

**GUEST  
 OPINION**

**What to do  
 to avoid being  
 'crammed'**

By ROY COOPER

You open your phone bill to discover that your long distance service is now being provided by a phone company you've never heard of. Or, you notice that you've been charged for voice mail service when you didn't sign up for it. What happened, and what can you do about it?



These practices are known as slamming and cramming, and they happen to consumers all too often. In fact, complaints about telephone service and telephone bills are some of the most common complaints my office receives.

Slamming happens when your telephone carrier is changed without your permission. In some cases, slammers switch your phone service without even contacting you. In other cases, a telemarketer working for the slammers tries to trick you into changing to a different long distance carrier. For example, a telemarketer may claim to be calling from your current telephone company and offer to sell you a special new calling plan. When you agree to sign up for the new plan, they instead switch you to an entirely new carrier.

Cramming occurs when a company tries to sneak unauthorized charges onto your phone bill in the hopes that you won't notice extra items slipped into the middle of a lengthy and complicated bill. Like slammers, some crammers bill you without ever contacting you. In other instances, you might be tricked into signing up for a travel club, voice mail or pager service by a telemarketer who promises that you can try the service for free and then cancel it at anytime without being charged. The charge may show up on your bill just once or it could start to appear on your bill monthly.

Follow these tips to avoid getting slammed or crammed, or to solve the problem if you've already been hit by one of these scams:

-Read your phone bill carefully every month to make sure your service has not been switched without your authorization. Review it as closely as you would your bank statement or credit card bill, looking out for any strange charges.

-Use caution when talking to telemarketers. Be wary of answering questions you don't fully understand, because the company may later claim that you

See Guest, 5A

**OPINION**

The Kings Mountain Herald

**LOOKING BACK**



The Optimist team won the 1963 Little League Playoff Championship by defeating Bur-Mill 6-3. Front, left to right, Junior Lefevers, Ronnie Payne, Kenny Bridges, Dana "Pancho" Sarvis, Jerry Ruppe and Corky Fulton. Second row, David Bolin, Barry Rikard, Mickey Floyd, Billy Early, Steve McNeeley, Brad Gregory and Bobby Peterson. Back, head coach Jim Connor, Larry Gantt and base coach Nelson Connor.

**About Pagan Road,  
 Little Switzerland  
 and the log cabin**



Andie Brymer  
 Staff Writer

"Working on mysteries without a clue," the Eagles sing. They're not the only ones. This small town reporter has a few she can't solve either.

Where are the pagans on Pagan Road. On my first ever trip to Grover, I spied the green road sign to my left, just outside Kings Mountain.

I had visions of a long road winding toward a farm house. An old woman who grew herbs and knew some secret incantations would live there. Or maybe not. Maybe, the inhabitants would be young hippy types way into nature.

Finally I got up my nerve to drive down Pagan Road. It was shorter than I expected and came to an abrupt end. As best I can remember, the end of the road was blocked by earth and a guard rail. To my left was a fairly modern looking brick house. It appeared to have fallen victim to both disrepair and some vandalism.

Was the road named after the house started to go down hill? Was that why it was so named?

Okay fellow Sherlocks, on to the next mystery. Why would people from Switzerland visit the North Carolina mountains. I'm not making it up, they really do.

My husband was at the Mt. Mitchell Restaurant selling his nature prints last week. He overhears folks talking about being from Switzerland. I know Mt. Mitchell is the highest point east of the Mississippi, but they are from the land of the Alps for crying out loud. Mt. Mitchell is a foothill, a little bump in the road to these folks. Why, I repeat, why did they spend their vacation looking at our relatively small mountains.

Did they snicker and whisper to one another in Swiss, "Look at the cute little hills, oh, aren't they quaint. Those silly hikers even think they are tired." Then they jump in their rented car and yodel with glee all the way down the parkway.

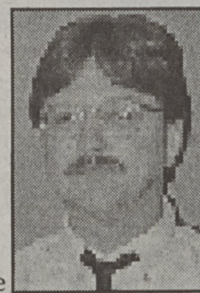
Okay, on to the next mystery. Why is the Herald located in a log cabin?

When I drove up for my interview, I was amazed. I assumed the building had once been home to a steakhouse. After I'm on the job and its safe to start asking question, I inquire. No such culinary history here. I'm told the building was designed for a newspaper.

I'm not complaining. It's got character. Certainly beats the sterile environment created by one past paper's ultra modern building. Another paper was housed inside an old building. It had no character, just lots of mold.

