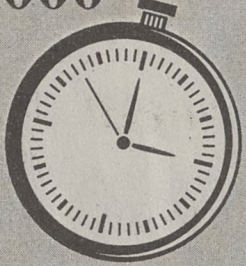


By
Alan
Hodge



**Enough Y2K rumors
to fill a large book**

As the days toward January 1, 2000 draw ever closer, the number of rumors concerning Y2K problems seem to escalate. Scenarios ranging from the government declaring martial law, to toasters burning the morning bagel are all on the rumor-mill. Even though some of these possible problems are a bit far-fetched, concerns that a type of national hysteria could arise is not out of the realm of possibility.

Some of the more popular rumors about Y2K concern the airlines, medical devices, and things we use everyday. To set many minds at ease, experts are debunking just about all worries on these and other subjects.

Airplanes are getting their share of Year 2000 attention. Air traffic control, often operating at maximum capacity now at certain airports, is one area where Y2K naysayers are casting their eyes. Global Positioning Systems which are used to navigate most larger aircraft these days are also under scrutiny. The question is - will airliners be able to get where they are supposed to be going without smashing into one another in the sky?

To address that question, the FAA has assured airline passengers that all of its air traffic control systems will be Y2K compliant by June 30, 1999. In a personal vote of confidence, FAA Administrator Jane Garvey has announced that she plans to be on board an airliner as the New Year 2000 dawns.

On the other side of the coin, a poll of information technology executives said that over 60% of those responding would refuse to fly on January 1, 2000. The vice president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association declared neither he or his family would be in an airplane that day.

In the healthcare arena, rumors have been circulating that certain heart pacemakers will stop working on January 1, 2000. According to pacemaker manufacturers, no models exist with year-sensitive chips, although the stress of worrying about things like that could cause a problem. See your doctor if in doubt about the brand of pacemaker you have.

Given that a large number of people work in multi-story buildings with elevators systems, it's not surprising that this is another area where rumor has wormed its way in. The story goes that some elevators have year-sensitive chips that will cause them to plunge to the bottom of their shafts when the number 2000 comes up. The elevator, you see, will think that it has been 100 years since its last maintenance. Elevator manufacturers want to assure everyone that even if this happens, the worst thing that can happen is that the elevator will simply glide to the first floor or basement as usual and stop.

OPINION

Herald/Times

Editor: Gary Stewart 739-7496
March 25, 1999 Section A, Page 4

PICTORIAL EDITORIAL



It's planting time in Cleveland County, and folks are flocking to area hardware stores and garden centers to buy plants and seed. George Melton at Bridges Hardware in Kings Mountain is getting a plant display ready for his customers.

**You can fall in
love quick with
a chick like Ethyl**



**Alan
Hodge**

Staff Writer

We had a death in the family recently. Little Ethyl had big brown eyes and a soft voice that was a joy to hear. She was just learning to jump up like Michael Jordan for a sprig of fresh grass dangled slightly out of reach in her pen. Little Ethyl was some chicken.

My wife, Sharon, was heartbroken when Little Ethyl suddenly fell ill. At first Ethyl's legs went, then she just lay on the ground helpless. Big Fred, our rooster, actually took pieces of cooked spaghetti over and put them close enough to Little Ethyl so she could try to eat.

We tried everything we could think of to get Little Ethyl up and going. We called a chicken veterinarian, gave Ethyl medicine, and even brought her into the house. A chicken can stink up a home in no time flat.

Finally, we took Little Ethyl to a guy in Spencer Mountain that raised Big Fred before we got him. One look at Little Ethyl and he said she was a goner.

The passing of Little Ethyl taught me that animals, including chickens, have more feeling for one another than many people realize. Another revelation is the speed with which we can become attached to a pet. Little Ethyl was but seven months old.

Grief for pets is a valid emotion. It doesn't matter if the pet is a goldfish or a Saint Bernard, the feeling is still the same when they die.

We've got a new hen now named Wilma. Wilma is not as pretty as little Ethyl, but she has her own perky way. Wilma and Big Fred are still sleeping on different sticks, but they are growing closer as the days go by. Love sometimes takes a while to blossom.

The grief over Little Ethyl will pass for Sharon and myself as well, but there will always be a special place in our hearts for the chicken that taught me a big lesson about how much alike all living things can be.

**Moss Lake line
is a time bomb
ready to explode**



**Gary
Stewart**

Editor

Kings Mountain City Council is considering several issues at present which will probably split public opinion right down the middle. But isn't that usually the case?

The Utilities Committee has been discussing a possible new water line from Moss Lake to the city. It could cost a bundle. But can KM afford not to pursue this project?

