcomed foreign exchange students deserve to be commended, as do many other community members who have shown these teenagers what it means to be a "real" American.

Thank you, Bob and Dianna. You are a credit to your community for helping Kings Mountain to share the American spirit and to become part of a lifelong international friendship.

Asa Rangne

Thanks for support

To the Editor:

We want to thank you for everything you have done for drama and music programs this year.

"The King And I" was a resounding success because of your contribution. We sincerely appreciate all that you did.

Thank you again and we look forward to your help in future productions at Kings Mountain High School.

Betsy Wells
Gene Bumgardner

PUZZLE

MIRROR IMAGES

Each answer below is a "mirror word"—a word that appears to read right-side up when it is held upside down in front of a mirror. The nine letters of the alphabet that have this mirror symmetry are B, C, D, E, H, I, K, O, and X. Answer the clues using capital letters to discover the words. The number of letters in each word is indicated in parentheses.

- EXAMPLE: Gingersnap (6) COOKIE
- Option (6)
 - Refrigerator (6)
 - Reverberated (6)
 - Upper part of a dress (6)
 - Solve a secret message (6)
 - Carbon (7)
 - Recipe locator (8)
 - Went too far (8)
 - Walter's companion (9)
 - Reproach (5)

ANSWERS

10. CHIDE
9. EXCEEDED
8. CHECKBOOK
7. COOKBOOK
6. RECORDER
5. DECORATE
4. BODICE
3. ECHOES
2. ECHOES
1. CHOICE
MIRROR IMAGES

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Sidewalk Survey

If Ross Perot were on the ballot for President, would you vote for him?



Rick Moore
No. Bush.



Jack Martin
There's no one running I think that can do the job.



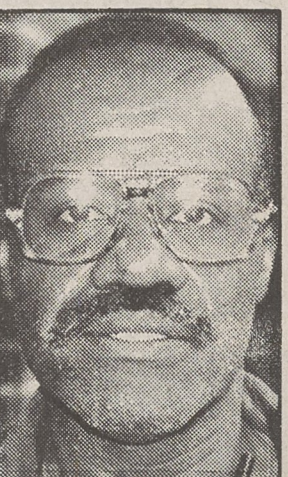
Skokes Wright
I have very mixed feelings on this thing. He talks good but will he be backed up?



Dale Gantt
I haven't heard of him.



Margaret Treviso
Absolutely not.



William Jenkins
I don't think so.