See Andie, 5A

**The real Mayberry  
 may just be our  
 own hometowns**



Alan Hodge  
 Guest Column

There are many legendary places in the world. Some of these spots include Patee, foggy London Town, Timbuktoo, Shangri-La, Shuffletown, and Mayberry.

I went through the supposed 'real' Mayberry recently, and found it to be decidedly lacking in resemblance to the town on TV that spawned the name.

Let me explain. The Mayberry I passed through on the way to Laurel Hill, Virginia is actually Mount Airy, NC, the birthplace of Andy Griffith. If you don't know who Andy Griffith is, or that the town he was sheriff of in TV land was named Mayberry, then you must have no doubt been born too late or not at all.

Mount Airy bills itself as Mayberry. Ads to this effect are all over town. There is a real barn on Highway 89 as you come into the city with 'Welcome to Mayberry' splashed all over the side. Just past the barn and all along through town are many strip shops and convenience stores and a few nice older homes but little or nothing that looks like the town still seen on TV re-runs...that is, a quaint, tidy little town with nice sidewalks and folks strolling along and some whistling like Andy and Opie do as they saunter down to the old fishin' hole and maybe a dog wagging its tail etc. & etc.

Well, let's not beat around the bush any more. I think local towns are a lot more like the legendary Mayberry in tone and look than Mount Airy can every hope to be. That's my opinion and since this is my opinion column I can say it, so I did.

There is more to Mayberry than the ambience. The people who live there make it much of what it is. Immortal indeed are the characters that populate the town. Stereotypical are they in some ways, yet each is a distinct personality that may be found in many small towns across the nation.

If you look closely enough, there are many local folks who resemble characters in the TV Mayberry. I think it is safe to say that both Goober and Gomer types are well represented in our region. There are also may ladies like Aunt Bea, though I heard a person recently referred to as such who in no way, shape or form resembles her.

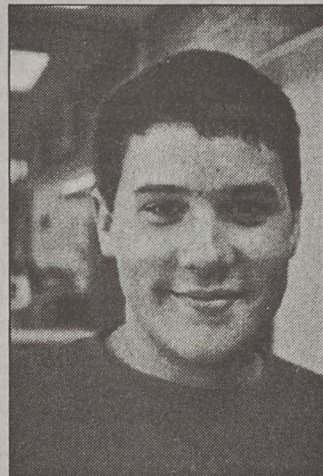
Cast your eyes across the local landscape and you will see many Opies running around. Go to a city council meeting and see Howard there, go to the local schools and scope out the Helen Crumps. Barney can be found as well. Reece, Reece, Reece 10-4. Oh what would we do without our own Otis Campbell. Perhaps you know one

See Alan, 5A

**SIDEWALK  
 SURVEY**

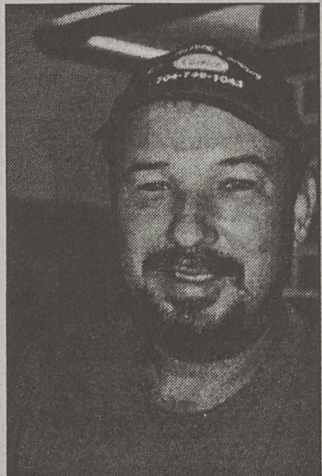
BY ANDIE L. BRYMER  
 THE HERALD

**Should the  
 government  
 have released  
 and the media  
 publicized  
 photographs  
 of Saddam  
 Hussein  
 deceased  
 sons?**



"Yes. Because we killed them. We can show our troops they're getting some headway."

Alex Childers  
 Kings Mountain



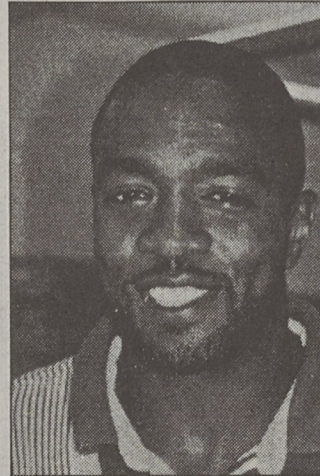
"We ought to because Saddam Hussein photographed their dead. They killed their own."

Travis Phillips  
 Kings Mountain



"I think so, so people would know."

Gwen Smith  
 Kings Mountain



"Yea, to let the people know they are dead."

Robert Strong  
 Shelby



"No. Death is a personal thing that should stay within the family."

Alene Williams  
 Kings Mountain