

Viewpoint

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

Echoes of the Past

Bits and pieces, notes and quotes

Editor's note: This is part 99 in a continuing series on the "Recollections of Mooresville in the 1800'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.

Sept. 26, 1935

Without thought of flattering your vanity, Mr. Editor, if such passion you have, I publicly congratulate you for the recent editorial eulogy of your dear friend, Wade H. Harris. I have watched his course from early manhood with admiration. He appeared to be one of rare worth, both as man and as editor. His record was commendable — a well worth commendation — and a good example for young men now.

He had his early training under Charles A. Jones, himself an able and versatile writer, of strong convictions. Not always right, but not afraid to stand on his convictions. Alas, too often we undertake new tasks without sufficient knowledge of the "whats" and "whys" and "wherefores." Better training with fewer casualties.

Over a chasm of half a century comes an echo of a family of friends then living at Mt. Mourne: the Robert Gouger family. Mr. Gouger was a good farmer, a reliable citizen. His wife was a daughter of Peter Kistler, as I recall, and a fine woman. They reared a large family of boys and girls. Charlie married Miss Jennie Houston, Sallie is Mrs. J. A. Black, the others were single as I knew them. I had lost all knowledge of them.

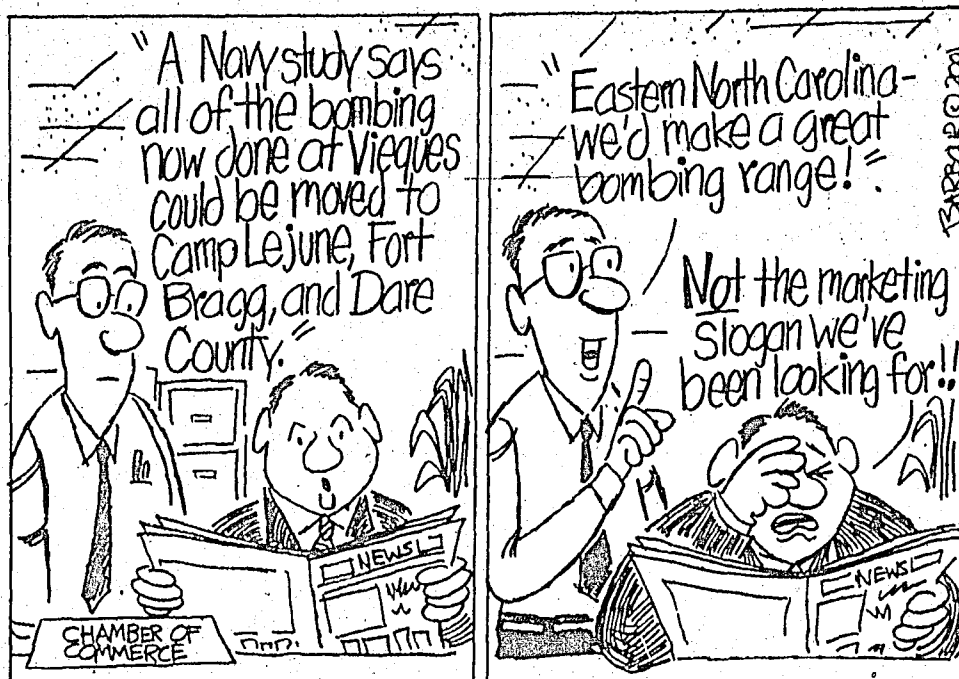
I rejoice to hear that George became a country physician, lived a useful life and died an honorable death. Isn't that a good record? I may see Nannie some time on passing through Oklahoma, John, William and Locke, with one or two little girls, were among my pupils. To each one of them this carries my regards. May all their records win encomiums from those who knew them.

St. Enoch's church, echoes many and conflicting. From childhood I recall many events connected therewith. Rev. A.D.L. Moser was last pastor of the old church, succeeded by Rev. W.A. Julian. As is often true the building of a new church generated a bit of friction that was long in healing. Such things should not be, but man, even at his best, is full of weak spots, contentions, and slow to forgive and forget.

