

Viewpoint

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

If it saves us money, what's the big deal?

I've noted with amusement the most recent legislative spat in Raleigh, with lawmakers at odds over the Division of Motor Vehicles' new policy of inserting paid advertisements into license tag renewal notices mailed to N.C. motorists.

The latest ads are from Nissan, promoting two of its 2002 model cars. By including the small fliers in the tag-renewal notices, the state is slashing the cost of mailing those notices by nearly 50 percent.

Editor's Corner

But a few legislators, trying to appear righteous, argue that this effort to save taxpayer money is merely the first step toward the commercialization of government. Nonsense. It's an effort to save money on postage, period, and a wise move during a time of fiscal nervousness in Raleigh.

As somebody pointed out, utility companies have been cutting their mailing costs for years by including paid ads in their billing notices. Do I care? Heck, no. I open the bill and toss the ad, often never looking at it. It's a little more waste in my garbage can, but if it helps keep my utility bill lower, so much the better.

The same goes for ads included in license tag renewal notices. They don't signify that state government is endorsing the Nissan Maxima as the car we all oughta buy. It's a money-saving effort, pure and simple. And with the state budget being what it is, why any legislators are opposed to the ads is beyond me.

Commercialization of government? We've got bigger things to worry about. Besides, some think there are more than a few agencies of government that could benefit from being commercialized, or operated by the private sector. The schools, for instance. But that's another subject...

When it comes down to it, look at all the ways our government save money by accepting commercial sponsors. Police cars could ride around town with a "Joe's Bail Bonds" ad. on the bumper. Law firms could pay to hang their banners behind the judge in district court. In Washington, D.C., both of those industries — the bail bondsmen and lawyers — could realize a client windfall by sponsoring Congress. Lord knows, there's more than a few crooks in that bunch.

The point, though, is this:

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Write us a letter!

The Tribune welcomes your letters. We prefer letters dealing with local issues. All letters must be signed, list a full street address and telephone number. We reserve the right to edit for brevity. Deadline is noon Monday. Mail letters to: The Mooreville Tribune, P.O. Box 300, Mooreville, NC 28115, or fax to 664-3614.



Make friends wisely

Soon students will begin another year of academic and social development. This new year offers many challenges to parents, students, teachers and administrators. It seems to me, that parents dread sending their little "cherubs" to school more each year.

Perhaps it's because we used to perceive our schools as safe havens where our children could go to learn without undue alarm for their safety. Over the past few years, school violence has shocked our society into believing that no one is safe in the classroom today. The tragedy of Columbine High School still lingers in the recesses of our minds even though some see it as old news. Children and weapons don't go together! So when we hear of children toting firearms, we fear for their safety.

I am grateful for the measures that the Mooreville Graded School District and the Iredell-Statesville Schools have implemented to assure the protection and safety of each child.

I want to suggest that, as horrible as school violence is, there is a much greater threat to your child. It's an issue so widespread that every student will face this concern. What is this problem? It's worth another look!

First, let me describe this menace that every child faces. In December 1985, we moved from Johnson City, Tenn. to Charlotte. Since we moved in the middle of the school year, our children were forced to change schools at a most inopportune time. However, they responded like champions with great



Dr. Steve Gouge

'It's Worth Another Look'

attitudes and a willingness to find their "pecking order" in a new environment.

On the day we enrolled our girls at Windsor Park Elementary, we met Principal Walter Summerville. He was nearing retirement and spoke with a gruff, raspy voice that commanded attention. He spoke wisdom when he advised our daughters, "Don't make friends too fast. Let some time pass before you choose friends and cautiously decide who you will spend time with."

That was great advice then and now.

I am sure that you have guessed my urgent plea. Students: Be careful choosing your friends! The advice of a now-retired school principal that friends influence whom we ultimately become and that their influence can be either positive or even evil is well worth taking. The Bible says, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm" (Proverbs 13:20, NASB).

Parents, encourage your children to make the right kind of friends. Talk with them concerning their choices. Help them to develop their own list of qualities they should look for in a friend and encourage them to stick with it. I have seen good kids go desperately wrong because of pressure from their friends. We all suffer harm from companions who are foolish and sway us to do foolish things.

The Rev. Steve Gouge is senior pastor at Southside Baptist Church in Mooreville. His column appears every other Wednesday on the Tribune's Viewpoint page.

The debut of town's first pool

By O.C. STONESTREET III

We're in the dog days of summer, and activity is at a peak at Mooreville's municipal swimming pool. But excitement about the pool was really high 46 years ago, when the original facility behind the War Memorial building formally opened to the public on Tuesday, May 24, 1955.

That event had been a long time coming, but most people figured the \$72,818.00 was money well spent.

Local folks had some places for swimming before the town pool. There was Brown's Pool out on the Mt. Ulla Highway, which was a favorite place to go since its 1940 opening. Then there had been a pool in the old Stewart's Park which was bordered by Oak Street and West Park Avenue in town.

Other commercial establishments like Happy's Lake towards Kannapolis were popular. And, of course, there had always been the Catawba River.

