

# Opinions

**THOM GOOLSBY**

Syndicated Columnist



## No good argument exists for state school bond issue

Opposition to a recent proposal for a \$1 billion plus bond issue to build schools across the state has caused division in the Republican Party. Vernon Robinson, candidate for State School Superintendent, referred to the proposed bond referendum as "a rip-off of voters and taxpayers."

Robinson decries the proposed bond issue as "a power-grab from the voters at the local level." He and other critics claim that any so-called "school building crisis" is being inflated by an attempt to gold-plate current construction standards that make older, but well functioning schools obsolete. Sen. Hamilton Horton (R-Forsyth) joined Robinson and Steve Arnold, Republican candidate for Lt. Governor, at a recent press conference where the trip blasted the \$1 billion plus bond proposal.

Sen. Horton accused the state of abandoning "fine, even elegant, schools." He claimed that a cruel fraud was being imposed on taxpayers and the local school boards by state laws and regulations that strip local systems of any freedom to design efficient, low-cost school buildings.

Other Republicans didn't jump on the band wagon. House Majority Leader Leo Daughtry (R-Johnston) and Rep. Fern Shubert (R-Union), both members of a bipartisan panel investigating school building needs, claim that there is a real need for state-funded public school construction. They support a plan that would allow taxpayers to approve a bond referendum wherein the state would borrow \$950 million for new building construction. Additional moneys would be set aside out of any budget surpluses. A Democrat plan calls for borrowing almost \$2 billion.

In fairness to Robinson, he doesn't simply complain about more spending - he raises some very real questions and possible solutions to simply throwing more money to the education establishment. He suggests calculating the positive impact that tuition tax credits or vouchers would have in reducing the overcrowding in public schools and the need for additional facilities. He calls for reforms in so-called "gold-plating" of school building construction requirements and wants to rewrite the regulations that prematurely rule older buildings "obsolete."

Robinson wisely points out that private sector leasing and buy back approaches to school construction can deliver quality buildings faster and at a much lower cost to local school districts than complicated and slow moving taxpayer-financed bonds. Further, leasing and buy back approaches give school districts added flexibility to deal with sharp increases or decreases in student enrollment.

Why must we continue to do things "the way we've always done them?" Constructing more and more expensive, traditional public school buildings will not begin to solve our crisis in education. Throwing more and more money at our public school debacle seems to accelerate its demise.

The patronage and pork barrel aspects of the proposed state bond referendum may be the real driving force behind the demand for more and more of our money. We continue to see very little, if any return for the billions of dollars we lay out every year in a vain attempt to have our children educated. Is it really worth giving our kids a bright and shiny new building when we continue to demand sixth grade skills for a high school diploma? Our crisis in education is not about buildings, equipment or facilities. It's about a system that focuses on all these things to the exclusion of teaching Johnny to read, write, do his arithmetic or much less how to think.

## An excellent graduation

To the editor:

Each year the Senior Class always has been special to me. The Class of 1996 is no exception.

I was proud to have been a part of their graduation exercises on Friday, May 31. All of them helped to make this a ceremony that they can look upon with pride.

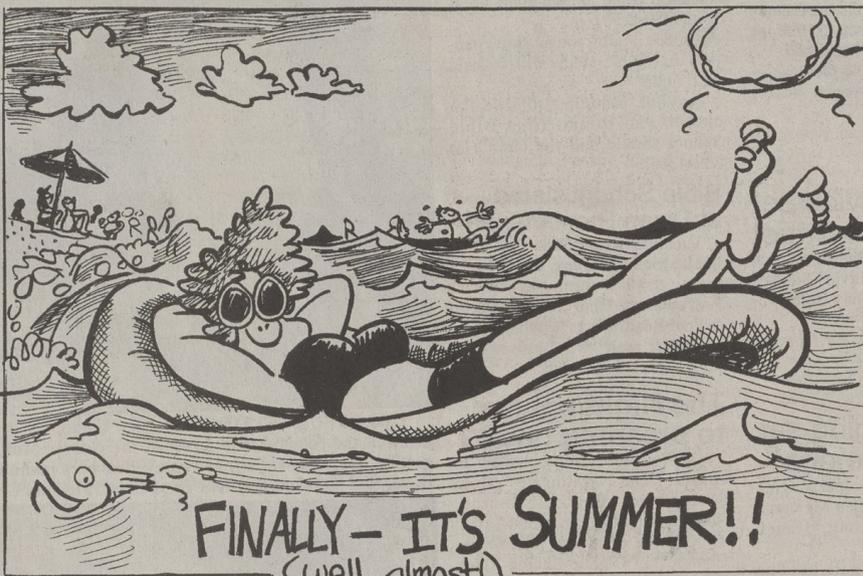
As they left the high school building to begin their march, I could not help but notice how distinguished, mature, and responsible they all were. Once they were seated and the program began, it was obvious that the audience had respect for them.