The result in this case was a change of pastors. Rev. W.A. Lutz became the new pastor in 1880. He was a man of superb body, fine personality and strong vigor. A child of the Alleghenies, his principles, like them, were founded on the sure foundation of holy writ and you might as well try to move the mountains as to change his

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Editor Dale Gowing's column will return next week



Warning: Making a commitment could change your whole life

George Thomas was a remarkable person, a wonderful friend and an extraordinary Tennesseean. Let me introduce you by recounting the accomplishment I most remember from his life, and I think you will agree this story is definitely worth another look!

When I first met "Uncle" George, as he was affectionately called, he seemed to be a weather-beaten, grumpy old man. As pastor of the church where George belonged, my first encounter with him was less than harmonious. He scheduled an appointment to ask why I insisted in doing things differently than his former pastor. I simply told him that I could not possibly imitate someone else's ministry style and be successful. I asked his support in using my own skills and abilities rather than to be confined to copying someone else's.

At that time our church was involved in a strong bus ministry which helped provide transportation for children who otherwise would not or could not attend church services. When volunteers were invited to accept the challenge to become a Bus Minister, "Uncle" George indicated his willingness to serve. I inwardly groaned, because he didn't seem to like children and that quality was a "must" in bus ministry.

With reservations, we trained George to become a Bus Captain. That meant he would have to make a weekly Saturday visit to every child on his bus route, ride the bus every Sunday morning, supervise the activities on the bus, see that every child got to the proper Sunday school class, supervise the loading of children on the bus after worship and make certain that every child got home safely. This routine was repeated weekly and consistency was expected.

My thoughts were that "Uncle" George might last a month. He was then in his late seventies, and had a grouchy attitude that would never do with rowdy children who would find it difficult to behave properly in church. I thought it ridiculous when "Uncle" George asked to have the Higgins Creek route. The only road into and out of Higgins

Our friends to the west participated last weekend in a centuries-old tradition: scapegoating. About 75 people showed up last Saturday at an anti-immigrant rally in Newton that was sponsored by the Council of Conservative Citizens, which touts itself as the "true voice of the American Right," but which is classified by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a hate group.

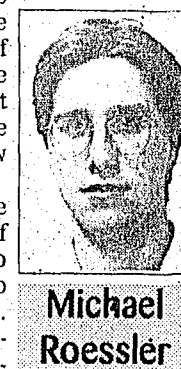
The protesters were angry about the number of Latino immigrants who have found their way into our area in recent years. Furthermore, the protesters claimed, those immigrants are taking jobs away from honest, hard-working Americans.

The residents of Catawba County can't be blamed for their dissatisfaction with the local economy. The county's unemployment rate has more than tripled in the last year. But the protesters are gravely mistaken in their effort to pin the blame for their problems on recent immigrants.

See ROESSLER, page 11A



Dr. Steve Gouge



Michael Roessler

Heading off temptation

The question of why economies stumble is a complex one. So whereas we cannot determine the exact combination of causes that lies behind Catawba County's economic woes, we can definitively say that it is not due to any single cause.

But the people who protested in Newton don't want to hear that the cause of their troubles is complex. They are jobless and scared. So they want to blame someone or some group for the whole of their difficulties.

Latino immigrants are an easy target. Some don't speak English well, while others don't speak it at all. Some are here illegally. Nearly all of them are not white.

And that's what the protest was really about. Despite the protesters' attempt to couch their rally in terms of economics, their actions were really driven by racism. After all, they were targeting Latino immigrants, not western European immigrants; Spanish-speaking immigrants, not English-speaking immigrants; dark-skinned immigrants, not white immigrants.

But why mention the protest in the Mooresville newspaper? Well, Newton's only 30 miles away. Iredell County has also been

'It's Worth Another Look'

Creek was a serpentine, narrow, unsafe road with several one-way bridges. I thought it unwise for a gentleman so advanced in years to accept such a responsibility; however, he insisted.