The new municipal pool, however, was to have all the latest innovations, including dressing rooms with showers, a place to check your street clothes, a concession stand and lifeguards "on duty at all times."

You could even sign up for swimming lessons. The new pool at the War Memorial was 110 feet long by 44 feet wide, three feet deep at each end and gradually becoming five feet deep at the center. The so-called "diving wall" with two diving boards had a maximum depth of 11 feet.

Money for the pool had been raised by the Mooreville Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Tom Swann Post No. 1072, Veterans of Foreign Wars. Funds were collected by all sorts of groups from

Letters to the editor

Saving babies' lives is a 'no-brainer'

To the editor,

What if your state was 5th in the nation in infant deaths? What if your state was first in the occurrence of a birth defect of the spine and brain that caused death for some babies and crippling paralysis in others? What if your state also had a high incidence of other birth defects involving the face and heart that killed and maimed infants? What if, in addition to the physical and psychological costs these birth defects placed on affected children and their families, they cost the state millions of dollars a year?

Such is the situation in North Carolina.

What if there was a way to prevent many of these birth defects? What if it cost 1 million dollars per year for 5 years to prevent hundreds of birth defects, reduce infant mortality, and save millions of dollars? Would you make that cost effective investment? Seems like a "no brainer," doesn't it?

Well, it's not happening. In fact, at this moment in the budget process, the mothers and children of North Carolina will be lucky to receive \$200,000 for one year for a birth defects prevention program. The state pours millions of dollars into programs to give our children a good start from the time they are born. But what about all of the children who die at birth? What about the many others (approximately 1 in 33), who are born with a severe birth defect? What kind of a start do they get? They aren't even worth a million dollars a year.

Birth defects are the leading cause of infant mortality, and the neural tube defects spina bifida and anencephaly are some of the most common major malformations. Seventy percent of cases with neural tube defects can be prevented if women take a daily supplement of folic acid (400 g), usually as a multivitamin, for 3 months prior to becoming pregnant and then throughout their pregnancy.

Folic acid also prevents some cases of cleft lip and palate and heart defects. It is proven. It represents one of the greatest public health benefits of our lifetime and we don't have to make it work for our moms and their babies. We have had a Folic Acid Council in our state since 1995 and we have operated on a shoestring budget and the good will of individuals (including several legislators) and organizations like the March of Dimes, but

monetary support from the state has been minimal. South Carolina, over the same period, has spent approximately 1 million dollars a year to help their mothers and babies become aware of the benefits of folic acid. Over this time, their rates of neural tube defects have decreased by 50% and they have saved their state over 26 million dollars in health care related costs.

Right, it's a "no brainer." Saving babies' lives and making them healthier. Aren't our babies worth a million?

T.W. Sadler, Ph.D.
Co-chair, North Carolina Folic Acid Council
Director, Birth Defects Prevention Outreach, UNC-Chapel Hill

Thanks, Ice Cream Man, for memories

To the editor,

As the evening sun is setting low, the sounds of summer always make me smile. The playful laughter of children, the hum of scooters and bicycles wheeling down the street, the happy chatter of friends talking at the end of the driveway, and the joyful melody of the Ice Cream Truck.

The Ice Cream Truck is a staple of middle class America, at least in my mind. The all-too-familiar tunes, the money-toting children, and the yummy treats found inside the truck create memories for all who live along its path.

I remember the stir of excitement as I grasped, my own quarters and waited to be served by the smiling Ice Cream Man. Now I stand on my own front porch, and watch my children, now with dollars in hand, greet the still-smiling Ice Cream Man. I feel their excitement as they get to choose their treat and enjoy it refreshment on a warm summer evening. And yes, I still like to indulge myself occasionally, sometimes for the taste, but many times for the total experience.

It's funny how something so simple can still, in our complex world, create such joy. While stirring a grown-up memory, it creates new memories for our children to someday share with our grandchildren. I hope they will find the same joy in hearing the music from their front porches while watching their own children make delicious choices.

Thank you, Mr. Ice Cream Man, for reminding us of how simple life's pleasures really should be.

Karen Mauney
Mooreville

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A life spent honorably and well

Editor's note: This is part 96 in a continuing series on the "Recollections of Mooreville 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 Mooreville Enterprise newspaper. This series is compiled and edited by Iredell historian O.C. Stonestreet III.

August 8, 1935

Well, nearly a century has elapsed since two babies were born near Prospect Church, and in nearby homes. There they played together, attended the same schools, were trained in Prospect Church, have always dealt within several miles of their birthplace.

Both chose home-grown wives, and have never, I dare say, had cause to regret their selections. Neither has ever roamed afar by land or sea, both content to dwell within the narrow spaces of childhood. Both have been men of real worth, giving of their time, money and ability to the betterment of their fellow men.

No vast coins of gold will be their bequest to their children and to humanity; their names will not be known by many afar, but a worthwhile heritage — a life spent honor-

Echoes of the Past

ably and well — will they bequeath to their small world...and in their long sleep they will lie near their dear ones for several generations back. Is not such a life worth living?

