

Opinions

JIM HEFFNER
Guest Columnist



Perot and the new TV shows

Here we go again. Ross Perot is about to foul up another election. You'd think that sawed off, big eared runt could find something better to do than run around trying to control the government.

Every time that loud-mouthed squirt holds a meeting somewhere, politicians from both parties rush to patronize him. I cannot understand why they attach such importance to Perot. The best thing to do would be to ignore him.

Perot threw a monkey wrench into the last presidential election, and probably was responsible for the election of Bill Clinton.

This is not to say it wouldn't be a good thing to have three major political parties, it's just that I don't think Perot should govern who becomes president, and certainly he would be a joke as the head man.

Maybe that wouldn't be so bad though, because most presidents turn out to be jokes.

I've made a study of Ross Perot the last three years, and I have determined that he is an alien from another planet. How else can you explain his appearance, his high-pitched voice and his flawed logic? The next time you see him notice the lump in the small of his back. That's a rechargeable battery pack.
I rest my case.

The new season - The new television season is well underway, and it is the 45th consecutive disaster. Perhaps, of all the new shows, one or two may survive for a second season, and that will be by default.

I get a little tired of those morning TV shows this time of year. Instead of bringing us stories of current events, we get another scatterbrained actor or actress who looks as though he or she just rolled out of bed and didn't have time to comb his or her hair.

Bryant Gumbel had one on this morning, and she was so interesting I've forgotten her name and the title of the show she's on.

Old Bryant asked her the same question he's asked every actor or actress that has appeared on the Today Show for the last ten years. "Are you anything like the character you portray?"

Geez - give me a break.

I've been told I'm missing out on some good television by not watching network TV. I've tried but I just can't do it. I watch old movies, Andy Griffith reruns, a sporting event on occasion, A&E, and animal shows. I also watch Bugs Bunny cartoons, and sometimes the Roadrunner, although I'm getting a little weary of that stupid coyote.

I will watch a made-for-TV movie on the networks sometimes, but those occasions are few and far between. I don't watch everything on A&E, just programs such as Biography if the show is about someone who interests me, and some of the historical stuff.

Someone once described TV as a vast wasteland. I have come to the conclusion that it is far vaster and far more wasted than anyone could have imagined.

Remember the days when we sat in the front porch swing and listened to the radio? Those of you under 55 probably won't remember that, but we old folks recall those days.

Radio shows such as "Mr. Keene, Tracer of Lost Persons," "The Shadow," and "The FBI in Peace and War" were high drama. That drama was richly enhanced because there were no pictures and we were forced to use our imaginations.

Television dulls the imagination, and it has made sex boring. Almost every TV show has sex as it's major theme, or at least an underlying theme. You don't believe it? Make your own survey. Get a pad and pencil and watch 10 shows. You will find that eight or nine of those shows, and probably all ten, are about sex.

I'd rather read a good book - I'd even rather read a bad book.

HERALD LETTER POLICY

The Herald welcomes your letters to the editor for publication in each Thursday's paper. We ask that you follow these guidelines:

Keep the letters brief and to the point. Letters in excess of 600 words will not be accepted. Type and double space, if possible. If not, write legibly. Sign all letters and include full name, address, and telephone number for verification purposes.

The Herald reserves the right to edit letters for any reason and reserves the right to reject any letter for any reason.

Mail letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086.

Cartoonitorial



Your Right To Say It Be responsible pet owners

Dear Editor,

On Wednesday, September 27, my husband and I and others witnessed a cruel act.

We were in Cherryville behind the old Winn Dixie, salvaging wood from the Black homeplace. At approximately 7:30 pm a two-tone brown van with customized windows stopped momentarily behind the shopping center near the dumpsters. The driver of the van proceeded to blow the horn, this is what caught our attention, then drove off leaving a cardboard box and scattering four loudly squealing kittens that attempted to follow.

My heart sank as we realized what was happening, then my husband and I both became furious.

People we must be responsible pet owners. Spay or neuter your pets!

Animals dumped like that, left to fend for themselves, besides being cruel in the sense that they could starve to death or be hit by a car, may contract rabies and or reproduce, only adding to the huge problem of unwanted pets or spread of rabies.

STOP and think before you bring home that sweet little puppy or kitten. Can you afford the food and doctor care that the animal needs? The spay or neuter? Are you willing to provide loving care for as long as the pet may live maybe eight, ten, or twelve years? It's a commitment.

Pets are not disposable play things to be dumped behind shopping centers or along country roads when you grow tired of them.

As for the people in the van, you have been reported to Gaston County Animal Control, how long did you think that handful of cat food and small bowl of milk was going to last?

Julie Long

No more jobs for life

For about as long as anyone can remember, a job working for the state meant you had a job for life. However, "The times, they are changin'." In the new political climate of cutting taxes and downsizing government, state workers are receiving little sympathy in the face of drastic reorganizations resulting from a push for smaller, more efficient government.

