

# Opinions

## Editorial:

### We must come together under Obama

The voters have spoken. Barack Obama will be president in 2009, and it is crucial that all of us support him as he deals with two wars, an economic crisis, energy problems, and environmental concerns.

It is important that we recognize that we have elected an honorable, intelligent, and capable leader.

The name-calling and character assassination that was so much a part of the recent political campaign was frightening for some, but simply not accurate. So let's get some facts straight as we work to make our new President successful.

For one, Obama was never a Muslim. He is a Christian, and has been for a number of years.

Two, the fact that Barack Obama Hussein II has a name which some associate with radical Muslims was not his decision as to whether he wanted to be named after his father. His father left the family when Obama was two years old. "I don't think anyone had the idea I would be running for political office when they named me," he jokes.

Three, much was made by some Internet bloggers of Obama's alleged association with radical William Ayers. Obama's contact with Ayers was limited to sitting on a Chicago anti-poverty board with him and accepting a \$200 campaign contribution when Obama ran for reelection. Likewise the charge that Obama "associated" with radical author and labor organizer Saul Alinsky is another stretch, as Alinsky died in 1972 when Obama was all of 11 years old.

There are other baseless claims, of course, just as there were baseless claims against McCain when McCain ran

against George Bush.

Those who have taken the trouble to read Obama's interesting and enlightening books, and who have taken the time and made the effort to truly research this individual, are usually impressed with his intelligence, his understanding of how government works, his knowledge of world affairs, his humility, and his basic values, even if they do not agree with all of his political programs.

His personal history shows that he not only talks the talk of bringing people together, he walks the walk, as he did as president of the Harvard Law Review, with its 80 liberal and conservative editors.

We should, regardless of our political leanings, also be proud of the fact that a majority of U.S. voters have finally broken the racial barrier for the presidency. Although breaking barriers should never be the reason for voting a certain way, we Americans believe that any qualified individual, whether Black, White, Latino, Oriental, American Indian, male, or female, can grow up to be President of these United States.

As we believe in Democracy, we also have to believe in diversity.

The talents of every individual and group are needed to solve the multitude of domestic and foreign challenges. We CAN come together, as Sen. John McCain so eloquently stated in his concession speech.

Yes we can.

-Dwight Connelly

## "Better him than me!"

Ever have one of those moments when you see something bad happening to somebody else? Maybe you feel impelled to be a Good Samaritan: to help them or warn them. Then your common sense takes over, you stop for a minute, then think to yourself, "Thank God, it isn't me!" Sure you have. Be honest. You know you have. We all have. It's part of our "human nature". I call it the "Whew!" Factor.

That's sort of the way I feel for Barack Obama, the history-making former Senator from Illinois, and our soon-to-be President.

I can't say I feel sorry for him, because he reached the pinnacle to which he aspired. And I must say he is certainly to be admired for all his hard work. It has brought him this far. "Good work," I say. He has reached the throne of power of what was, and by many accounts, still is one of the greatest nations ever to grace the stage of history. I hope his wife now has a better view on her being an American.

I wish him luck in the next four years in unraveling this tangled mess with which his predecessors left us. I don't envy him, so the "Whew" factor kicks in and I would most likely say to him, were I to meet him, "Better you than me!" Maybe he's already heard that comment from a few of his supporters and friends.

President-elect Obama will now have to draw from whatever wealth and depth of experience he has garnered over his few short years in the Senate in order to help wrestle with the major dilemmas currently facing this nation. I know what he has said he is going to do; I've heard his commercials. There he faced no angry feedback or digging in of the political heels by members of the House or Senate bent on standing in his way. Come the day after inauguration, he will step into reality. We will then see if he has what it takes to stand up, throw his weight around, and get the job done, for all Americans.



## POWELL'S NOTEBOOK

Thing is, he just seems to me to be too much of a nice guy. And that's what bothers me most, I guess.

