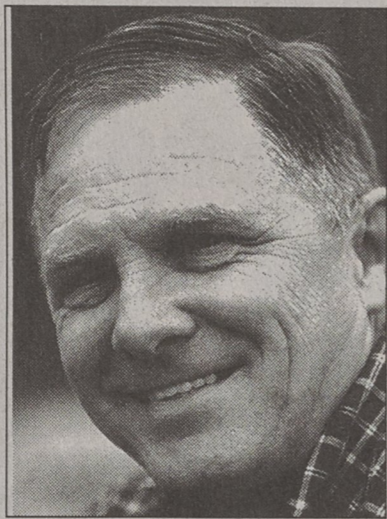


SIDEWALK SURVEY

BY EMILY WEAVER
THE HERALD

What is one of the most important issues that politicians should focus on this term?



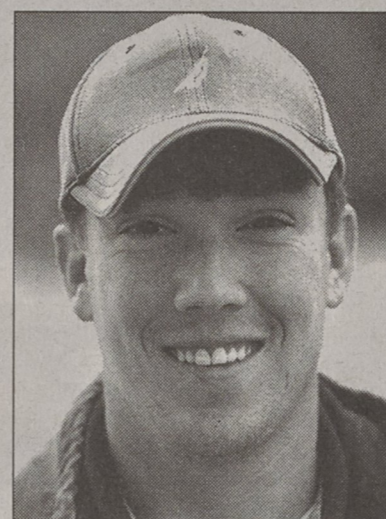
Lynn Carter, Banner Elk, NC
"Cooperation between the different parties. We're all one people and they shouldn't waste time fighting each other."



Jeremy Cummings, Mount Holly
"The war in Iraq. We need to continue our work over there so what happened in New York won't happen again."



Mary Meeler, York, SC
"The war in Iraq. We need to bring our soldiers home. We've been over there long enough."



Aaron Boggs, Fallston
"Medicare is an important issue and we need to fix it."



Stephanie Hurt, Kings Mountain
"We need to fix Medicare. A lot of elderly people cannot afford their medicines and it needs to be fixed."

GUEST COLUMNS

O'Reilly talks out of both sides of mouth

I don't watch too much television, because most of it is such a tripe, but I do tune in to the talking heads of cable TV a little bit almost every night.



Jim Heffner
Guest Column

The first time I watched Bill O'Reilly, I thought to myself: "Now there's a good conservative worth watching. As usual I was wrong. O'Reilly is not a true conservative, nor is he a true liberal. To tell you the truth I don't know what he is. He talks out of both sides of his mouth."

Recently, O'Reilly, castigated talk show host Rush Limbaugh because Limbaugh said that Michael J. Fox was either acting or off his medicine when he made TV commercials for Democrats, where he rocked back and forth and fidgeted, much like a person afflicted with Parkinson's disease would do.

Fox has admitted in the past that he sometimes did not take his medicine when making appearances.

In his book *Saving Millie*, Mort Kondracke wrote the following about Fox after he had testified at a Senate hearing on Parkinson's: "He looked stiff and fidgety. I assumed that his morning dose of Sinemet had yet to take effect. Later he told Diane Sawyer in an ABC-TV interview that he'd purposely not taken his medicine so that the world would get some idea of what Parkinson's does to people."

The Democrats are using Fox in an all out effort to regain the House and Senate. Some of the people his ads oppose have always been in favor of stem cell research. Some of the Democrats he has made commercials for have actually voted against it.

This is just another individual the Democrats are using who they believe cannot be challenged because of his illness.

O'Reilly's TV show is called the No Spin Zone, and he makes a big deal out of not allowing anyone to engage in "spin" on his show, anybody but himself, that is.

On a show a couple of weeks ago, the spinmeister told his listeners it was OK for educators to discuss homosexual activity in school civics classes. This from an ex-school teacher. I don't know about you, but I'd rather my children spend their school time learning their ABC's.

English, history and math. I'll teach them the rest at home.

