

Opinions

Nostalgia Corner

Your Right To Say It

JIM HEFFNER

Columnist



Following the dream

There are some weird people in this world. All you have to do is read the newspaper or take a look at the tube news.

Last week an over-the-hill rock group from the 60's appeared in the world class city and I was fascinated to find that some of their "groupies" have been following the band for more than 15 years.

I'm speaking of the "Grateful Dead." The people who trail around after the band are called "Deadheads."

When I say trail around after them, I mean night after night, wherever the band is appearing. These people don't have jobs. Their sole purpose on earth is to attend "Grateful Dead" concerts.

Most of them make their money selling drugs. I suppose they sell to each other, I don't know.

When the group appeared in Charlotte, over 70 people were arrested, most for possession of narcotics. They don't go for any newfangled drugs, just marijuana, LSD and mescaline--the substances of the 60's.

Last year, while the band was in town, one of the "Deadheads" murdered another one. I don't know how that turned out, but I thought it ironic that the guy who was murdered probably had been following the band since high school. In other words, he lived and died with the "Grateful Dead."

I saw, on the tube news, a family consisting of a man, a woman and a child. The parents looked to be in their 30's and the child about six. This little family was ragged and haggard. They were "Deadheads," and the father told the interviewer they had to hurry and get on the road in order to make it to the next concert site in time.

If I live to be a real old man, I don't think I'll ever understand why some people attach themselves to so-called celebrities. To me it's one of the real mysteries of life.

**L.A. UPDATE** - Los Angeles police records indicate that 30% of those arrested in the rioting were illegal aliens, most from Mexico.

Illegal immigrants cost U.S. taxpayers \$140.5 million in 1990-1991. All a family needs to do is get across the border and they immediately qualify for welfare and Aid To Families With Dependent Children.

Now the illegals are joining in the robbing, looting and stealing. Do you think any of our fine, upstanding congressmen or senators will take steps to do anything about that? Not on your tintype.

House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt had this to say about the recently-passed Emergency Urban Aid bill: "This bill is not nearly as much as I wanted it to be, but at least it's something to begin to resolve the problem."

The bill is for one billion dollars, and was brought on by the looting of Los Angeles. Originally the Gephardts of the world asked for two billion but George (RML) Bush threatened to veto.

So your government tries to solve another problem by throwing tax dollars at it--your tax dollars.

And, speaking of illegal immigrants, I see where the Mexican police crossed the border into Douglas, Arizona and seized two men at gunpoint the same day the U.S. Supreme Court infuriated the Mexican government by ruling that it is ok for agents to cross borders to nab fugitives.

**THE POET IN ME** - When Dan Quayle proved he couldn't spell potato, all I wanted to do was say, "Mr. VP, say it ain't soe!" Instead, I was inspired to compose several bad rhymes. With apologies to all, here are a couple:

Poem number one:  
Daniel Quayle is our VP  
A scholar he is not  
Potato is spelled without an "E"  
His spelling ain't so hot

When reelection plans are made  
To Southerners he should cater  
We always call a spade a spade  
And a potato is a 'tater

Poem number two:  
Ross Perot would like to be  
The leader of us all  
I'm not too sure I want to see  
Him standing quite so tall

He hems and haws and grins, this gent  
And never says a word  
To consider him for president  
is dumb if not absurd.  
Th-th-that's all folks.



**GIRLS GLEE CLUB IN 1933 AT KMHS** - The Girls Glee Club at KMHS in 1933 is pictured. Back row, from left, C. Hord, R. Putnam, H. Williams, M. Ware, M. J. Logan, D. Plonk, and L. Fulton. Front row, D. Plonk, M. Cooper, F. H. Patterson, S. Collins, M. S. McGinnis, and Eva Suber. The director, Daphne Doster, now resides in the resident section of The Methodist Home, 3420 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte. She said she donated some of the music records of the group to UNC-G for its history collection. Doster taught in Kings Mountain three years.

Our View

When will Perot respond?

In this strangest of election years, a slight, plain-talking Texan appears to have captured the country's imagination.

Ross Perot's ascendancy to prominence is not based on normal criteria. He is without a party, a platform, experience, issues and solutions.

What he has is money and a way of talking that lights a fire in the belly of middle America.

Perot's singular claim to fame is a private commando raid into Iran to free two employees from jail, a mission that was spectacularly successful.

Some have described his Iranian adventure as foolhardy and unnecessary risk-taking. Had he failed it is probable that several people might have been captured or killed. Perhaps even Perot himself.

Be that as it may, the diminutive Texas billionaire has convinced a multitude of people that the U. S. government is a business and he is the man to manipulate the purse strings.

Perot's popularity continues to grow as he consistently evades questions surrounding all the normal issues a presidential contender must eventually deal with.

His unwillingness to engage in public debate while maintaining a high level of appeal may be laying the groundwork for a new strategy when it comes to running for national office.

There will come a time, probably following the Republican and Democratic conventions, when Perot will be forced to respond to the media, for they are relentless and will not be denied. Already many have started digging into his past and many questions will undoubtedly be raised in the near future.

The question becomes: "Will that day signal Perot's downfall, or will it be his finest hour?"

Whatever happens, his independent candidacy has the Bush and Clinton camps in a dither, bordering on panic. Where there was once talk of victory, there are now private rumblings of possible defeat.

At this juncture, when any poll is taken, it invariably shows Perot in the lead by a couple of percentage points over Bush, with Clinton trailing. More and more, when we hear Bush and Clinton on the stump, Perot's name is mentioned.

