

# Viewpoint

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

## Some niceties among the mayhem

Good and kindly deeds are abounding in the wake of last week's catastrophes in New York and Washington D.C. Many have been documented by the media, many others haven't. Here's another:

Technicians at Moore's office of Adelphi began the work day of Tuesday, Sept. 11, facing the displeasure of having to cut off the cable TV service of dozens of customers.

Called "non-pay disconnects" by the company, those customers hadn't paid their bills in two to three months.

"We don't like to do it, but eventually you just have to turn (the service) off," explains Bill Bethune, general manager of the South Iredell-North Mecklenburg regional office, noting that they disconnect 175 to 200 customers a month.

But about 9 a.m., the horrifying scenes of destruction began rolling across our screens. Several employees came to Bethune and asked if Adelphi could delay cutting off customers' service in light of the extraordinary circumstances.

"They felt it was important that people be able to keep up with the news, to see what was going on, and they were right," Bethune says. "We called all the (delinquent) customers we could reach and told them we'd let them stay on a few days."

"A lot of them then came in and paid their bills."

The Print Shop in downtown Mooresville, along with its affiliate in Charlotte, printed 500 red-white-and-blue posters — depicting an American Eagle with the words "United We Stand" and "God Bless America" — and distributed them free to downtown businesses last Friday.

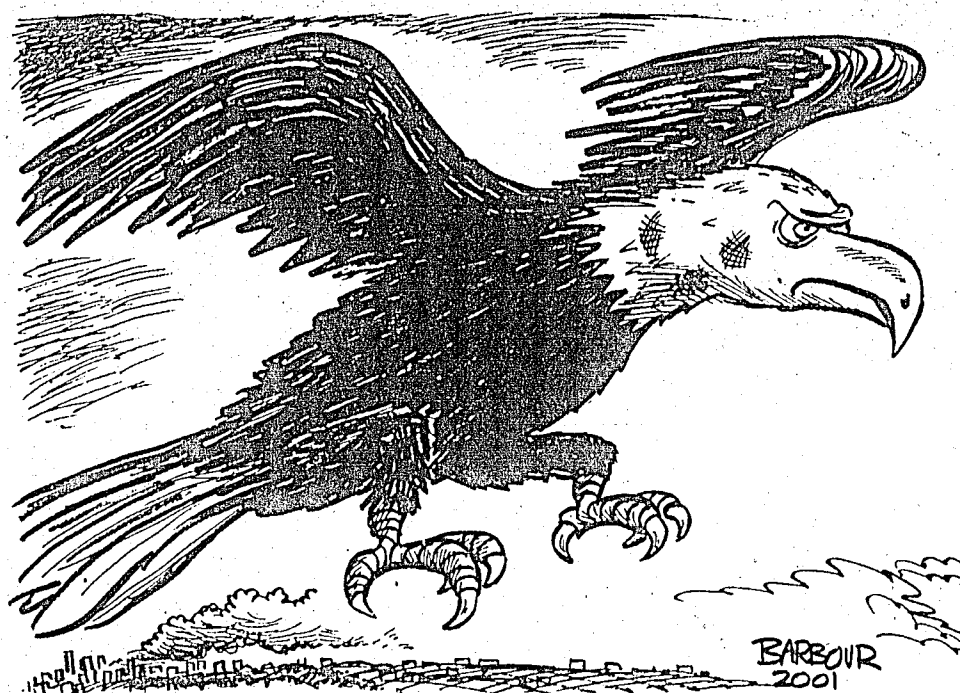
Another 2,000 were due off the presses Tuesday, and will be available to anyone beginning today at the store, 152 N. Main St. They're free, but a Red Cross donation jar will accept any gift you care to make.

Much like America's entry into World War II, people young and old are voicing enthusiasm for enlisting in the military following last week's attacks. "We've had calls from people wanting to know the age limit for enlisting," points out Pfc. Jim Bond of Iredell's Army Recruiting Station in Statesville. "A 50-year-old veteran wanted to know if he could enlist again."

"We've had a lot of young people who are interested in going to war. That's not how I hope it's going to be."

