

# Opinions

**JIM HEFFNER**  
Columnist



## Happy birthday George

Today is George Washington's birthday, and the Father of his Country would be amazed that the holiday celebrating the event occurred two days ago.

Not many people know that old George was almost eliminated before he ever got a chance to run for political office.

At the Battle of Brandywine in Pennsylvania, none other than Patrick Ferguson, the scourge of the Battle of Kings Mountain, had George in his sights but couldn't bring himself to pull the trigger.

Ferguson didn't know who he was at the time, but he later described George as "A man of regal bearing riding a magnificent white horse." The English officer asked for his identification and Washington rode on by, ignoring Ferguson completely.

Many myths have sprung up about our first president over the years. It is said he never told a lie, but that is doubtful. If it is a fact, Washington would be the first politician to tell the truth every time he opened his mouth. I don't believe that is possible where any politician is concerned.

Some swear Washington threw a silver dollar across the Potomac River. I've seen the Potomac and it is pretty wide. A dollar, however, did go further in those days.

I suspect that if young George did cut down one of his father's cherry trees, the old man would have tanned his hide good and proper.

Many folks believe George Washington used a set of wooden false teeth. I doubt it, but it could explain why he always looked down in the mouth.

I sometimes wonder about George. When he crossed the Delaware standing up in a small boat, he took a chance on being the father of the fish instead of the country. It's a good thing there was no game warden around. They tend to frown on such carelessness.

I cannot tell a lie, there's one thing that has always bothered me about George Washington. The monument honoring him in our nation's capitol doesn't resemble him in the slightest. Oh he was tall alright, but not that tall, and he didn't have a pointed head (some of our later presidents did).

I am glad George was our first president. What if it had been someone like Millard Fillmore? Then the nation's capitol would be Fillmore, D.C. Somehow that just doesn't have the same ring. The Fillmore Redskins? I don't think so.

Can you imagine George Washington running the show today?

"Tarnation, Martha," he'd say. "Turn that dang-fool television set off. I'm trying to figure out some way to help Mexico get their finances straightened out. By the way, where is Mexico? The last time I tried to bail something out was that cotton-picking boat I used to cross the Delaware. Have you called in the exterminators yet? Those termites have just about ruined my teeth."

Letters, I get letters - I recently received a letter from J.S. Jenkins of Atlanta, and he didn't like something I said about Duke University allowing same sex couples to be a part of the University employees group insurance.