Does Obama REALLY have what it takes to, as my grandfather used to say, "Cut the mustard" in the rarified leadership role he now occupies? Does he have what it takes to truly lead this great nation, or is he just another smiling politician? I guess time will tell. And we have four years to see the results, good or bad.

My son, staunch young Republican that he is, called me, after the results were in, wailing and moaning about how he couldn't wait to get out of semi-nary. I asked him, "Why?" "So I can move to another country. America will soon become a socialist state, at worst, and the liberals will have us all living and working on communes!" That's actually not exactly how he said it, but it's pretty damn close. "Calm down," says I. "While President Barack may be a wee bit more left of center than most, I don't think it's fair to judge the poor guy just yet. I mean, he hasn't even placed his hand on the Good Book and taken the oath of office! Give the guy a chance." I reminded him that he survived the Clinton years, and I survived the Carter years, so there's always a light (of sorts) at the end of every rainbow, even if a Democrat occupies the Oval Office.

"Daddy," he says (he still calls me that and he's 25 years old, for crying out loud!), "sometimes I don't get you. I know you're a registered Republican, yet you don't always vote the straight ticket. You're a solid GOP kind of guy, and are very conservative Biblically. You will blast anyone, Democrat or Republican who leans a little too far to the

left in a heartbeat, especially on things that really matter morally and ethically with you, yet you're ready to give the guy a break? What's up with that?"

I said, "Son, I feel sorry for him, O.K.? He seems a decent chap, and he appears to be sincere about what he says, especially when it comes to talking about giving the middle class and those who are poor a better chance at things. Now, here he has gone and gotten himself elected to the Presidency and it's basically crunch time for him and his those he brings on board with him, when he gets into office."

We both agreed Obama is heading into some scary economic and tumultuous waters, left roiling by a swiftly drowning "Dubya" and his buddies, and the poor kid is smiling like he's got it all under control. For some reason, that scares me.

"Why does that scare you, Dad?" asked my seminarian.

"Well," I replied, "It almost makes me question his seriousness about the issues. You know, just how quickly he'll take things into hand and start solving all our problems. After all, the liberal media has played him up to be larger than life; the new political 'übermench' of 21st century America, if you will. All I can say, is I hope he has a level head and hasn't taken what's been said about him too seriously."

"Maybe he won't," said my son. "Maybe he has great common sense and will remember from whence he came, and what was taught him by his beloved, late grandmother." "I believe he will do just that," I tell him.

Later, as I hung up the phone, I couldn't help but think again, "Poor Barack. He's got his work piloting the American Ship of State cut out for him."

But, hey! What do I know, right? Better him than me!

by Michael E. Powell  
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## 42¢ Forum...

### Letters to the Editor

#### 'Thumbs up' to DOT

To the Editor:

For all the citizens of Kings Mountain and all through traffic that use East King thoroughfare, a big thumbs up to DOT and Gary Spangler for the much needed resurfacing. We will keep our fingers crossed, hoping West King will be on schedule in early 2009. Thanks again to the NCDOT staff.

Jerry Mullinax,  
Ward 3 City Councilman

#### 'Rest of the story' on liquor by drink petition at church polling place

To the Editor:

On Election Day at 0830 I was told there were folks on our parking lot soliciting signatures for a Liquor by the Drink referendum. I immediately went out and explained that they were on private property and should move to the public sidewalk across the street. They said since we were a public polling place I had no right to ask them to leave. I told them I disagreed and they politely told me they would leave.

I returned to my office, trusting them to keep their word. Shortly, their lawyer came to tell me they were within their rights and that we had surrendered our rights when we agreed to be a polling site. I assured her that if such was the case that we would abide by the law but changes would be made before the next time.

