

Opinions

JIM HEFFNER

Columnist



It doesn't make cents

Kings Mountain Herald Editor Gary Stewart asked me, "What are you writing about this week, birds or President Fuzzy?"

Everybody knows about Fuzzy, and birds are one of my abiding interests.

In deference to Gary, I'll leave those two subjects alone this week.

That does, however, limit my subjects, so I'll just ramble a little.

Last night I went to one of the local supermarkets for a loaf of bread. When I took my purchase to a cash register and handed the girl two bucks, it took her a good five minutes to return my change. The reason is her cash drawer had no pennies.

The first thing she did was leave her station and go to the office. She returned with several rolls of pennies. I had to wait until she got all the coins tucked away in her register. Then she took one of the rolls and tried several times to break the wrapper on the cash register drawer. Finally the roll broke and the pennies scattered all over the counter and the floor.

The young woman made change, smiled and said, "Have a nice night." At least she didn't say, "Have a nice Da-a-y."

Now I ask you, how much trouble would it have been to resupply her penny slot after she used her last one? Shouldn't she have gone for more then, rather than make a customer wait? Is it possible she thought she wouldn't need any more pennies during her shift?

It seems to me that most of the time, people who operate cash registers run out of pennies, and customers are forced to wait until they break a roll open. And what are those wrappers made of? You'd think they're made of steel plate, they're so hard to open.

I would suggest that the mint cease manufacturing pennies, but then we'd have to go through the same routine with nickels.

For the first time former Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders said something the other day that made sense. She was speaking to some graduating class, when she said, "The only people in this country who get free health care are prisoners."

She's correct, and it's something that was brought to my attention last week by Ken Rumney of Bessemer City. When a prisoner scratches a finger, he goes to the infirmary. If he needs his appendix removed, he is entitled to surgery. None of this costs him a cent. Guess who pays his medical bill.

What good is a magnolia tree? As far as I'm concerned, they're an aggravation I can do without.

The flowers draw Japanese beetles, the leaves die incessantly and clutter the yard. Birds don't build nests in them (I lied, Gary), children don't climb them, and, as far as I know, nobody makes furniture from the wood. No self-respecting woodpecker would be caught dead in a magnolia tree. They don't seem to have any redeeming features at all.

My next door neighbor has a magnolia tree that constantly spews leaves into my yard.

Once she said, "Our magnolia tree is shedding again." By ours she meant hers and mine. I have no claim on that tree, and I wish she'd chop it down, but she won't. The least she could do is rake up her leaves from my yard, but that would be too easy.

I think God put that tree there as part of my punishment, although I don't recall doing anything bad enough to warrant such treatment.

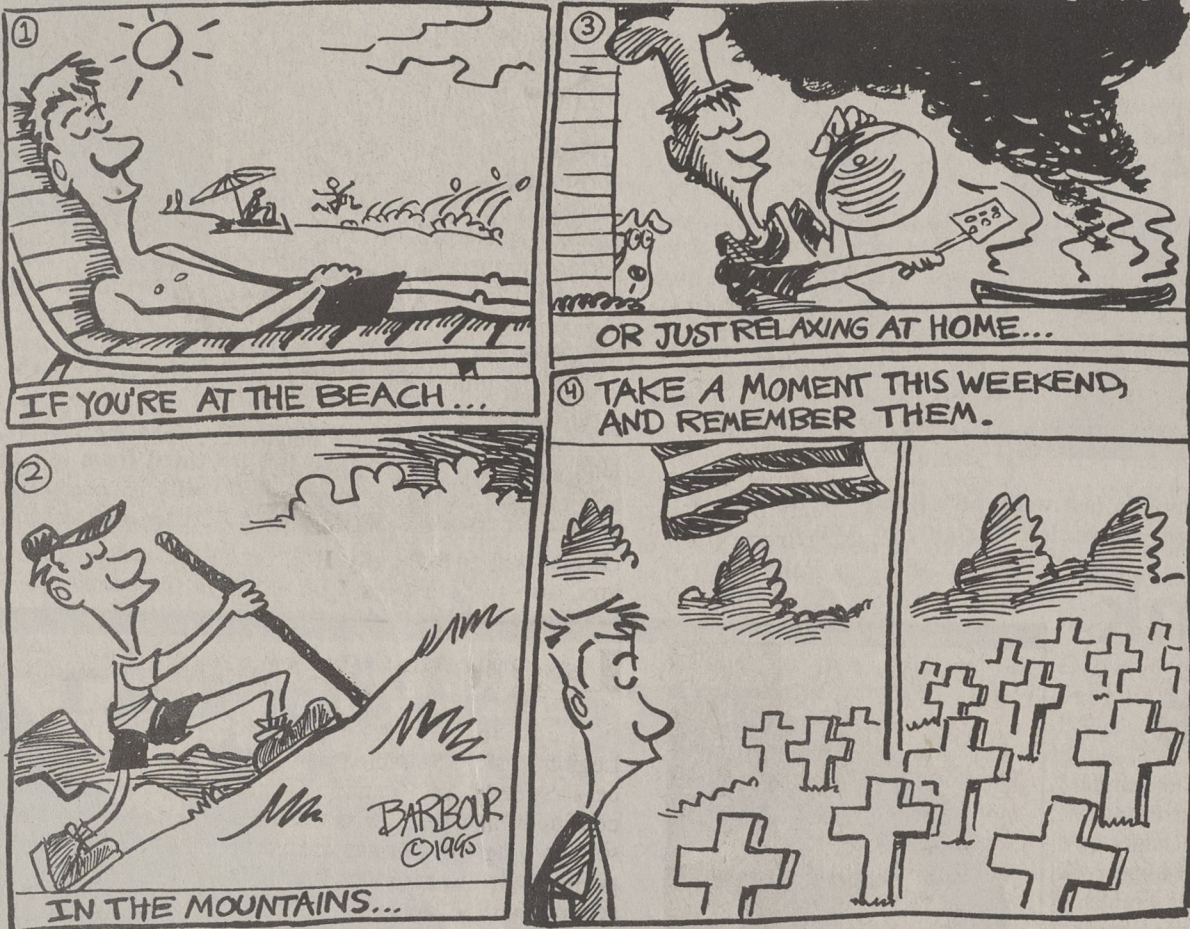
I've heard that if you drill holes in the trunk of a tree and fill them with salt, the tree will die. I wonder of that's true?