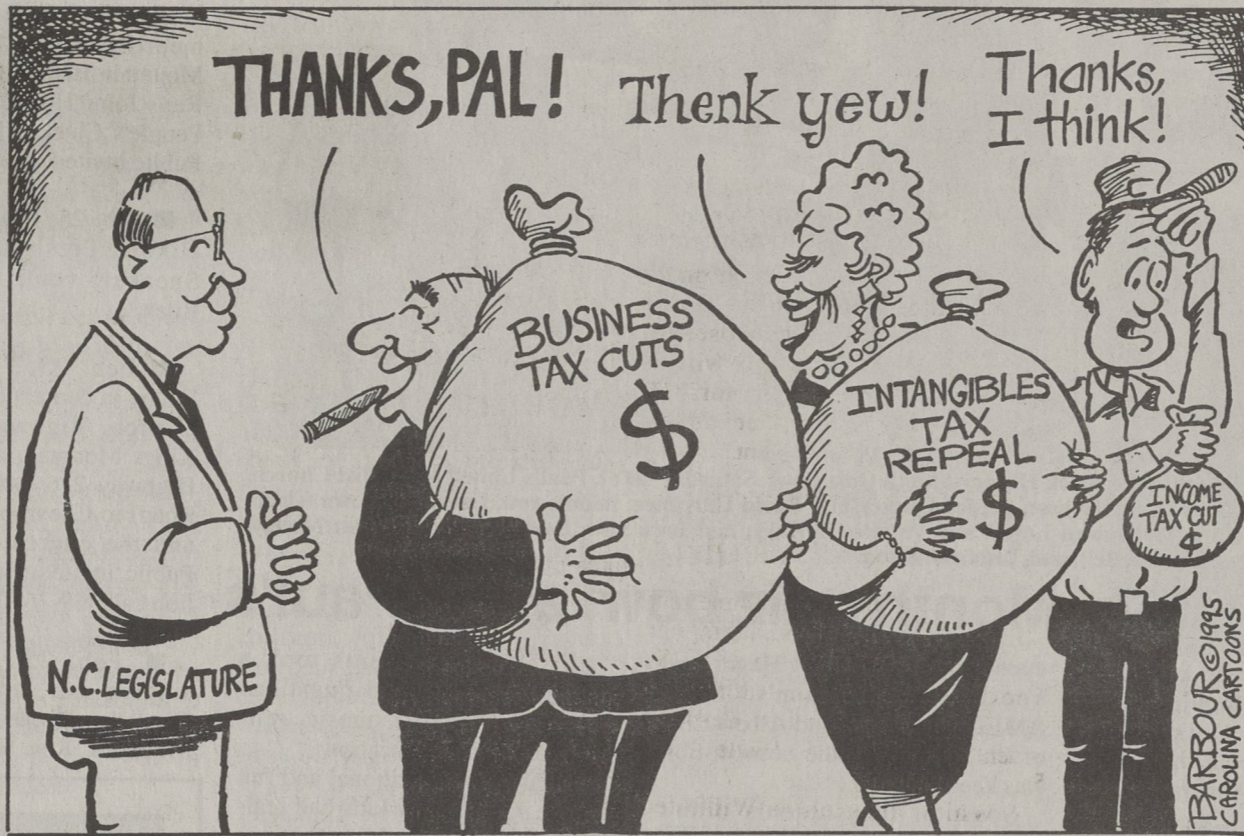
Mr. Jenkins immediately launched into a diatribe against Jesse Helms. I don't quite understand that. I wonder why he doesn't just write Jesse a letter and express his distaste for the Senator. I don't even know Helms, but given a choice of friends I would choose Helms over Barney Frank any time.

Jenkins also referred to North Carolina as a backward state. He lives in Georgia and calls this state backward? To each his own I guess. Frankly, I can't think of a better place to live.

I have come to the conclusion that homosexuals in this country don't want recognition, but endorsement. I'm not prepared to go that far, but my motto is live and let live. I won't bother Mr. Jenkins if he will agree to leave me alone.

Anita Bryant once said: "If the Lord had wanted us to be homosexuals, he'd have created Adam and Bruce." She may have had a point there.

## Cartoonitorial



## Your Right To Say It

### Stopping violence in schools

By JEREMY A. MORETZ

Violence in society, violence in the streets, violence in our schools. Enough of the violence!

Kings Mountain High School has joined a national movement against violence in schools, Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE). SAVE was started in response to the number of guns found on students at Kings Mountain Middle School and as a preventative tool in all schools.

The motto of SAVE is "In Our Schools You Don't." This motto states we will not accept any weapons or

weapons. If any weapon is found, or a fight occurs on school premises, the perpetrator will be punished by the legal system.

At the first of the year, SAVE had a pledge week. The pledge was not to be involved in any violent act. SAVE acquired 225 pledges. Also, donations of any amount of money from a dime to a dollar was requested from students to support SAVE. Dr. Bob McRae has committed to match the money raised as long as the students stick to their commitment. The proceeds will be used as a scholarship from SAVE.

Representatives from SAVE go to elementary

schools to educate the fifth graders on alternative solutions to the use of weapons and violence. Also, they assure the students that KMHS is a safe place. SAVE has presented its program to civic organizations and has sponsored non-violent programs to students. Mothers Against Murdered Offspring, MAMO, presented a program of non-violence. One of their themes is the color purple. Purple is a symbol for non-violence. Therefore, when you see purple you will think of love for one another. In response SAVE is planning to hold a "Purple Day."

The Kings Mountain High School SAVE Chapter is spreading its message to other schools. Last Thursday, Shelby High School and Kings Mountain Middle School met with our SAVE students to install a SAVE group in their schools.

If you would like more information about Students Against Violence Everywhere, please contact Kings Mountain High School. Remember, the more we prevent violence now, the more we make this world safer in the future.

(Jeremy Moretz is a student at Kings Mountain High School).

### Proposal would rob Social Security

To the editor:

Some members of Congress are acting like mad scientists. They're trying to mix two incompatible issues, knowing full well the results could be explosive.