Governor Hunt himself, when recently speaking to State employees at their Association's annual conven-

tion, was forced to say, "Things change." Even as Hunt was addressing the convention, the Department of Public Instruction announced that three hundred of their "Educrats" would be eliminated by the end of the year.

A survey of employment across the Tar Heel state, broken down by region, demonstrates the extent of government jobs. In almost every region of North Carolina, local, state and federal governments are the number two or number three employers. Such statistics beg a most disturbing question - If and when a majority of citizens begin working for the government, how will we ever stop its growth?

Until the previous election and the most recent session of the General Assembly, such concerns were real possibilities. However, new leadership in the General Assembly has begun to slowly roll back the ever-expanding tide of government growth. In the most recent session of the General Assembly, taxes were reduced and the state budget, which had previously been expanding at a rate of \$1 billion per year and doubling every five years, was held in check. Consequently, when government growth is curtailed, the expansion of its bureaucracy is stopped.

This year's efforts to roll back expanding government may only be a "blip on the radar screen." After decades of living it up at the taxpayers' expense, the constituencies who are comfortable feeding at the trough are not about to back down and go away. In his last speech, Ed Little, the outgoing President of the State Employees Association, told his troops that in the face of constant criticism, it was time for government leaders to start speaking up for State employees.

Mr. Little is correct when he refers to the many government employees who dedicate their lives in service to the people of the Tar Heel State.

However, he is dead wrong when the criticism is properly directed at an ever-expanding government. Wise politicians will see to it that this year's slowdown in government becomes a permanent way of doing business.

Thom Goolsby

About Jesse Helms, Mrs. Weir and others

Some things that have crossed my mind lately:

Sometimes I wonder how Jesse Helms' foot tastes. It must be pretty good, because he's always putting it in his mouth. Recently on Larry King Live, a Helms fan praised him for putting Blacks in their place, and the caller used the N-word. Instead of condemning the racist remark, Jesse thanked him.

With the O.J. Simpson trial over, many of us will have to find something to do during our lunch hour. (Eat, maybe). Just as in the case of the assassination of J.F.K., I'll guarantee you we'll always remember where we were when we heard the not guilty verdict...

The fastest worker in the world has to be a spider. Isn't it amazing how you can mow the lawn one week, then mow it exactly one week later and run through dozens of spider webs?...

Cheers to Kings Mountain City Attorney Mickey Corry who last week instructed the Council to end its closed discussion about a possible gas contract and return to open session because the discussion was in violation of the state's open meetings law. The new open meetings law is very clear on what can and cannot be discussed behind closed doors, and the precise manner in which a closed meeting can be called. With an election around the corner maybe the City Attorney needs to schedule a workshop on the open meetings law for current and potential Council members...

And since there is an election coming up, persons running for office should be commended for offering their service. I'd be afraid to run for office for fear of finding out how people really feel about me...

Older newspaper people like myself don't do it too often, but in this day and time most headline writers thrive on cute, catchy titles which grab attention. As I mentioned in this space a couple of weeks back, the J-School students at UNC are having a field day with their new Chancellor, Michael Hooker. The headline on the front page of the last edition of the Daily Tar Heel said "Hooker leaning toward \$400 increase."



GARY STEWART
Editor

That catches the eye a whole lot quicker than something like "Chancellor will probably support tuition hike."

As we put this paper to bed the weather channels are saying that Opal is heading this way and could be another Hugo. That, I can do without...

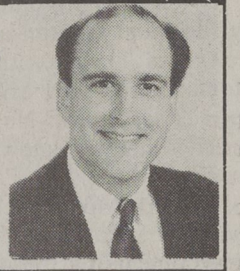
I was watching the Clemson-Virginia pre-game show when the TV showed the Tigers touching Frank Howard's Rock and beginning their traditional run down the hill at Memorial Stadium. I remembered what the legendary coach told his players after a friend brought him the rock from the "real" Death Valley: "If you ain't gonna give a hundred percent, keep your filthy hands off my rock"...

So the Shelby City School Board wants to meet with the Kings Mountain and Cleveland County boards to discuss merger again! Merger is inevitable because sooner or later the State Legislature is going to refuse to fund over one system per county, or else the County Commissioners are going to demand it. But when merger comes it should be because of the benefits it can bring to all students in Cleveland County. Deep down I wonder if there is a connection between this proposed meeting and the fact that Shelby's enrollment has dropped so much that the Lions are in danger of having to move to the 2-A classification in sports...