Instead of quitting after a month, I saw a man transformed by this ministry. He fell in love with those children and they came to adore him in return. He never missed his weekly visits to Higgins Creek and up until his mid-eighties he drove his own car up those winding roads to visit every child. He always supplied a prize for "his kids." He gave them candy, an inexpensive toy, or a promise to take them to a fast food restaurant in exchange for their perfect attendance on his bus for one month.

After a few months, I began to see some cracks forming in the previously gruff exterior of this older gentleman. One Sunday at the close of worship a child came forward and made a commitment to receive Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. When I looked at the congregation, I saw "Uncle" George with tears coursing down his cheek. I called "Uncle" George to the front of the church to stand in support of "his kid" and there was not a dry eye in the church building. Hence, transformation of a cantankerous codger was complete. God's Holy Spirit works in ways we know not of.

Over the years "Uncle" George continued to serve as a faithful Bus Minister. In his mid-eighties everyone thought he would be forced to give up his ministry when he lost his drivers license. Not so; he recruited a personal chauffeur and continued visiting those kids on Higgins Creek. His became the oldest Bus Ministry in America.

Today, commitments are all but avoided — it is especially difficult to get people to serve in our local churches. Take a lesson from a great Tennesseean who has gone on to be with the Lord: get involved in a worthy cause. It could change you into another "Uncle" George.

The Rev. Steve Gouge is senior pastor at Southside Baptist Church in Mooresville.

Letters to the editor

To the editor,
Recently, the Town of Mooresville hosted the N.C. Black Elected Municipal Officials Summer Board Retreat and Conference. And again this community (business, citizens and town government) displayed outstanding citizenship and cooperation.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the sponsors. Because of you, the retreat/conference was such a big success. The sponsors were: The Town of Mooresville, Joe Knox Properties, Randy Marion Chevrolet Pontiac Buick Inc., Mooresville Travel & Tourism, the Mooresville Downtown Commission and Lake Norman Regional Medical Center.

Also, I would like to thank Cotton Ketchie, ALLTEL, Mooresville-South Iredell Chamber of Commerce, the N.C. League of Municipalities and the Mooresville Golf Course for the donation of door prizes. Also, thanks go to Mary's House of Flowers, Catered Occasions and the Catawba Queen.

And a special "thanks" to Cindy Jacobs for the great work and dedication she put into the conference along with the town staff, Recreation Department, Citizens Center staff, Melvin Herring of Hargett Motives, the Winnie Hooper Center staff, Shannon Bailey, Atina Johnson, Kyuanna Fox of Salisbury, the Mooresville Police Department and Campbell Baptist Church.

Because of persons/businesses and organizations like we have in this community, Mooresville is a special place to work, live and call home.

Franklin Campbell
Town Commissioner

On behalf of the Tarheel Weimarner Club Rescue, we would like to express our most sincere appreciation to the .Tribune for Janice Gattson's fine story (Animal Samaritans, Aug. 17) about our group's efforts. We would also like to thank the many caring people who came out last Saturday to demonstrate their support at our club's garage sale.

We are well on our way to covering the expenses incurred for Baroni's surgery ... and we will be able to continue to help other dogs in the future.

Linda Schilling
Rosi Adams
Mooresville

To the editor,
Thank you! Thank you! For running the front page color photographs of the work the United Daughters of the Confederacy are doing to identify Confederate graves at Willow Valley Cemetery (July 25 Tribune).

"Since then, people have called to tell the UDC that some of their Confederate veterans' names are on the UDC monument in Willow Valley. How wonderful that that has happened!"

Sometimes I ask God if we have bitten off more than we can chew in trying to raise \$8,000 for a historical project for the town of Mooresville. We citizens, collectively, do not think "history," therefore we will have to educate ourselves to spend money to preserve it.