I'm referring to a proposal now before the Senate to include Social Security in a constitutional amendment to balance the federal budget. On their own, Social Security, which keeps millions of Americans young and old out of poverty, and a balanced budget are great ideas. But, together, in a constitutional amendment, they're a recipe for fiscal disaster.

Despite all the campaign promises to leave Social Security alone, proponents of the balanced budget constitutional amendment are steamrolling toward a major and dangerous change to Social Security.

Don't misunderstand - America's senior citizens strongly support the idea of a balanced budget. But any constitutional amendment which includes the Social Security program is the wrong way to go.

The proposed constitutional amendment would rely heavily on the annual surpluses of the Social Security trust funds - payroll taxes paid by working Americans - to offset the huge deficit in the general revenue fund.

In fact, if this amendment is passed, the Social Security trust fund, in effect, would cease to exist. All the monies that have been earmarked specifically for beneficiaries both young and old no longer would be separated from the rest of the budget. There would be no trust funds - only revenues and outlays. There would be no distinction made for monies taken in by the government for a specific purpose.

The problem is the entire federal government does not operate at a deficit. Only the spending programs financed by general revenues are running a deficit. Social Security and many other trust fund programs are running substantial surpluses, which then are being taken to mask the true size of the deficit.

The Social Security program is soundly financed. In fact, the Social Security trust fund is estimated to run a

surplus upwards of \$60 billion this year. This money was collected for Social Security benefits and administrative expenses only and should not be used for deficit reduction. The Social Security program should be protected from the general budget process, not just for today's seniors, but for future beneficiaries who are counting on the program when they retire.

Controlling government spending and getting the federal budget in order is part of the job of every lawmaker elected to Congress. Of course we need to control a deficit that runs in the hundreds of billions of dollars. But why unnecessarily destroy a successful program to accomplish that?

The 1994 elections should not be construed as authorizing Congress to divert Social Security revenues to a federal deficit slush fund. But that is precisely what the balanced budget amendment would do. If members of Congress cannot do their jobs without raiding the Social Security trust funds, then it's time to find leaders who can.

Despite all the campaign rhetoric and promises to leave Social Security alone, proponents of the balanced budget amendment are moving toward a fundamental change to Social Security. They need to be told to keep their fingers out of the Social Security cookie jar.

Please call your senators either at their state offices or by going through the Capitol switchboard in Washington at (202) 224-3121. Tell them that Social Security didn't create the deficit, in fact, hasn't contributed one dime to it, and that it shouldn't be raided to fix it. Also tell them to reject any balanced budget amendment that includes Social Security.

It's the fair and right thing to do.

Martha McSteen, President, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

## Democrats playing politics with innocent lives

Rather than immediately lifting the Tarheel state's prison cap, the Democrat-controlled North Carolina Senate recently approved a bill that continues the cap until September 1996. The much maligned prison cap only allows North Carolina's prison system to lock up approximately 25,000 criminals, no matter how much crime is committed. Last year alone, the cap gave early releases to tens of thousands of criminals.

The actions by the N.C. Senate shocked Attorney General Mike Easley, who belatedly supported a plan to remove the cap immediately, allowing the Department of Correction to manage the increase in prison admissions. Easley expressed concern that the Senate's plan would needlessly continue the state's "revolving door" prison system an additional 20 months.

The Senate's proposed delay in the removal of the cap means that at least 9,000 more inmates will be released on North Carolina's streets in order to meet the cap's prison population requirements. With our state's current recidivism rate (the percentage of criminals re-arrested and sent back to prison on different crimes within three years of release) at well over 60 percent, it does not take a math whiz to calculate that such a policy will lead to the victimization of several thousand in-

GUEST COLUMN  
THOMAS GOOLSBY  
Carolina Syndicated Columns

nocent North Carolinians by criminals let out early under the cap.