Shame, shame, shame: Somebody stole a \$75 U.S. flag from the flag pole in the front yard of Brenda Baker's home on Cedar Street. I know flags are hard to come by these days, but doesn't it sort of cancel out your patriotism when you steal one?

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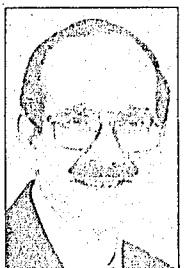
## Prayer must replace prejudice

Last Tuesday's attacks of terror on American symbols of military and material power is now burned into our memory forever. The unthinkable happened. A group of extremists attacked the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and the civilized world mourns with us. However, there were some notable exceptions.

Television crews in some Middle Eastern countries filmed rowdy celebrations of Arabs in the streets of Egypt, Jordan, and the West Bank of Israel. Women wagged their tongues in obvious delight; men flashed the victory sign ("V"), others passed out candy as an expression of sweetness for the moment.

For me, that image is also indelibly stored in my memory. Could this possibly be the reaction of the majority of the Muslim population in the world? After careful reflection, I dismiss this as being the norm. Why? Having identified several Arabs in the course of my ministry, every one of them have condemned any and all acts of terrorism. We must guard against the mentality that brands all people with certain racial features as the evil enemy.

The desire to seek retribution can lead people to make mistakes aplenty. Historians record the unfortunate barbarism that was expressed toward Asian people when Pearl Harbor was bombed on Dec. 7, 1941. Thousands of Asian-Americans were rounded



Dr. Steve Gouge

To my dearest brother-in-law Mike and all my many friends serving in the U.S. armed forces:

I can't even begin to imagine the fear, but immense pride and conviction, swelling in your hearts right now.

While the nation is mourning the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of Americans, you are waiting for the call, that one command, that will change your life — and probably all of ours — forever.

When I first watched the airplanes crash into the World Trade Center last week, then heard the report that the Pentagon was on fire and another hijacked plane crashed in Pennsylvania, I, like every other American, was horrified.

I thought about the victims — those in the plane to know well before us what was about to transpire, and those who had no clue. I thought about the families of the victims — mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, spouses and children — and the way it would shatter their hearts and lives.

Then I thought about you. And it was then that I realized the war had only just begun. Nobody really knows what's going to happen, but what we do know is your Commander-in-Chief has declared war against terrorism. And any time he does that, it means you have a big job to do.

We're all preparing for the worst, fully aware that we may have to go weeks or months without seeing or hearing from you ... and my heart aches for you and for the unknown.

But before any decisions are made or any actions taken, I wanted to let you know how much I admire you and love you for who you are and for the willingness you have to protect me, my family, and millions of other peo-

## 'It's Worth Another Look'

ed up, arrested and moved to refugee camps far from their homes. That action was tantamount to the Trail of Tears our ancestors forced upon the Cherokee Indians.

Now as we sit glued to our TVs, we are hearing accounts such as that of an elderly man in New England attempting to run over a Pakistani pedestrian and a Molotov cocktail being tossed at a Muslim Mosque in Texas. American Airlines, which had two planes hijacked in the Tuesday of terror, did the right thing by issuing a directive for all employees to treat Arab passengers with respect, not revenge.

Let's not repeat past mistakes. Certainly evil people perpetrated this unconscionable act, and they should be brought to justice. But let's reject the notion that all people of Arab descent or Muslim faith are the enemy. No doubt innocent Arab-Americans also perished in the attack.

As we sort out all the details of this disaster, let's recognize that prayer is our greatest asset. When you pray, remember the many Arab-American citizens who may suffer because of the misplaced anger of Americans against a faceless enemy.

Rev. Steve Gouge is 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. Rev. Gouge can be reached by e-mail at [DSgouge1@aol.com](mailto:DSgouge1@aol.com)



Jaime Gatton

## To those who serve ...

I want to tell you how proud I am of you and how grateful I am that you are willing to follow in the footsteps of the brave women and men before you — those who fought so hard to establish the freedom you're getting ready to defend.

(My 4-year-old daughter) Daisy told me she was going to assure her kindergarten teacher that there was nothing to worry about. "My uncle Mike is my uncle, and he's going to go beat up those bad guys that flew their airplane into that castle," she told me.