The line serving inside city residents and industries is over 30 years old - it has been in place since the lake was built in the sixties. It's old and breaks quite often.

If the city does not replace the line, it is a time bomb waiting to explode.

Council will have to soon decide how to pay for a new line, and most likely it will include a tax or utility rate increase, or both. This is an election year and politicians don't like to raise anything during election years.

But they might have to bite the bullet and do it anyway.

Another issue that has focused recently has been the potential sale of the old city water lakes off York Road. Actually, this has been discussed numerous times in the past, but this time it appears to be headed somewhere.

There has been talk that the city has a potential buyer - and there is also talk that a conservation group wants to purchase the city's property and adjoining property along the Kings Mountain ridge and use it as park land that would connect the Crowders Mountain and Kings Mountain State parks.

Neighbors, of course, are concerned about the possible sale because there is no county-wide zoning in Cleveland County. City Manager Jimmy Maney has noted that any sale of the property would include deed restrictions that would protect the adjoining property owners.

We don't care to get into who the city should sell its land to, but a lot of people would probably agree that the lakes are no longer an asset to the city. To use them even as a back-up water supply would probably cost millions because of dam repair work and processing plants that would have to be built or upgraded. Developing them for recreation probably would not result in a profit for the city's budget.

An appropriate use of funds generated from the sale of those lakes would be to finance new lines from Moss Lake.

**SIDEWALK
SURVEY**

By ALAN HODGE
Herald/Times

**Should
schools keep
the social
promotion
program?**



If a student doesn't have the ability to pass their grade, they should not be promoted.

**Meghan Potter
KMHS student**



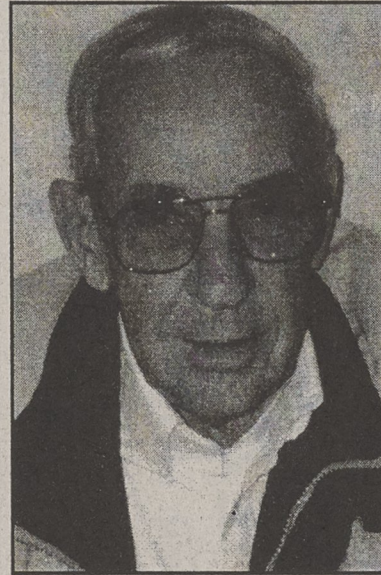
They should not promote students to the next grade if they aren't ready. It places them in the work force unprepared.

**Robert Burns
executive**



Some of the kids they are passing to the next grade are practically illiterate. They should not be passed if they can't do the work.

**Janet Wilson
textile weaver**



They should not pass kids if they can't read.

**Bud Ballard
retired communications
worker**



It hurts the student in the long run if they are promoted and can't do the work. Some could benefit from extra teaching help.

**Amy Poteat
library employee**

YOUR VIEW

**Cancer
Survivors,
we need you!**

To the editor:

Cancer survivors, what was your reaction when your doctor used the "C" word. You probably thought you would die soon, that you should get your affairs in order and count the days.

Thank God for the American Cancer Society and their work in cancer research. The American Cancer Society provides medical and scientific research that results in relieving some of the anxiety associated with the news of cancer when it strikes your family. Everyone is touched in some way by this disease.

On Friday, April 16 and Saturday, April 17, the American Cancer Society, along with local teams of volunteers will host the annual Relay for Life event in Kings Mountain, at the walking track on Cleveland Avenue (behind Handy Pantry). This event will raise money for the continuing funding of research to find a cure for this dread disease. As a cancer survivor, your participation and support will assist in our efforts.

The opening ceremony will be at 6 p.m. on Friday, April 16, followed by the Survivors Walk and Roll Call. You are invited to participate. If you have friends who are cancer survivors and have not registered for this event, please invite them to participate, also.

As a 10-year cancer survivor, I have experienced first-hand the toll this takes on you personally and on your family. I feel that I have a responsibility to my children and grandchildren to do all that I can to further the research to find a cure. Even though this disease can be debilitating, just remember these things:

Cancer is limited, it cannot cripple love.

- It cannot shatter hope.
- It cannot corrode faith.
- It cannot destroy peace.
- It cannot kill friendship.
- It cannot suppress memories.
- It cannot silence courage.
- It cannot invade the soul.
- It cannot steal eternal life.
- It cannot conquer the spirit.

I look forward to all cancer survivors participating in the upcoming Relay for Life.

**Jane A. Clemmer
Honorary Co-Chairperson**

Address letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086, or fax them to 739-0611. All letters must be signed in ink and include the full name, address and telephone number. Letters may be edited