I then placed two signs on our vans stating that Second Baptist Church in no way supported this petition. Next I called the Cleveland County Board of Elections leaving a voice mail concerning the matter and asking for clarification of our rights as a polling site. Soon afterward I was told the matter was being dealt with by the Board of Elections and local polling officials. After I left for a meeting in Shelby that morning a representative of the petition gatherers came into our office and told our secretary that "out of respect for the church (which they had not had before nor did they show to other churches that day) they were leaving."

My thanks to them for honoring our position and a special thanks to the Cleveland County Board of Elections officials who protected our rights and the rights of the petition gatherers.

Now you know "the rest of the story" and the true facts. Sadly, some were duped into signing the petition (telling me so personally). If you were one of them, please call the petition gatherers and the Board of Elections and ask that your name be removed., Thank you.

JAMES T. LOCHRIDGE JR.  
Pastor, Second Baptist Church  
Kings Mountain

## Mergers

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Currier said that, over the years, Southern Industrial has maintained a close working relationship with Gibson Industrial and Kings Mountain is the ideal location for the combined companies to locate.

Southern Industrial has assumed the ongoing operations of Gibson and has begun offering all of its services working out of Gibson's location, the 110,000 square foot York Road building leased by the company which now houses forklifts and other equipment, small and heavy, ranging up to 60,000 pounds or more.

David Bland, who is in charge of Southern's project management and business development, said that because of Kings Mountain's proximity to I-85 and beyond that the plant is poised to service small and large jobs.

Paul Gibson and Ken Milem, owners of Gibson Industrial, will stay on and work with Southern Industrial with offices in Raleigh, Wilmington, Columbia, SC and now the Charlotte Metro Area/Kings Mountain. Earl Johnson Jr. is chairman of Southern Industrial. The 45-year-old company is headquartered in Raleigh and the original owners are still active in the business.

Currier said Southern Industrial has doubled its initial employment - from 15 to 30 workers - and plans to hire 50-60 additional employees by next year. With expected growth, Currier anticipates a goal of 100 employees in the next couple of years.

Bland, Currier, Milem and Gibson share a total of nearly 200 years experience in the machinery and installation business in a corporation which has added over 200 jobs (from 520 to 860) company-wide.

"We are a flexible business and it's exciting to become involved on this I-85 industrial corridor where we can do a small day job for a customer in town or a several million dollar project for a Fortune 500 company that could take a longer period of time to complete," said Bland.

Currier said he is "excited with the quality of the workforce in the Kings Mountain area," saying that they like to hire employees with a background in machinery but will train new employees. The company specializes in industrial construction, industrial electrical construction, rigging and machinery moving, industrial plant maintenance and fabrication and crane services, among others.

"The merger of these fine companies is good news for Kings Mountain which means more jobs for our people," said Mayor Rick Murphy.

## Agencies

Continued from Page 1

Drive, which helps bring Christmas to local families and children. Murphrey's Scooter Shed is collecting toys and donations for its 14th annual Toy Run, set to begin at 11 a.m. Saturday, November 22, 2008. Goodies from the Toy Run will be distributed to the Shriners Hospital, the Masonic Home for Children, and to the KMPD Toy

Drive.

Murphrey's Toy Run will take off from the Scooter Shed at 11 a.m. A police escort will leave promptly at noon. This year's Toy Run will feature a live performance by the Crimson Rose band and barbecue.

The KMPD received overwhelming support from the community last year. They raised \$3,400 in cash donations and received enough toys to bring Christ-

mas to over 244 children, who otherwise would not have received a visit from Santa. But with the record amount of job loss the city has seen over the past few months the need for donations has grown. More and more children may wake up to empty stockings this Christmas without the help of their neighbors.

KM.Police Lt. Det. Lisa Proctor said that they find out which children and families are in need through

local school counselors and administrators. They also discover cases of need through word of mouth. Each case is looked into to determine true need.

Donations for this year's Toy Drive can be brought to the KM Police Department or dropped off at other participating locations. To find a collection center near you or for more information, call 704-734-0444.

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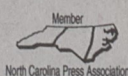
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