To be able to look at this with the innocence of a child ... But I can't, we can't. Most of us have an idea about what's coming; some people are even predicting World War III. It troubles me to know, each time I hear from you, that you know so much more than I do about what's going on and what's to be, and are having to face it all without my reassurance that everything's going to be okay.

So many people here are heavy-hearted. How quickly our feelings of horror and remorse turned to outrage — so much so that if minds and hearts could start a war, we would've probably already fought it — and won it — for you.

While some people are terrified to send their loved ones off to war, others already have you there, naively chanting to blow the coward's responsible for our hurt off the face of the world.

But that's really easy for people to say — those of us who are sending you to the front lines while we carry on about our lives with few other worries than how you're doing and who you're bombing.

I'm not the one who will be there, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with you as you carry around the tremendous burden of punishing the aggressors while defending me, whose sole physical involvement will be through watching your successes on TV from the comfort of my home.

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## Letters to the editor

To the editor,

This letter is to the unknown person using the Mooresville Transfer Station between 2 and 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 2. I want you to know the American flag you so thoughtlessly discarded with your trash has been taken to VFW Post 2031 in Statesville for proper disposal.

Your total disregard for the most recognized symbol of our country was so upsetting, I could barely get the words out to ask a county worker to retrieve the flag for me. I'm proud and thankful to be an American and live in this country.

An American flag, no matter its condition, should always be treated with respect and dignity. The next time you have a flag that requires disposal, please take it to a VFW Post; they will make sure it is taken care of in the proper manner.

Sara Nestler  
Mooresville

To the editor,

Guess what? I became a hero today. I met some great people before work. I stopped by on the way.

I didn't run into a burning building, I didn't go off to war. But what I accomplished today made my confidence soar.

Some say I'm not too brave or that I'm a "stick in the mud." But today I saved a life; I went to the Red Cross and donated blood.

Lori McDaniels  
Mooresville

To the editor,

Today in September, a date I don't want to remember, lots of people were killed. Two planes from Boston made a destruction bigger than the very last will.

A piece of the Pentagon was hit, too — another plane crashed before, and now let's add the plane 2+2.

Four planes hit, thousands were killed, there are still two planes in the air, ready to strike in fear.

My only wish, my only hope, that the people who were killed will not be forgot-

## Saving more babies

The writer is Chairman of N.C. Safe Kids, based in Raleigh.

By JIM LONG

Fragile, helpless and innocent, your infant enters the world completely dependent on you. From the moment you leave the hospital, you take steps to keep her safe.

You buckle her in a rear-facing car seat for the ride home, bathe her in bath water you've checked for the right temperature, and tuck her into a crib with a label that assures you it meets national safety stan-

ten. That this day will quickly end, and will not happen ever again.

All will rest in peace, the commander of this incident will be captured.

So this world can have a chance to sleep.

And the people of our nation can rebuild the two towers that fell.

The hurt and weak people grow strong, and this nation continues, forever, just like a happy little song.

Kaylin Bugica  
age 11  
Mooresville

To the editor,

Broken, twisted and crumbled it all came crashing down.

From 110 stories high they tumbled to the ground.

What once stood mighty and tall for all the world to see is but a part of our memory missing from the skyline of NYC.

Not just these structures are missing but our family and loved ones are gone. Destroyed by hatred of evil souls who brought misery to our home.

They came like the cowards they are, hiding behind women and children, too.

Using their bodies as shields turning to black our skies of blue.

Their miserable lives were worthless, our people worth their weight in gold.

American lives cut short by hatred. In their veins blood runs black and cold.

But the statue of our people won't crumble like mortar and brick.

Because we'll come together side by side, by each other we'll stick.

We've only been made stronger by this cowardly act on our land.

Make no mistake about America because united we all will stand.

We'll work together as family to rid the world of this misery.

By all methods made possible on land as well as by sea.

So terrorists, keep this in mind: look over your shoulder every day.

For on your heels you will see a stronger, mightier USA.

Vivian Meletis  
Mooresville

## The booming 1880s: Town sees economic growth

Editor's note: This is part 103 in a continuing series on the "Reflections" of Mooresville in the 1880's, as chronicled during the 1930's by the Rev. J.J. 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.

