

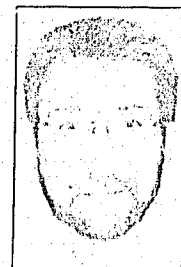
# Viewpoint

"Although I disagree with everything you say, I will defend unto death your right to say it"

## Coleman, and I-S, need to move on

Come Saturday, it'll be one month since Howard Coleman was suspended, with full pay, from his job as superintendent of the Iredell-Statesville Schools. The board of education took that action Aug. 8, pending completion of an investigation into several instances of financial mismanagement on the school district's administrative level.

Editor's Corner



Dale Gowing

Coleman is spending his days, we suppose, playing golf or fishing — all on the taxpayers' dime. We don't really know, because he's not talking to the media. When I called him Tuesday, for example, he refused to talk and then hung up.

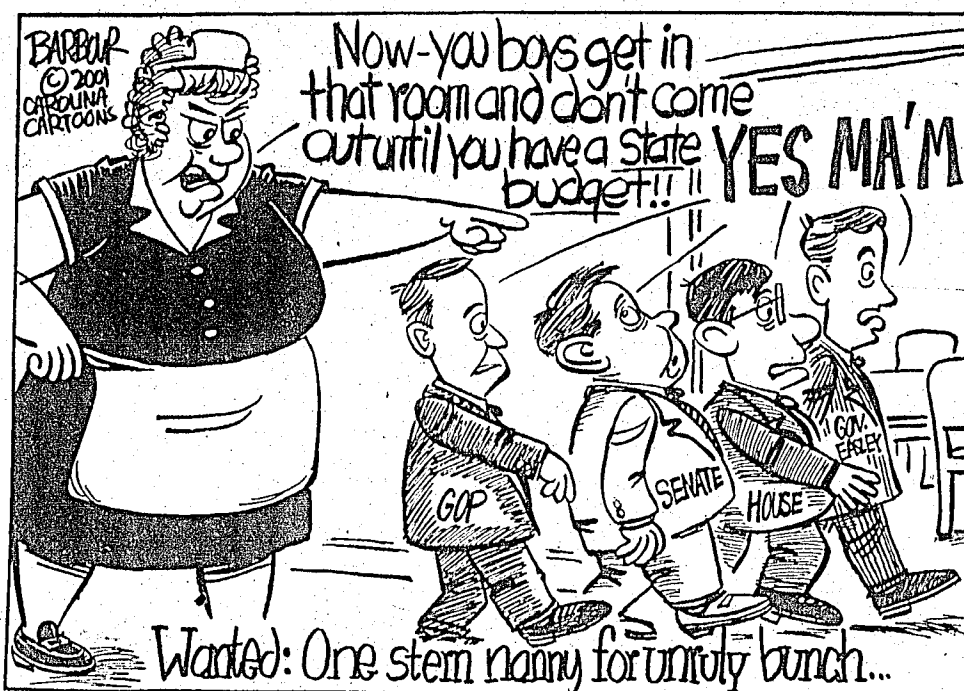
Now, if Coleman were to publicly comment on the predicament he's in, he'd no doubt say that he's biding his time until the investigators and auditors prove that he did no wrong in the cases of fiscal foul play that have engulfed the county school system.

But, surely, if he's vindicated, Coleman doesn't plan to return, does he? Not a chance. He's been humiliated among his employees and colleagues, and no longer commands any loyalty — especially from teachers, who stand to lose hundreds of dollars apiece if their supplemental pay increases are revoked for 2001-02. Losing that pay is a likely offshoot of budget cuts made necessary by the Keystone Kops-like handling of finances over the past few years by the school district.

Furthermore, this isn't a matter of whether Coleman directly had a hand in the mess. I don't believe he did.

But he was the general in charge of the troops when they pillaged the countryside, so to speak. Ultimately, the blame for the problems that fell on Coleman. The board of education was correct in suspending him — it was all they could do under

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## Let's get away from it all

Are you experiencing low morale, a decrease in energy level, or a lack of patience with others? Do you tend to take comments at work, school, or home personally and become defensive when challenged? Do you find yourself saying, "I wish I could just get away from it all?"