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Let's insure pregnant women now

The writer is Communications Coordinator for Western Carolina Division of the March of Dimes NC State Chapter.

By KIMBERLY P. EDMISTEN

With goodwill and a little hard work the United States Congress can accomplish a significant achievement this year: Guaranteeing that ninety-nine percent of America's pregnant women have access to health coverage for maternity care.

When it returns from its summer recess in September, Congress has the opportunity to approve legislation that would make health insurance available to pregnant women who are more often than not employed and have modest family incomes. This provision has broad bipartisan support in Congress and in the States.

In fact, just this month Gov. Easley joined his colleagues at their annual summer meeting by voting unanimously to support this initiative. The governors have asked for this flexibility, and now is just the right time for Congress to give it to them.

For us at the March of Dimes, the importance of this bill cannot be overstated. Nearly one in five women of

childbearing age in the United States is uninsured, many of whom will become pregnant. In North Carolina there are 305,000 women between the ages of 15 and 44 without health insurance. For these otherwise young and healthy women, pregnancy is typically the most expensive medical event they will experience as young adults. What can be done to help them?

It may be that wholesale reform of the health care system will take time, but the legislation now pending in Congress includes incremental but important steps to help uninsured pregnant women and newborns.

Specifically, this legislation permits (rather than mandates) states to use federal funds to extend health coverage to approximately 41,000 pregnant women whom, each year, meet the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) income guidelines. The provision for pregnant women, which has been introduced in one form or another in the U.S. Senate by Senators Bond (R-Mo.), Breaux (D-La.), Bingham (D-N.M.), Lugar (R-Ind.), McCain (R-Ariz.), Corzine (D-N.J.), Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Snowe (R-Maine)

and in the House by Representatives Lowey (D-N.Y.), Hyde (R-Ill.) and Murtha (D-Pa.), would also provide health coverage to newborns.

Importantly, President Bush and Health and Human Services Secretary Thompson have expressed their support for improving access to prenatal care. In recent days, numerous proposals to expand access to coverage for pregnant women have been considered. The President's press secretary said it best: "The President's concern is to make certain that there is proper prenatal care."

At the March of Dimes, we couldn't agree more. And the least cumbersome and contentious way of meeting this goal is to make sure states have the option to cover income eligible pregnant women in their State Children's Health Insurance programs.

But for the political will to make this legislation a priority, there is simply no good reason why this bill cannot be passed this year.

SCHIP is the only major federally funded program that denies coverage to pregnant women while providing coverage to their infants and children. Covering eligible babies once they are born but denying

prenatal coverage to their mothers makes no sense.

We know prenatal care improves birth outcomes and can save money. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, infants born to mothers who receive no prenatal care or late prenatal care are nearly twice as likely to be low birth weight. In fact, low birth weight accounts for 10% of all health care costs for children.

Often, lawmakers are confronted with contentious issues to which there are no easy answers. This is not one of those times. Expanded health insurance coverage for pregnant women with limited family incomes will have a profound — and immediate — impact on improving their health and their children's.

It's worth noting once again. A recent study commissioned by the March of Dimes found that if this provision becomes law and every state were to pick up the option to cover income eligible pregnant women, 99 percent of all pregnant women in the U.S. would have access to health insurance coverage.

That's a success story in which we could all take justifiable pride.

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Echoes of the past

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opinion.

An able exploiter of the scripture with an attractive delivery made him a speaker both entertaining and instructive. He was a doctrinal preacher, accepting the doctrines enunciated in the Augsburg Confessions, which were too strong a food for some who had been accustomed to a weaker diet, thus causing not a little friction, especially among the older members of the congregation. The younger ones more readily accepted his teachings.

The founding of an academic school under Prof. R.G. Kiser was a popular move. This school proved its worth and well repaid its cost of building and maintenance. Later Prof. E.B. Brown was headmaster for a lifetime.