Senator Bob Packwood, R-Ore. is upset because he thinks welfare, if turned over to the states, will not improve the lives of poor families. I had no idea welfare was designed to improve life for anyone. I've been laboring all these years under the impression welfare was designed to help people who are down on their luck until they get back on their feet.

Here's a novel idea. Scientists are saying marijuana may cause cancer. Why didn't somebody come up with that years ago, then maybe people would have stopped puffing the stuff. This opens up a whole new area?

I'm putting out the word today. If a clerk in the supermarket runs out of pennies, he or she, could be exposed to cancer. Not only that, I have it on good authority that magnolia trees are carcinogenic.

Cartoonitorial



Quotes from 'famous' people

Quotes and quoted from Monday night's Kings Mountain High School spring sports banquet:

"It's very difficult to be a headline...but it's not difficult to make up your mind what you want to do in life and work at it very hard."
-Charlotte Hornets announcer Gil McGregor

"He set a standard that everyone in the state can shoot for."
-McGregor on KMHS basketball standout Bryan Leftwich's state 3-point field goal record.

"He's my man."
-Coach Chris Johnson on Bryan Leftwich.

"He's a great coach but also someone we can call our friend. Sometimes we felt like calling him dad."
-Basketball player April Putnam about Coach Tony Leigh

"He would run through a brick wall if you'd ask him to, but there are no brick walls in track so we just stuck a few hurdles in front of him."
-Coach Aubrey Hollifield about Shane Logan

"We started good and got better and better as we went on. There are 12 running events and there was only one event anybody could touch us in. Our girls were very fast. They could fly."
-Girls track coach Diane Dooley talking about her conference champions.

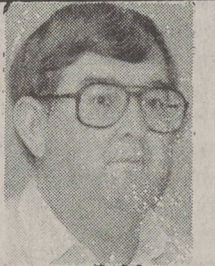
"She gave it her all. That's all we expect from our athletes."
-Coach Chris Johnson about star runner Tina Welch

"She has determination and drive and you can see it in her face. If there happens to be anyone in front of her she's going to get them or die one, and she's not dead."
-Coach Dooley on state champion 400-meter runner Jackie Houston

"Our guys really loved playing basketball. You could take their uniforms away and take the scoreboard down and they'd still love it."
-Coach Larry Sipe on his 1995 sectional champions

GARY STEWART

Editor



"The day I told her she was going to become a starter she cried because she didn't want to win a starting position due to another girl becoming academically ineligible."
-Basketball Coach Tony Leigh on most improved player April Putnam.

"He has natural talent. He worked hard and it took a little growing and maturing, but he came a long way."
-Assistant wrestling coach Alfred Ash on Mario Robbs.

"We're number one, baby!"
-Assistant girls track coach Chris Johnson, who was in bed with the flu when he got a call from the players informing him that they won their first Southwestern Conference championship.

"This is an extraordinary group. It's not often you hear of batters hitting sixth, seventh and eighth in the lineup hitting over .500."
-Girls softball coach Susie Hughes on her SWC champions.

"She's so good on defense, I even heard opposing coaches tell their players 'don't hit the ball to her.'"
-Susie Hughes on shortstop and SWC Player of the Year Keisha Wells

"He's the ultimate team player."
-Assistant basketball Coach Aubrey Hollifield on Mars Hill recruit Albert Perkins

"Let's keep these coming."