Nov. 27, 1935

To me there come frequent echoes of the time when Mooresville was "a-borning," still in its swaddling garments, through the 1870s and '80s. At the close of the 1870s our business interests were small, arising principally from our splendid school, the Mooresville Academy. This had been segregated a few dozen families. Our business houses were few. Harris, Sherrill & Co.; McNeely and Connelly; and Goodman and Son in general merchandise; Beatty's Drug Store; W.N. Johnston, and Wilkerson and Hethcox with small building shops; Dan Perry's cabinet shop; Joe Hudgin's blacksmith shop.

With the opening of the Eighties, several others came into existence. The Grange Store, with Ezekiel McNeely as manager; J.F. McLean & Co., groceries; Templeton and Williams, saw mill and

## Echoes of the Past

flour mill; Freeze Ludwick and Co., general merchandise; Melchor Bros., planing mill; Woodburn and Wyoff, builders; R.H. Tomlinson, tinware; Sam Newell, confectioneries. Two livery barns, H.W. and C.K. McNeely, and Ed McCorkle; also three shoe repair shops, Hutchinson, Barns and Coley.

Since then fifty-five years have rushed by. Of all those directly connected with these establishments not a baker's dozen are alive, so far as this writer is aware. There remain Pink Mills, W.C. Johnston, James Lee Harris and this scribe. Are there others? One has just left our number, Daniel E. Overcash, of Freeze, Ludwick & Co. Just blooming into manhood was Dan at that time.

Physically Dan was not robust, yet his gearing was long in wearing out. A busy, quiet, unostentatious man was he. Always a gentleman and a builder. He was the support of his widowed mother through old age, three times married, tribal head of a large family, with varied business interests, always a leader in Christian activities. With a small num-

ber of like faith he did much towards the organization of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, being one of the original officials, and the last one to lay aside his guardianship. Probably a half dozen or so of the church charter members are now living, of whom the writer is proud of the small part he had in that organization.

Thus it is that old things pass away and things become new. St. Mark's Church has done, and is doing a noble work. It was not easy to establish by the few Lutherans in the town, nor did it have a mushroom growth.

Mooresville had a population of probably eight hundred souls in 1885. Where are they now? It would be interesting to know how many of that number are even alive, at the end of that period. Some were scattered abroad, some are still with you. But nearly all have served their day and generation, and joined the Innumerable throng in the Beyond.

To each of these old-time fellow citizens, the writer sends greetings, and would say, God bless you as you get near home, day by day.

J.I. Goodman  
Fleming, Colo.

## Saving babies

Continued from page 10A

landing surface. Head injuries are associated with the majority of deaths and severe injuries resulting from falls. Because falls are associated with a child's curiosity and development of motor skills, babies are at the greatest risk of fall-related death and injury.

Infants are at greater risk from falls associated with furniture, stairs and baby walkers. Nine out of 10 children in America will use a baby walker before their second birthday. Shockingly, almost half of these infants will wind up injured — many severely — as a result of falling down stairs or tipping over while using the walker.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), in 1999 infant or baby walkers were responsible for some 8,800 hospital emergency visits by children younger than 15 months. Earlier this month, the AAP called for a ban on the manufacture and sale of infant walkers because they increase the risk of head injuries and falls and delay normal motor development.

Parents think their child is safe in a walker, as long as they are close by. However, their mobility enables them to get into trouble very quickly — traveling as fast as four feet per second.

All baby walkers manufactured after June 30, 1997, must meet American Society for Test and Materials voluntary and mandatory standards. These walkers must be wider than a 36-inch doorway or have a brake.

## Gatton

Continued from page 10A

But at the same time, I know it's your job, and this is when it really counts.

I also know your heart. I know how caring and compassionate you are ... how willing you are to sacrifice your life to save mine and a million others.

And I want you to know — even though we're sending you off to do a big job, and sometimes we may be so distracted with what's going on that we forget about your feelings of fear — that our prayers, love, undying support and unfailing respect will be with you always.

May God protect each of you as you go to protect us.

With all my love,  
Jaime

Jaime Gatton is a Tribune staff writer.

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