Could it be that this country is ready for a third national party?

Only time will tell.

Responsible medicine

Representative Wayne Owens, D-Utah recently penned an article in Secure Retirement magazine regarding health and long term care for the aged.

One of the statistics the Congressman included in his informative piece is startling and should make everyone sit up and take notice.

Owens said: "Almost 250 million Americans lack affordable and adequate long-term care insurance. We virtually make no provisions for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses. Medicaid pays for nursing home care, but only after all resources are depleted. And it provides very little assistance for in-home care."

What that means is that nearly none of us have adequate health insurance. The nation's population isn't much more than his figure.

Health insurance premiums have risen sharply in the past ten years and the cost of medical care and prescription medicine has gone up accordingly.

All these factors, along with a sagging economy, have combined to instill fear in most people over 50. They know that a long-term illness can wipe out hard-won financial and emotional resources.

Every day, more and more companies reduce group medical benefits and charge employees more for the little they do provide.

Home with Alzheimer's victims and children with muscular diseases have very few places they can turn. Parents caring for a child with cerebral palsy spend all their time caring for their stricken child, without a break in most cases.

This country is directly on course for a major health care crisis. There are committees in Congress now looking hard at the situation, but the wheels of government never move quickly.

Doctors, hospitals and drug supply firms need to get their acts together. There is a bill before Congress right now that would limit how much they could charge for their products and services, the Health Insurance and Cost Control Act.

Canada has socialized medicine and most Canadians will tell you it is a bad system, with long lines and careless medical attention. Many, who live along the U. S. border opt for American care by driving a few miles south.

This country doesn't need socialized medicine, we simply need a more responsible medical community.

Red Cross after blood

Give blood.

That's the plea of local Red Cross officials who say blood inventory is seriously short.

Two factors increase patient need for blood in the summer.

The number of people traveling on our highways means an increase in car and motorcycle accidents. There are also people who are injured in boating accidents and with fireworks mishaps that require blood transfusions.

More organ transplants are available due to these increased deaths. Some organ transplants--especially liver transplants--can require as many as 150 units of blood. When blood supplies are low, it's possible that enough blood won't be available to perform these surgeries.

On the flipside, officials say they have a harder time recruiting donors in the summer. The high school and college population base is not available--and this accounts for 25 percent of donations. Community and corporate bloodmobiles also decrease because of summer vacations.

The following blood types are currently at emergency shortage levels: O positive, O negative, A negative, B negative, and B positive.

Three opportunities for you to give blood are in Gastonia next week: at Freightliner, 1400 Tulip Drive, between 12:30 and 5:30 p.m.; at Jaycees building at 201 Clay Street between 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. June 25 and at the American Red Cross Chapter House, 190 S. Oakland Street, 2 p.m.-6:30 p.m. July 6.

Taking memories

To the Editor:

Goodbye to baseball, hot dogs, Thanksgiving and Fourth of July, among other uniquely American traditions. But not goodbye to the warm memories collected during their high school year abroad with EF Foundation.

Foreign exchange students, like Patrick Frei of Switzerland, Sabastian Bub of Germany and Trine Tommesen of Denmark, throughout our community are packing their suitcases and preparing to return to their native countries around the world. They will take with them a new maturity and self-confidence, as well as a broadened view of the world, after spending a year immersed in another culture. They will leave behind a host family, high school and community that has grown with them through increased understanding of cultural differences.

EF Foundation is a non-profit organization, dedicated to the promotion of international understanding through student exchange. All EF Foundation students are fully insured, speak English, and bring their own spending money. A new group of exchange students will arrive in your community in August, anxious to learn about the American way of life. If you or someone you know is interested in sharing your community, and your America, with a someone from another land, please call 1-800-44-SHARE.

Bob & Diana Little

Thanks for support

To the editor:

We would like to thank the Kings Mountain School Board, Dr. Bob McRae, Jackie Lavender, the Kings Mountain High School staff and the Kings Mountain Middle School staff for their support and help in making our tennis camps successful.

We are also very appreciative of the community support we received from Harris Funeral Home, McDonald's and the Kings Mountain Herald.

Barbara Jones  
Kathy James

Could be Dodge City

To the editor:

In response to "Is this Dodge City?" letter in last week's Herald.

Dodge City, as I remember, consisted of horses, other animals, a saloon, drunks and unlawful citizens. Well, I suppose, Mr. Rathbone, that Bennett Drive just about qualifies.

On one end of Bennett Drive, there are indeed horses and other animals (mine), and on the opposite end of Bennett Drive there are usually a yard full of drunks.

Our animals are in control. They are made to comply with supervision from their rider and behave manerably. However, residents at the other house appear to be somewhat dazed and out of control and I know this because you see them all during the day and night stagger past your house. Needless to say, we have never felt like it was necessary to address until now -- we try to mind our own business.

Our horses are not an eyesore to the community. Their beauty and eagerness to do the right things are very evident to people. I find no beauty, however, when I have to pick up beer cans in the morning nor am I thrilled to be kept awake or awakened during the night by grown adults. Now, can you believe the animals are at my house? I think not.

As for the smell, Mr. Rathbone, I think it might just be in someone else's yard.

Truthfully,  
Don and Carolyn Guiton (alias Marshall Matt Dillon and Miss Kitty).

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.

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**Sidewalk Survey**

**Do you favor a balanced budget amendment?**

WILLIAM C. KELLY Yes	JAMES RAYBORN Sure	MONTY THORNBURG Yes	GEORGE MAIDA Yes	KEN ROBERTS Yes	LUTHER BENNETT Yes