You are not alone. Thousands of people are subject to similar feelings. Is there a solution? There is, and it's worth another look! We can learn a lesson from the United States Armed Forces in dealing with our old drudges.

More than 30 years ago our military leaders noticed sagging morale among combat troops. It was determined that the rigors and stress of military life posed a threat to the health and careers of some of the nation's toughest soldiers. A solution had to be discovered. The answer came to be known as "R and R," which stands for "rest and recuperation."

A soldier assigned to a war zone, hazardous duty, or an isolated area is granted two weeks leave in some interesting location such as Honolulu. Once in the exotic spot, the soldier can relax, be with his family, or do anything he wants for 14 days. In short, he is encouraged to forget about his military duty and take a break. The result? When he returns to duty he is rested and better equipped to complete his assignment.

Is this principle of "R and R" something new? Not really. The name is unique, but the concept is as old as the Bible. The Bible is the textbook on effective living, and it clearly teaches that there are times when it is in our best interest to get away from duty and responsibility in order to rest and recuperate. Sometimes this means getting away from everything — job, home, telephone, and even other people.

I suggest that we all need regular periods of "R and R" if we are to maintain the quality of life that God wants us to enjoy. Jesus practiced this principle — "And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there." (Matthew 14:23, NKJV). He encouraged His disciples to follow His example — "Then Jesus said, 'Let's get away from the crowds for a while and rest.'" (Mark 6:31, NLT).

It is necessary to retreat from the stress of everyday tension to renew our spiritual and physical strength. So go ahead — GET AWAY FROM IT ALL! Following the principle of "R and R" will refresh you and make your life more successful. So if you are saying, "I wish I could just get away from it all," then go ahead and take some time away.

Steve Gouge is the Senior Pastor at Southside Baptist Church in Mooresville. Church services can be seen on cable channel 25 at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. every Sunday. Dr. Gouge can be reached by e-mail at [Dsgouge1@aol.com](mailto:Dsgouge1@aol.com)

By DONNA LARKIN

During my years of parenting, there have been many decisions to make, some short-term and some that will affect my sons for their entire lives. I, as I'm sure all parents do, have made mistakes, and there are things I would do differently if I had it to do over again...but one thing I know I wouldn't

## 'It's Worth Another Look'

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## The SAT myth

Last week's media coverage of our public schools' Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores is indicative of how beholden we are to standardized tests.

Tests like the SAT, we think, are an objective way to measure the success of our schools because they offer a standard measure; there is no difference from classroom to classroom, school to school, district to district, or state to state.

The absence of questions that require open-ended answers — like essays — and the use of answer sheets that are scored by machines, not people, add to the perceived credibility of standardized tests as models of objectivity. That perceived objectivity is so important to us because we want to believe deeply in the meritocracy of American life. We want evidence presented to us that confirms that factors such as race and socio-economic class do not influence one's ability to achieve; we want to know that successful people have earned their position, just as unsuccessful people have earned theirs.

But even the most objective of standardized tests is incapable of offering us the comfort we seek when looking for validation of the American meritocracy. Consider last year's SAT performance gap between white students and black students in North Carolina. Black students scored an average of 835, while white students scored an average of 1041 — a difference of an astounding 206 points. The national disparity last year between white and black students was 201 points, only

slightly less than in North Carolina. There was also a performance gap last year between North Carolina's Latino students and white students. Latino students scored an average of 975 compared to white students' 1041, a difference of 66 points. And American Indian students last year scored an average of 891 in North Carolina, 150 points lower than the average score for white students.

Even the College Board, which owns and administers the SAT, acknowledges that test results reflect non-academic factors. On its web site announcing the state's latest scores, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction posted a disclaimer from the College Board stating that the test results should not be used to rank schools, districts and states — as many in the public and media have done and will continue to do — because "demographic and other non-school factors can have a strong effect on scores."