One of O'Reilly's frequent guests is Mike Ferrell, the liberal Hollywood actor who once called a news conference to announce that he had it on good authority the U.S. would attack El Salvador in three or four days. It didn't happen, of course.

O'Reilly said on one of his shows that Ferrell never engaged in personal attacks. What a laugh! Anyone who has ever heard Ferrell talk about Dick Cheney will tell you O'Reilly doesn't know what he's talking about.

O'Reilly has also said the Chicago Tribune is not a liberal newspaper. That's right; he said the Tribune is not a liberal newspaper. You can ask any conservative and some liberals about that, and you will find that it is one of the top five liberal newspapers in this country, right up there with the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times and the Boston Globe. Better yet, read a copy of the Tribune and decide for yourself.

O'Reilly simply wants everyone to believe that in a world torn between liberal and conservative viewpoints, his is the only balanced view.

It isn't true. I put him in a class by himself. I don't consider his views liberal or conservative. I guess I just consider him insignificant and not important.

Oh well, people will believe what they want to believe, and I guess that's the way it should be.

Jim Heffner is a reporter for the Belmont/Mount Holly Bannernews and is a longtime columnist for The Herald. Contact him at Jim@bannernews.com

By GOV. MIKE EASLEY

RALEIGH Health care is a critical issue in North Carolina, especially for our seniors. The cost of the prescription medications they need to maintain their health is skyrocketing.

The federal government program, known as Medicare Part D, offers seniors an insurance plan to cover prescription medications. In too many cases low income North Carolina seniors are not eligible. In other cases, they try to apply but give up because of confusing and cumbersome paperwork.

Seniors on fixed incomes make difficult choices every day. When it comes to their health, the choice should be simple. The new North Carolina Rx prescription drug assistance program will provide financial assistance and personal guidance so low-income North Carolina seniors can get the medicines they need.

North Carolina Rx will help pay monthly premiums so many of the federal plans will be free or very low cost for qualifying low-income seniors. Just as important, we are providing a toll-free number (1-888-488-NCRX) as a resource for citizens trying to navigate the complicated federal system.

We will help all seniors, no matter what their economic status, find and apply for the Medicare Part D plan that fits their income and needs. Help is a telephone call away.

There are more than 1.3 million Medicare beneficiaries in North Carolina. Since last January, North Carolina seniors could choose from a variety of prescription drug insurance plans. For 2007, there will be 51 plans offered to North Carolina seniors. To participate in Part D, seniors must select a plan and pay the monthly premium. Plan premiums range in cost, from \$17.80 to \$85.90 per month for 2007. Seniors will be able to start signing up right away for the coverage that will begin on January 1, 2007.

EMS

From 2A

ice." QRVs, Quick Response Vehicles, are fully-equipped ambulances without the stretchers and additional passenger room.

"Each shift has a Captain, Lieutenant, and a Field Training Officer (FTO) with eighteen additional Paramedics and Intermediates that work together to provide the most efficient care and assistance to the people of Cleveland County," the website stated.

According to "Cleveland County EMS - Past and Present," written by Lord, "Before Cleveland County began serving its residents with ambulance services in 1976, volunteer rescue squads and local funeral homes provided all local ambulance services." Before 1989, most of the county residents were served with basic level pre-hospital care provided by Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). More training was developed in '89 for EMTs to become EMT-Ps (Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedics).

need.

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The county EMS works with Cleveland Regional Medical Center to provide Specialty Care Transport Units and services to transport critically injured patients from one medical facility to another. "Today CCEMS transports approximately 800 patients a year at the Critical Care level," he said. "Currently, CCEMS staffs nine Critical Care Paramedic ambulances and three QRV's during normal peak times."

Starting a couple of decades ago with just a group of volunteers, the Cleveland County EMS now employs up to 19 paid staff members working around the clock with specialized training and equipment to keep the county safe. Their new base in Kings Mountain will help them continue to stay on the cutting edge of emergency response.