Rev. Lutz built the Concordia Lutheran Church and organized the congregation in Mooresville, the foundation upon which St. Mark's Lutheran Church was built. He became highly respected and influential throughout his parish. After twelve years

of arduous labor he was called to build a church in Winston, next to Statesville; thence to Charlotte, where the Reaper will find him at harvest. His life has been a grand success, and many are the stars that will shine in his crown.

This writer had gathered a nucleus for a congregation in Winston-Salem, and exchanged pastorates with Rev. Lutz, thus locating at Enochville for temporary work before coming West for pastoral work already agreed upon. While at St. Enoch's and Trinity in Cabarrus, every hour was full of pleasant work. Never have I known a pastorate nearer ideal than that one was, and to memory it is a pleasant oasis. Ere this all the older ones have gone home. From time to time I see the names of a few of the younger ones whose hands I would like to grasp. How much I wish I could have been at St. Enoch's centennial celebration last Sunday!

Three of my fellow students at Roanoke College have served as pastors of this charge in later years, to wit: Reverends J.L. Morgan, C.M. Fox, and O.B.

J. I. Goodman
Fleming, Colo.

Letters to the editor

Continued from page 10A

en for the glorie of God, and advancements of the Christian faith ... a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northern parts of Virginia ...

Our first president, George Washington, stated: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

Benjamin Franklin, in his call for prayer at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, wrote: "I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth — that God governs in the affairs of men."

Noah Webster wrote, "Almost all civil liberty now enjoyed in the world owes its origin to the principles of the Christian religion."

Everyone quotes the First Amendment totally out of context. The amendment was written to prevent the establishment of a State-run church such as in England. It says nothing about no one in government not being religious.

This is only a few of the many quotes and examples of

our religious heritage that Mr. Roessler is ignorant of, or chooses to ignore. Travel to our nation's capital and visit the Supreme Court building. You will see the Ten Commandments etched in stone in front of the building. Is this not proof our laws are based on the Commandments? If they are in front of the highest court in the land, what is the beef about them being in our schools?

Buddy Hemric
Statesville

To the editor,
No matter how you feel about taxes, no matter which party you vote for, we need to understand the budget crisis has forced our state's leaders to make a fundamental choice.

We can cut programs and most likely move backward or we can make strategic cuts as well as find more revenue so we can continue to move forward.

We CAN continue our great gains in education, protect our

strong health care systems and lighten the load on working families. Or we can let essential services crumble, jeopardize critical health care programs, say no to our 1.3 million schoolchildren and lose our valuable Triple A bond rating.

Gov. Mike Easley and the Democratic legislative leadership have proposed steps to keep the state moving forward. Their budget proposal includes hundreds of millions of dollars in spending cuts and erases millions of dollars in corporate loopholes. But more has to be done to plug our deficit. We must find more revenue.

How we answer this budget challenge determines what kind of schools our children

learn in, the quality of our families' health care, the homes of our senior citizens and the fiscal future of our state.

How we answer this budget challenge will decide whether our state moves backward or forward.

Just saying "no" — as our GOP counterparts are saying — means ignoring our working families and neglecting our children. We need to continue to do what is necessary to move the state forward.

Now is the time for courageous bold steps. Now is the time to shore up our budget problems.

Barbara Allen
Chairman
N.C. Democratic Party

Roessler

Continued from page 10A

affected by the weakening economy, though not as severely as Catawba County. Iredell, too, has seen an influx of Latino immigrants in the last decade. And Mooresville has seen some big plant closings in the last couple of years: Burlington, Fleetwood, and Matsushita.

So whereas the economic conditions here are not as dire as in Catawba County, they are similar enough to warrant a preemptive strike against any growing desire

to launch an anti-immigrant crusade of our own.

Should Iredell's economy come to mirror Catawba's, we must not fall prey to the belief that a particular group of people is singularly responsible for the troubles we would suffer. We must be prepared to avoid the temptation to scapegoat. And the best way to resist such a temptation is to consider its danger before it is upon us.

Michael Roessler is a Tribune staff writer.

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