To these aged couples the writer extends congratulations for their longevity and useful lives. Of them he has pleasant memories from his earliest childhood. He can still visualize them in their courtship days and early marital life. Is it needful to name them? Most of your readers have already guessed them: Mr. and Mrs. D.A. Lowrance and Mr. and Mrs. John A. Kennerly.

All of us who have known them should thank God for such noble examples of high living. In every community throughout our broad land, generally speaking, may be found such men and women as the above. They are the salt of the earth and a constituent part of the church of the living God...

My mind reverts to the middle 1870s when in our village of Mooreville there was not even an establishment for caring for the dead. Ed Wilkinson and Hutchey Halthcox, the

leading carpenters of the village, had a small workshop where R.H. Tomlinson afterwards erected a modern building, later used by the Voils Bros., grocers. They made plain wooden boxes, generally lined with cheap, black cloth at a cost of several dollars.

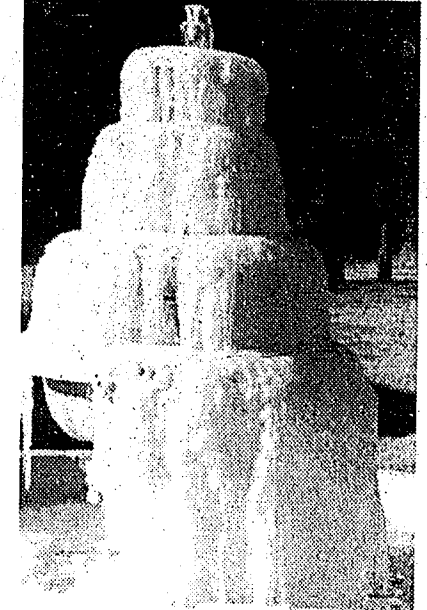
Later, W.N. Johnson did likewise on a larger scale. Rich or poor, all had similar care. In many cases neighbors made a box for a friend or even a stranger. Simply clothed in his own garments, the man was laid therein, lifted into the wagon and driven to the graveyard, now called a cemetery, where some friends had dug a grave, the body was lowered therein and then filled by other friends, while all attendants stood in mute awe; then departed in reverent silence.

What a contrast to our present method. Maybe one was too simple and the other is too wasteful. The happy medium might be better. That is hard to attain in any matter. We are all extremists. It is as though we were riding on the tip of a clock pendulum, which vibrates from one extreme to the other. Personally, I heartily endorse the article written by Dr. Lingle in the

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Worship ends at Little Joe's

A closing ceremony celebrating the history and witness of Little Joe's Presbyterian Church in Barium Springs was held Saturday at the 51st annual meeting of the Salem Presbytery.

During the morning worship, the Rev. Erich Thompson spoke about the life and meaning of Little Joe's Presbyterian Church, which has been located on the campus of Barium Springs Home for Children since its beginning in 1907.

"From the beginning, this was a different kind of congregation. It was tied to the Home," Thompson said. The church was originally built according to the wishes of a six-year-old orphan named Joe Gilland, who hoped to build "a church with a porch" on the campus.

When Joe died at age 9, he left behind a coin purse containing 45 cents, which he had saved for the building of the church. Presbyterians throughout the state responded generously. In 1907, the original Little Joe's Presbyterian Church was built. The church was rebuilt in 1955, where it still

stands on the campus today.

The administrative commission overseeing Little Joe's Presbyterian Church decided in May to close the church, with plans to call a new church development pastor to begin a new congregation at the site.

The final worship for the congregation of Little Joe's Presbyterian Church was held on Sunday, July 15, led by singer-songwriter Rev. F. Brent Price, son of Forrest and Shirley Price of Barium Springs.

Alumni of Barium Springs Home for Children will hold a worship service during the Barium Springs Alumni Homecoming Aug. 4-5.

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Editor's corner

Continued from page 10A

A state government agency has come up with a way to save the taxpayers some money. Good for them. You legislators who are belly-aching about it: shaddup.

Speaking of saving money, it bewilders me why the federal government is spending all that money on postage and paper to inform us taxpayers that we will soon receive the rebate checks which we already knew were coming.

True, the notices serve to duly inform us of the exact amount of our impending checks, which I suppose is nice to know. Problem is, a lot of those amounts are inaccurate. So now the IRS is sending NEW notices to correct the totals. Keep that up, and they're going to have ask for the checks back to pay for it all.

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Governor Mike Easley has appointed Dr. Fred M. Dula, Jr. to the position of Reviewing Physician for the Advisory Medical Committee of the North Carolina Industrial Commission. The committee is comprised of two pulmonologists and one radiologist who evaluate North Carolina Workmen's Compensation cases referred to the Industrial Commission. Dr. Dula will be serving a six-year term on the committee. He is President of Piedmont Radiological Associates and is Co-Chairman of the Department of Radiology of Rowan Medical Center. He, his wife Lynn, and their children, Stewart and Caroline reside in Salisbury.

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