

## GUEST COLUMN

# Don't be surprised if Democrats try to revive a welfare state

By DEBBIE CLARY

For more than a half-century, cradle-to-grave welfare has been the trick pony in the socialist circus conceived and operated by liberal Democrats. Now, long after most North Carolina citizens thought this decrepit nag had been put out to pasture, the Democratic leadership in the North Carolina General Assembly plans to trot it out one more time as part of its liberal legislative agenda.



Debbie Clary

This latest scheme to resuscitate the welfare state is represented by the Democrats' proposed changes in the state public assistance laws, which would:

- Increase the number of people eligible to receive public services by raising the qualifying family income ceiling for participants from 150 percent to 200 percent of the poverty level.

- And at the same time the Democratic plan would all but scuttle pilot programs that are now creating innovative, locally controlled responses to legitimate, documented needs for public assistance.

These substantive changes in the state law are proposed by liberal Democrats at a time when the impact of reforms introduced two years ago by Republican legislators and signed into law by Governor Hunt have helped, along with Work First, to reduce welfare rolls by more than 65,900, a decrease of 55 percent since January 1993.

At issue is the money that counties receive each year in savings that result from a reduction in their TANF cash assistance client basis. Polk County stands to lose \$16,506, while Rutherford County will have a loss of \$115,712.

Any attempt by the Democratic leadership to nullify the progress made under the present reforms would constitute the reversal of a state policy that has the overwhelming support of the people of North Carolina. The Democratic leadership is suggesting that the Legislature renege on its commitment to create a working partnership with local governments in the operation of public assistance programs. At the same time, it would reduce or eliminate work incentives for those

whom the Democratic leadership would arbitrarily embrace as newly eligible public dole participants.

Republican legislators agree with North Carolina's conservative majority that we have an obligation to provide a helping hand to able-bodied individuals who are financially disadvantaged and who have demonstrated a good-faith effort to achieve independence. And we believe, too, that local government needs to be able to look to the Legislature for support in developing programs that respond locally to the needs of their constituents.

But Republicans in the North Carolina General Assembly are not going to be party to the kind of circus act planned by the Democratic leadership. The Democratic leadership knows it, just as it knows that some of its own more thoughtful legislators are equally skeptical about the changes it would impose.

For liberal Democratic legislators, the rebirth of a big-tent state-government run welfare program is vital to its viability as a political force. Attempts to gut and destroy workable, constructive welfare reform is no less than part of the party's scheme to create a slush fund for what liberals view as a reliable dependent constituency. In this sense, an expanded welfare program is no less than an integral part of the Democrats' find 'em, count 'em, pay 'em and vote 'em campaign plan.

Republicans in the General Assembly believe it's important for people of North Carolina to be alert to the Democrat leadership's plan to put on a circus performance in its effort to undermine or stall welfare reform. The liberal Democrats are planning now to stage a distracting three-ring spectacle complete with trick pony to camouflage or draw attention away from their real intentions. But the people of North Carolina know that, if they buy this kind of Barnum and Bailey routine, they will find that the trick pony comes packaged with the pony's principal byproduct.

We don't think the people will buy this act, but that won't stop the liberal Democrats from trotting out their trick pony before the end of the current legislative session. We wouldn't be surprised if telltale hoof prints haven't already begun to appear in the offices of Democratic leaders.

(Debbie Clary represents the 48th District in the North Carolina House of Representatives).

## Hearing set on 4-year terms

City Council invites public input Tuesday night at 7:30 p.m. on a resolution of intent passed 4-3 at a recent meeting to amend the city charter and call for a vote in November on reinstating four year staggered terms.

The public hearing is the major item on the city hall agenda. Mayor Scott Neisler, who is not a candidate in the upcoming election, said continuity and experience are necessary in conducting city business and made the recommendation that council consider calling for a vote on the reversal from the two-year term at the polls in November.

All seven seats and the mayor's two-year terms are up in November. Amending the char-

ter and ordinance to revert back to the four year term would have to be approved by referendum and would not affect the mayor and board to be elected in November.