The reason, given by top Democrats controlling the N.C. Senate, for continuing the prison cap rings familiar - it will cost money to remove the cap. In typical "good-ole-boy" double-speak, Senator Fountain Odom (D-Mecklenburg), sponsor of the bill continuing the cap, stated that his bill "also means that we are not going to waste \$15 million to \$20 million just so somebody can think they feel safer." Even though we do not know what tomorrow's crime victims will be, Odom's glib attempt to overlook such pain and suffering is

Mayor's Corner  
Scott Neisler

## Holding line on tax

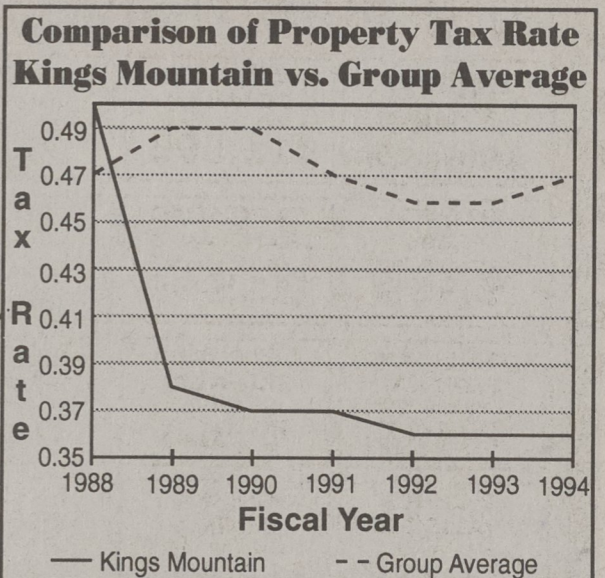
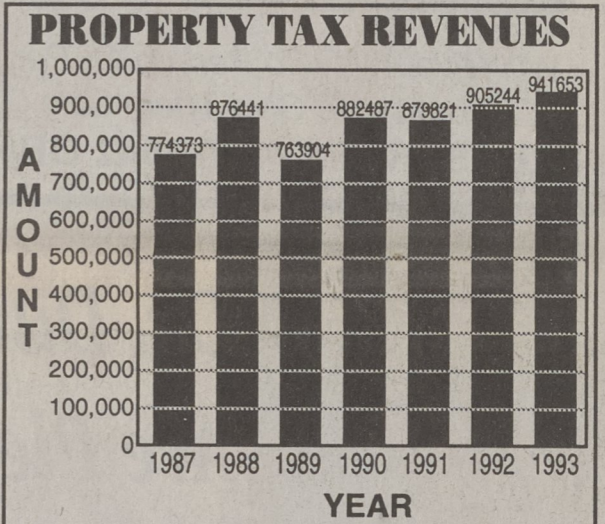
There has been some concern over our property tax rates in Kings Mountain during our audit discussion, so I wanted to do some research in the matter to clear up any misconceptions.

The statement was made, and a chart shown, that Kings Mountain was well below other cities in property tax rates; and sine they were so much higher than us, then they must be doing something right. It seems to me the reverse is true. Kings Mountain has held the line on property taxes to the benefit of its citizens and Kings Mountain is doing something right!

I was so interested in this I decided to find out during the past seven years what revenues the city had received from property taxes in Cleveland County. And as the charts show, the city collected almost \$200,000 more in taxes in 1993 (\$941,653) than it did in 1987 (\$774,373) when the rate was at 50 cents. The reason for this dramatic decrease in property tax in 1988 was because of property revaluation. This was also true in 191 when the city reduced the rate by one cent because property values increased.

The reason for this approach of keeping the rate low as because we have had to increase utility rates in the past to pay for utility improvements, and we did not want to increase the burden any more than we had to. I think that by showing that the rate had decreased so much, that it led some to believe that we did so at the expense of financial soundness of the city. But still we managed to increase the revenues while reducing the rate.

In 1955 we are facing still another revaluation which will certainly increase values. That is more the reason for repealing the tax increase last year to its former level. I am confident that if Council adopts the proposals I have outlined, in the months ahead we can reach that goal of reduced taxes and residential water rates. I will be working hard in that regard.



## HERALD NEWS DEADLINES

Deadlines for social news, club news, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, etc., is 5 p.m. Friday. Any items received after that time will be included in the current week's paper if time and space permit; if not, they will be withheld until the following week.

Deadlines for general news, community news, sports, church news, features, etc., is 5 p.m. Tuesday. Items received after that time will be published if time and space permit; if not, they will be withheld until the next week.

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