If you attended Kings Mountain High when it was located at Central School (prior to 1966-67), you'll get a chuckle out of this because you surely had Josephine Weir as either a teacher or librarian. I wonder how many of us over the years, even after we became

REFLECTIONS on Religion and Life

Rev. Dick Newsome
Pastor
First Presbyterian Church



Building humility

Let's play a game. I'll mention a city in the United States and you say what pops immediately into your mind. Ready?

Nashville, Tennessee.
I'll bet I can guess a few of the things you might have thought. Country music? Right. In fact, it is known affectionately by the locals as "Music City, U.S.A." Capitol of Tennessee? Right again. Your third grade social studies finally paid off. And a prettier capitol there couldn't be. Andrew Jackson? Sure, he was born around here. But don't tell Nashville that. They very much consider him their own. All of these things are right on the button. But there is one more. Because whenever the name of Nashville is uttered by my vicinity, a different image comes to mind. When I think of Nashville, I think of my alma mater, Vanderbilt. And in October, when I think of Vanderbilt, I think of football...bad football. Last Saturday, Vanderbilt got mauled by some real boars from Arkansas. And before that, they were slimed by some amphibians from Texas Christian. And before that, they were excommunicated by some not-so-little, green Irishmen. And before that, they were sat upon by a five-thousand pound elephant from Alabama. So if you pull out your handy calculator, you'll discover that this year's Commodore winning percentage is precisely in line with last year's. Furthermore, with the likes of Georgia, Florida and Tennessee still on the schedule, that winning percentage is fairly well set in stone. They may not be the Southeastern Conference's choice for "Most Valuable Team." But they are definitely in the running for "Most Popular."

Well, lest I begin to sound too "pouty," let me tell you that being a die-hard, black and gold Commodore does have its advantages. None of those nasty lines at the restrooms during halftime, for instance. And none of those agonizing last-minute defeats in bowl games. Not a single one. But the best advantage of following a team like Vanderbilt is the development of a sense of raw humility. Commodore fans have no choice. We can't point to the glory days of the past. They didn't exist. Nor can we claim boldly to wait until next year. Even freshmen don't believe such things. We simply smile and do the best we can.

So I have been thinking about my days of humility in Nashville. And the more I think about them, the more I believe that all people of faith should endure such an experience. Because the more I listen to public, religious dialogue in our country and in our town, the more I am convinced that the one thing we have lost to a degree is a sense of humility. Whatever else we Americans have hung onto from our proud religious heritage, humility is slipping away. Be it abortion. Be it capital punishment. Be it prayer in the public schools. The issue itself is most irrelevant. More and more, we are feeling pressure to claim to know the absolute truth on all matters of faith and practice. More and more, we are feeling pressure to admit to no uncertainty or discomfort with any issue which touches our faith, even when we know in our hearts that uncertainty and discomfort are there. And the result is that we are finding it almost impossible even to listen to someone whose opinion on a matter of faith may vary from our own.

That is puzzling, unfortunate and dangerous. So which faith-related issue do you feel most strongly about? Do you think it even possible to entertain the idea of genuine conversation with someone on the other side? If the answer is "yes," fantastic. If the answer is "no," maybe a prayer for humility and openness is due. And afterwards, if you are in the neighborhood on a Saturday afternoon, drop by for a few minutes of Commodore football. It just might do you well.

adults, trashed our chewing gum when we saw her coming. All students knew her reputation as a gum hater and at least once during our school days she made us throw our gum in the trash can. Even if you were at the last shelf of books in the back of the library with your chewing gum stuck in a hollow tooth and your mouth shut she'd follow the scent, find you, and make you spit it out. I'll never forget several years ago - long after my high school years and long after her retirement - when I was working in the paste-up room of the Herald, looked up and saw Mrs. Weir walking down the hall. I threw my chewing gum in the trash can and Mrs. Weir walked straight up to me and said, "You've been chewing gum. I can smell that stinking stuff a mile and a half away." I told her I had seen her coming and trashed it (out of respect for her). Would you believe that got a smile out of her? In her library, though, she always frowned on it...

A lot has been said lately about college football coaches running up scores to impress the pollsters. Running up a score to intentionally embarrass the other team is never right, which I feel was the case with Penn State's last minute bomb against Rutgers. But you also have to consider that many teams like Florida State are so talented that when they send their second unit in they don't miss a lick. You can't expect coaches to bench their first team in the first half. When second and third stringers start getting more playing time than the starters, the internal problems begin...

And in regards to the above, there is absolutely no truth to the rumor that Bobby Bowden already has his secretary working on a letter of apology to Mack Brown.

Kings Mountain Weather Report

	Sept. 27-Oct. 3	Year Ago
Total precip.	.6	.13
Max. 1 day	.6 (3)	.11 (2)
Year to date	47.59	46.37
Min. temp.	54 (27, 28)	45 (3)
Max. temp.	82 (2)	83 (1)
Avg. temp.	66.1	65.8

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