-Principal Jackie Lavender after accepting SWC championship trophies for girls track and softball.

GUEST COLUMN

Rep. Sue Myrick
NC 9th District



Remember heroes

Memorial Day is a time to pay homage to the lives of American men and women who died in the defense of our nation. Our nation's capitol is filled with monuments that are a testament to the ultimate sacrifices these individuals paid so that others may live free. Though massive in size and ornate in appearance, these monuments of stone and marble do not adequately compensate for the flesh and bloodshed for our nation's freedom.

On any given day, thousands of people stroll past these monuments and gaze at the brick and mortar embodiment of the brave souls of lost lives. The Vietnam Memorial, in particular, epitomizes what Memorial Day is all about. Here, the families, friends and veteran comrades of fallen soldiers gaze reverently at name after name etched in black granite. Coming across the name of a loved one, they pause to rub the etching with a gentle touch...mothers caressing the engraved stone much like they once touched the hand of their now departed son or daughter. Fathers pause before the monument and swell with an emotional sense of pride, as their namesakes are honored for their heroism. As they scroll their hands over the chiseled name of their soldier child, memories flood their minds...memories of the childhood whisperings of their sons and daughters, memories of birthday parties and Little League, memories of first dates and high school football games. Ultimately, these thoughts lead to the memories never to be made - to a life cut down in full stride.

America's free soil was paid for and consecrated by the spilled blood of thousands of individuals. While their names are etched in our monuments, more importantly, their memories are etched in our hearts. This Memorial Day, as we contemplate their deeds, we do so with reverence, respect and love, remembering their lives and the free nation they helped protect.

There are no words to adequately describe the supreme sacrifice made by those Americans who died in the service of their country. Our words of gratitude pale in comparison to the ultimate deed that these brave Americans did for those of us now living in a free world. While our humble words can never repay the debt we owe these men and women, we can strive to keep faith with them and uphold their vision which led them into battle and to their final sacrifice. As caretakers of their memories, we honor them with respect and reverence.

BOB McRAE

Superintendent
Kings Mountain Schools



Bud and Norma will be missed

The school year ends Wednesday, May 31, and this will be my last column for the year. Thanks to the Herald for once again generously allowing me space for the column, and thanks to the many of you who have commented positively about it. As we conclude the year, I want to say a special word of congratulations to the Class of 1995 upon their graduation. I am certainly proud of you!

As I thought about a topic for this last column, I kept coming back to our recent loss of two people who were special to the Kings Mountain District Schools - Bud Bumgardner and Norma Cissell. Our sympathy goes out to the members of their families and our sincere appreciation for the service each of them gave our school system. It is my firm hope that the work of these two will not be forgotten.

I especially remember Bud Bumgardner for two things - his unyielding interest in young people and his willingness to help others in any way he could. As for his interest in young people, I never saw anything in it other than a pure desire to see them do well. What a great attribute! Bud never wanted any glory for himself from the many hours he spent with his teaching and coaching responsibilities. He simply wanted the young people with whom he worked to be successful and to establish values which would last them over the long haul.

Bud did many personal favors for me. I quickly came to realize that he did them not because I was his principal but because he was happy to help friends who needed his service. Over the years many of you benefitted from that same spirit of helpfulness. I assure you that our school system also did.

Norma Cissell kept us up. Her positive spirit was always on display. She filled many roles in our school system, but I will remember her most for her work with a group of high school students with whom many do not care to work. They understand that they have had problems in school - some socially, some academically, some behaviorally, some all three. But Norma saw in them a greater ability than many did. Her expectations for them were higher than those to which the students were accustomed. I doubt it is any wonder that these students typically were more successful when under her supervision than they were in other school situations. Her sincere desire to help them realize their potential, even after they had left high school, will not be easily replaced.

Those of us who knew Bud and Norma will certainly remember them and their work with affection. However, it will be a disservice to their memories if we do not do more than that. The two of them taught us some great lessons. It is now our responsibility to be sure the traits which made them so special to us do not disappear from the system. If we truly desire to see our students succeed, if we truly are intent on helping others, and if we truly are interested in reaching out to students who have few other places to turn, we will be well on our way to having the kind of personality a school system ought to have.

The legacy of these two will serve us well if we simply keep it in our focus. I am grateful for their genuine commitment to our children and offer a special thank you to their families for sharing them with us.

Have a wonderful summer.

Nostalgia Corner



OLD CENTRAL SCHOOL - This is a photo of Central School which is believed to have been taken sometime after 1910. According to school records, the original school was destroyed by fire in 1910. This could be a dedication service for the new school or a Fourth of July celebration. The flags hanging from the building have 46 stars. New Mexico, the 47th state, joined the United States in 1912. Anyone with any information about the event being celebrated is asked to contact Mayor Scott Neisler.

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