Their class has set a precedent. Their actions, the manner in which they conducted themselves, and their goal to make this graduation a dignified ceremony were obvious. They, their parents, relatives, and friends, all need to be commended.

I thank them for their help in making this occasion one to be remembered as excellent.

Jaquitha R. Reid

# Cartoonitorial



## God breaks down walls that divide

Have you ever been party to a conversation which made no sense whatsoever? Have you ever felt like the people around you were speaking a foreign language, when in fact it was good ol' English passing their lips?

For instance, try out for size this trivia question: If you were to overhear one person say to another, "After the diasopam, we will tritrate your sodium pentothol," would they be speaking of A) a new blend of transmission fluid? B) medication pertinent to anesthesia? or, C) nicknames along your family tree? (Correct answer: B, unless for you it just so happens to be B and C).

Furthermore, consider these juicy samples from a recent article in the highly respected and prestigious journal "Social Text."

In quantum gravity...the space-time manifold ceases to exist as an objective physical reality.

Geometry becomes relational and contextual; and the foundational conceptual categories of prior science...become problematized and relativized.

The article in question was entitled, "Transgressing the Boundaries: Toward a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity," and was written by a professor named Alan Sokol of New York University. The beautiful part of it all, though, was that on the same day that "Transgressing the Boundaries" was published, Professor Sokol published another article in another journal to tell us (and the editors of "Social Text") that the whole thing was one gigantic hoax!

The entire article was a collection of utter nonsense shaped into something which sounded intelligent but was not. And much to the disgust of the serious-minded editors of "Social Text," Alan Sokol chuckled down deep until he thought he would cry.

## REFLECTIONS on Religion and Life

Rev. Dick Newsome  
Pastor  
First Presbyterian Church



In reading of this bizarre joke, however, I realized that we are often prone to do the same thing in the ways we relate to God and the ways we express our relationship to others.

From congregation to congregation, denomination to denomination, religion to religion, we are likely to develop a set of buzzwords, stock phrases, language, and in fact, an entire culture to help justify our own way. Of course, it makes no sense to others. But it serves to draw us closer to those who "speak our language" and to keep others who do not at a distance.

How marvelous it is, therefore, that from time to time, God takes the initiative to step in among us and break down the walls which divide, to loosen suspicion, to show each of us that we are not in the sole possession of truth, and to instill in us a helpful dose of humility. And when that happens, much like the good Professor Sokol, we can chuckle down deep at the very goodness of God.

## Our View

### Speak out on budget matters

"If it works, don't change it" say some people opposed to privatizing city sanitation services which City Council has had on the back burner for some time.

If you don't want garbage pickup at your house reduced from two times to once a week it's time to speak up.

But there are pros and cons to both sides of the issue.

Kings Mountain is apparently one of few cities that offers twice a week garbage pickup.

The City Council is eying privatization, a system that is obviously working in some cities, including neighboring Gastonia, and which City Manager Gary Hicks says will save the city and taxpayers money. Hicks said Gastonia folks frowned on the idea of curbside pickup at first but now they've adjusted and like it.

Sunday afternoon Council has set a 2 p.m. meeting to finetune the budget and the sanitation matter is high on the list of subjects to be aired.

The new budget won't be adopted until after a public hearing later this month.

Now's the time to let the elected seven City Council members and the mayor hear from you, not only about garbage pickup proposals but about the budget in general.

### HERALD LETTER POLICY

The Kings Mountain Herald welcomes your letters to the editor. We ask that you use these guidelines:

Keep letters brief and to the point. Letters in excess of 600 words will not be published. All letters must be legible, signed in ink and include the full name, address and telephone number of the writer.