The state will cover monthly premiums for North Carolinians with annual incomes at 175 percent of the federal poverty level, that is individuals making less than \$17,150 with assets worth \$20,000 or less (not including a home or car) or married couples making \$23,100 with assets of less than \$30,000.

During the next two and a half years, we estimate that about 50,000 people will sign up for the Medicare Part D state assistance plan. We have dedicated \$24 million from the Health and Wellness Trust Fund to pay for the program.

We have set up a special web site, WWW.NCRX.GOV, to direct seniors to the information they need to sign up for the plan that they qualify for and best suits their needs. And do not forget the special toll-free telephone line, 1-888-488-NCRX (6279) with specially trained advisors to provide information and assistance to seniors to sign up for the program.

North Carolina Rx is an important resource for seniors who are attempting to navigate the com-

plicated federal drug program, providing seniors with trained professionals that can help them choose the best program to fit their individual needs, handle paperwork and make sure it is properly filed. It will also provide a "medication therapy management" program so pharmacists work with patients to make sure seniors are taking the medications they need and avoiding possible drug interactions.

I want to enlist everyone's assistance in getting the word out about this new program. If you have an elderly parent, neighbor or friend who may qualify, please make sure they call our toll-free number or visit the website information.

When our seniors do not get their medicines, they get sick and have to go to the hospital. That is more suffering for them and more expense for the taxpayers. So North Carolina Rx is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do.

Our seniors were there for us when we needed them. Now, it is our turn to be there for them.

BLOODMOBILE SCHEDULE

The Cleveland County Red Cross has announced the following bloodmobile visits for November and December:

- Nov. 2 - Central United Methodist Church, Kings Mountain, 1:30-6 p.m.
- Nov. 6 - Ambassador College, Lattimore, 12:30-5 p.m.
- Nov. 7 - Swoogers, Kings Mountain, 12-7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 21 - Christian Freedom Baptist Church, Kings Mountain, 2-6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 22 - Polkville Volunteer Fire Department, 3-7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 25 - Buffalo Baptist Church, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
- Nov. 28 - First Baptist Church, Shelby, 2-6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 30 - Grover Street Fire Station (chili visit), 1:30-6 p.m.

BLOODMOBILE SCHEDULE

By Kenneth Kitzmiller

	Oct. 25-31	Year Ago
Total precipitation	1.03	0
Maximum 1 day	1.03 (27th)	0
Month of October	4.74	6.29
Year to date	44.76	40.18
Low temperature	42 (29th)	36 (28th)
High temperature	74 (30th)	70 (31st)
Avg. temperature	57.1	46.7

Be Car Care Aware



ASK RICK!

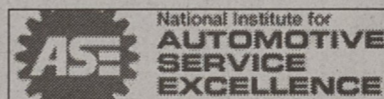
Rick Walker owner of Rick's Automotive ASE Certified Master Technician

The serpentine belt on my car chirps like a bird. I had the belt replaced but the noise remained. What do I do now?

The noise you're hearing is probably caused by a worn belt tensioner. The tensioner is a spring-loaded pulley that automatically keeps the proper tension on the belt. As the tensioner wears it begins to cock out on the bottom causing the belt to run crooked. This misalignment of the belt causes it to chirp. To correct this problem you will need to have the tensioner replaced.

Rick Walker ASEMT

Until next week Maintain Your Vehicle for Safety, Dependability and Value



"Certifying the Automotive Professional"

Send all questions to Ask Rick care of Rick's Automotive • 1001 East Main Street • Cherryville, NC 28021 or call 704-435-3801

Opinion Page Policy

The Herald welcomes your letters to the editor for publication in each Thursday's paper. All letters must be signed, and for verification purposes include the address and phone number. Letters should be limited to 500 words.

Mail your letter to Editor, The Herald, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086; fax to (704) 739-0611; or e-mail to KMH.Letters@kingsmountain-herald.com

Letters sent by fax and e-mail must also include name, mailing address and phone number for verification purposes.

Letters may be edited. Letters to the editor and columnists who appear on the editorial page do not necessarily represent the views of the Kings Mountain Herald.