By request of Ward 4 Councilman Gene White, Council members will also on Tuesday night discuss concerns expressed during a recent public hearing on an annexation plan which could offer a new septic tank maintenance program.

The majoring of concerns were expressed by residents of Canterbury and Lake Montonia Road.

Fifteen residents spoke during an annexation hearing in packed city hall recently and most said they didn't want to

be taken in the city limits. Ward 4 Councilman Gene White, who said he would vote for the annexation, recommended that City Council drop the septic tank proposal altogether. "Sign them up and if there is a problem, fix it at city expense," he said.

Council is expected to take action on the annexation ordinance July 27. The two areas would comprise the city's largest annexation in years, over 2,300 acres, 700 people, 250 homes, 30 businesses and nine miles of public streets.



Fred Dulin of Kings Mountain is one of the area's top yard gardeners. Besides taking care to see that his lawn is neatly groomed, Dulin is also concerned about the city's overall appearance.

## Fred and Martha Dulin's yard dresses up 'Gateway to KM'

BY ALAN HODGE  
Staff Writer

A lawn so neat and trim you could eat off it best describes the yard of Fred and Martha Dulin at 401 E. King Street in Kings Mountain. As immaculately groomed as Frankie Avalon's hair, the Dulin's digs are a visual treat for motorists and pedestrians as they pass the intersection of Dilling Street and E. King.

"Fred just works in the yard all the time," said Martha Dulin. "He really loves it. His mother was a gardener and passed her knowledge on to Fred. I do the housework and cooking, but Fred is master of the yard."

A retired machinist, Fred Dulin is originally from Bessemer City. He and his wife—a retired textile lab technician—

came to Kings Mountain in 1965 and are members of First Baptist Church. When he's not on the road traveling with his wife, Fred Dulin is usually in the yard.

"I spend at least ten or twelve hours a week working on the lawn and gardens," said Dulin. "My mother kept her house clean enough to eat off of the floors, and that's the way I want my yard."

A wide variety of plants and planting schemes make the Dulin yard special. Plant types Fred has cultivated include hydrangea, several types of rubber plants, petunia, violets, blackberry bushes, and mimosa trees. Boxwood hedges break up the lawn and create shady nooks like those found in English gardens. Adding to the relaxing en-

vironment, bird feeders and baths help keep a constant flow of feathered friends coming to the Dulin's yard.

Taking personal pride in both their yard and their citizenship in Kings Mountain, the Dulin's wish that everyone cared about their town as much as they do.

"It's really bad to see trash along the road and some people not caring if they throw it out of their car windows," Fred Dulin said. "I wish that everyone would try to help keep Kings Mountain looking good."

For their part, the Dulin's will continue to see that their yard is one of the beauty spots along the gateway to Kings Mountain.

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**The Herald**  
KINGS MOUNTAIN

Published every Thursday.  
• Periodicals postage at  
East King Street at Canterbury Road, NC 28086  
USPS 931-040 by Republic Newspapers, Inc.  
Postmaster, send address changes to:  
P. O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086  
Phone (704) 739-7496 • Fax (704) 739-0611  
Office: 824-1 East King Street,  
Kings Mountain, NC 28086

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## KMPD beginning move

Although some police staff is in process of moving into the new Kings Mountain Police Department, the building is not ready for the public.

Chief Richard Reynolds says the public will get a chance soon to see the new building but work is still in progress at

the new facility and it will probably be later this month or early August before an open house and dedication can be set.

Telephones were being hooked up this week at the new facility but it will take some time for the moving chores to be completed.

## KINGS MOUNTAIN WEATHER REPORT

(Compiled by Kenneth Kitzmiller)

	July 7-13	Year Ago
Total precip.	1.21	Trace
Max. 1 day	.49 (7th)	Trace (8th)
Year to date	22.03	35.53
Min. temp.	60 (12th)	68 (12th)
Max. temp.	92 (7th, 8th, 9th)	94 (13th)
Avg. temp.	74.8	81.9

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