That is a conclusion that Peter Sacks verifies in his work, *Standardized Minds*. Included in Sacks' evidence is a host of studies by universities and government agencies, including a 1991 article from the *American Educational Research Journal* that found that a person taking the SAT can expect to score an extra 30 points for every \$10,000 in his parents' income, as well as a 1995 U.S. Department of Education study that found that a nationwide performance gap of 91 points separated white students from black students on the verbal portion of the SAT.

The evidence, Sacks concludes, is plain: race and socio-economic class have an influence on a person's ability to achieve on standardized tests like the SAT. On average, non-white students and poor students — no matter

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the law at this point, although most board members would have preferred firing him.

My guess is that right now, Coleman is working the phones to find another job. He almost left a year ago to join an old friend, who had become superintendent of

the Lincoln County Schools; don't be surprised to see that scenario resurface.

What's sad is that Coleman is willing to sit at home and draw full pay from a financially troubled school system when everyone knows he has no intention of returning. He needs to do the right thing, right now, and resign, saving the board of

education the headache of trying to fire him or coax him into leaving. If he doesn't, he'll be sending a negative message to the teachers in whatever school district he joins next.

It's been a month since the Iredell-Statesville Schools need to move on, but that can't happen until Coleman does.

For more information, visit [www.circumcision.org](http://www.circumcision.org) or call Lark in at 704-528-9363.

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## Memories of home: Peanuts, persimmons and pumpkins

Editor's note: This is part 101 in a continuing series on the "Recollections of Mooresville in the 1880's," as chronicled during the 1930's by the Rev. J.I. Goodman of Fleming, Colo. in a weekly column in the old Mooresville Enterprise newspaper. This series is compiled and edited by Iredell historian O.C. Stonestreet III.

Oct. 25, 1935

A recent communication in "The Enterprise" by Rev. Gilbreath Kerr regarding school examinations in 1885 at Prospect Academy interested me much and also awoke memories of the past, some of which had long been dormant. Although I have no recollection of that event, it was my privilege to know all those who participated therein, teachers and pupils, save two of the girls, who appear lost to memory, and one boy.

A little later I was a pupil there under both Professor Kerr and Professor Leazar. And having been reared from childhood in that community, I enjoyed the privileges of a member at Prospect Church, there linger in my mind many dear memories of such associations.

Seventy years have rolled by since that school exercise. Of those participating therein, all have passed to the beyond, I think, except John Jamison, Cowan Raymer, Lenora Jamison and Minnie McCorkle. Some of them did not remain with us long, scarcely more than youth, then one by one, and only recently John Kennerly, James Jamison and Robert West. One of them became an M.D.; one a teacher; two,

and his, none of it was vulgar, offensive gossip. He had a good word for everybody, and represented everything in brilliant colors, so much so that it delighted my heart to have so good reports.

An echo is striking my ears drums as I write tonight. It sounds like the letter "P." Now P may be an abbreviation for many and sundry things, persimmons, for instance. They should be ripening now in your timbers. We have none here. Did not "The Enterprise" very recently tell about a birthday dinner in Mooresville, at which a certain guest devoured an entire 'simmon pie and still lived to tell the tale?

P may also stand for peanuts for which your state is also noted. Hot roasted peanuts before bed time with pleasant companions. Not to be gotten here. True, we can buy state roasted ones at some grocery stores; but who wants such? Instead, we have pop corn, roasting on street corners, hot and buttery. Many term it a delicacy. The consumption of it is heavy. In some sections you may see fields of it. This farm annually produces several hundred acres of it. Just now in harvest. One of our most profitable crops.

Again, P is the first letter in pumpkin, especially attractive to cows and that species of bipeds, yelpetmen. Who doesn't like pies made therewith? No more delicious pie was ever concocted, this writer thinks.

J. I. Goodman  
Fleming, Colo.

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