The Herald reserves the right to edit letters for length, spelling, good taste, libelous or slanderous statements, or any other reason; and the Herald reserves the right to reject letters for any reason.

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

**JIM HEFFNER**

Columnist



## News you can use

President Fuzzy wanted to claim he was on active military duty, as commander-in-chief, to avoid being sued, by a woman named Paula Jones, for sexual harassment.

When the public put up a hue and cry, his staff decided that wasn't such a good idea, since Fuzzy had dodged the draft during the Viet Nam fiasco. This is the same man who once said he "loathed" the military. The staff, in fact, says that was never considered, and they are busily removing that portion of a letter to the court - the portion that was never a part of the letter.

I don't know about the rest of you ex military people, but it turns me off every time I see the guy salute a service man. He doesn't even know how to salute.

**Misplaced priorities** - Former Mecklenburg County Commissioner Bob Walton was called to task for allegedly molesting a male teen several years ago, and now they want to name a building or highway or something for him. Is this what we have come to?

Why not institute a national holiday for Tennessee Williams, Barney Frank or Richard Speck.

Walton is deceased. I say let the man rest.

**Guilty as charged** - Three people have been convicted in the Whitewater scandal, and President Fuzzy's taped testimony didn't help his friends very much. I used to think the Whitewater thing was overblown hype. Now I'm not too sure. I doubt they'll nail Mr. and Mrs. Fuzzy, but at least they got some of the scoundrels.

I am enthralled with the Arkansas governor's name, Jim Guy Tucker. Now that's a southern name if there ever was one.

Old Jim Guy has resigned, and good riddance.

**Medals and ribbons** - I notice the news media is bent on finding as many people as they can who wear, or have worn, medals and ribbons they didn't earn. One of the guys committed suicide.

An officer in the U.S. Navy wrote an anonymous letter to the Navy Times to complain that Admiral Jeremy Boorda was wearing ribbons he hadn't earned. The unsigned letter was published by the newspaper three days before the Admiral took his own life, and it is known he felt "wounded" by the unsigned letter.

Now the officer, Commander John Carey, says he is sorry. He has good reason to be sorry, but the Navy Times has even more reason. There is an unwritten rule in the news business that you don't publish anonymous letters. The staff of the Navy Times should hang their heads in shame.

I wonder if the whole thing isn't retaliation because so many people have mentioned, during this political season, that President Fuzzy was a draft dodger.

**Use the food color** - In recent years, it has become popular among environmentalist nuts to tell people to stop using red food color in hummingbird sugar water.

Supposedly, it is unhealthy for the tiny birds. They will tell you that hummingbirds will come to feeders as frequently without the red coloring.

That's baloney. If you want to prove it to yourself, put up two feeders, one with and one without, and see which one draws the most birds.

I've heard no stories about hummingbirds being detrimentally affected by food color. It's another effort by zealots to control even the smallest parts of people's lives.

**Commencement** - I see where a college up north had as its commencement speaker, Kermit the Frog. That says a lot about the college, and the education it imparts to students.

Let me see if I have this straight. Kermit the Frog is a hand puppet isn't he?

You'd think the institution could have at least asked somebody with legs to speak.

I wonder if Howdy Doody was available?

### Kings Mountain Weather Report (Compiled by Kenneth Kitzmiller)

	May 29-June 4	Year Ago
Total precip.	1.93	3.30
Max. 1 day	1.78 (4th)	1.80 (1st)
Yr. to date	23.11	24.54
Min. temp.	46 (30th)	63 (30th)
Max. temp.	84 (29th)	85 (3rd)
Avg. temp.	74.1	74.1

## SIDEWALK SURVEY

• By Lib Stewart

### How do you feel about going to high school next year?



**BRANDON McCOMS**  
Excited. I have finished driver's ed at Kings Mountain Middle School. At Kings Mountain High School I will be able to drive a car.



**DANIEL WALKER**  
I'm excited too. I'm real glad to be out of Middle School.



**BLAKE CLARY**  
Happy. Being a high school freshman will mean that much closer to my senior year and graduation.



**THEA CARRINGTON**  
Kings Mountain High School will give me many more opportunities to get into.



**KEISHA McCLAIN**  
High school means more freedom. I will love it.

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