

# Dog fanciers know this issue isn't just about dogs!

First, a confession of sorts about my preconceived prejudices, just so there won't be any misunderstanding.

I like dogs. Some dogs I like better than some people.

Actually, most dogs I like better than some people — maybe better than most people.

And, just like a sign I see frequently in a Louisburg business, I work so that our dog can have a better life!

Just so you know, that's one of my prejudices, but while this column will start off about dogs, it's not really about dogs!

In last week's edition, we ran a Page 1 story about six missing dogs, all trained to sniff out explosives and alert their handlers to the

## My Turn

Gary Cunard



danger.

It's amazing that they can be trained to do that, but many are and have been performing a valuable service in the Mideast since we unfortunately decided to invade Iraq in search of mythical weapons of mass destruction.

These dogs have a fairly short working life and are "retired" by the military after their service and often loaned to local law enforcement agencies where they work a few more years in a less stressful, perhaps less deadly environment than a

war zone. Even so, sniffing out explosives isn't safe, whether you're in Afghanistan or Bunn!

Somehow, it appears that a few years ago, Franklin County was entrusted with six of these talented canines, although why this county needed six bomb-sniffing dogs boggles the imagination. Fortunately, I can't remember a dog uncovering an explosive device in the 25 years I've been here so, at least, these dogs should have had an easy semi-retirement.

There was, almost certainly, an agreement that humans signed ensuring the care and ultimate disposition of these talented dogs — but somehow our county officials can't remember what it said — or

where they put it — or even who might have signed it.

Amazing! Ideally, what should have happened was that all, or at least most, of these dogs should have been offered back to their military handlers who had forged incredibly close bonds with them while working day and night in dangerous situations for weeks on end.

Any dog lover who has had a well-behaved, trained and talented canine would feel exactly the same way — and some would go to the ends of the earth to get that critter back and ensure its proper care in the waning years of its life.

Yet, somehow, Franklin County "lost" six of these dogs — and can't seem to find any records of where they went, who might have them now or if they

were sold, given away or, Heaven forbid, shot!

We know what happened to two of the dogs. They were sold for a buck apiece to the deputies who were assigned to handle them during their service to Franklin County. That happened when Sheriff Kent Winstead took over but he swears there were only two dogs there when he was sworn in and, at least, we know what happened to them.

This whole fiasco is a tragedy, for man and dog!

Those dogs deserved better than they have received and their military trainers and handlers deserved a chance to get the dogs back safe and sound.

And, to ask the obvious question, why in the heck did Franklin County believe it needed six — six!

— of these highly trained animals in the first place? These animals are valuable and require careful handling and re-training to keep their edge — as well as special considerations when traveling, etc.

In other words, they are costly to keep — and while worth a fortune when their services are needed — they are not something any small county like ours needs six of!

### Not about dogs

But as I said, this column is about dogs — but not really about dogs!

This whole bomb-sniffing dog mess raises a host of other questions that deserve answers but which we likely will never get because, well ... that's just the way things happen around here.

See MY TURN Page 3b

## In our opinion

# Youngsville takes a positive step to meet town's needs

Youngsville residents have reasons to feel good about decisions town leaders have made in recent months.

Most specifically, the decision to create a new town hall for a community that's almost certain to grow dramatically over the next few years should be applauded.

As you've read in previous editions of this newspaper, Youngsville town commissioners have approved a \$1.8 million budget for the next fiscal year that raises the tax rate slightly.

The key item in that is the creation of a 7,500 foot town hall building on U.S. 1-A that will serve as both a town hall and a police department.

To say that a new facility for both is long overdue is an understatement.

The current offices for both the town and police are aging, way too small and totally inadequate for inevitable future needs.

It was good to see a town's leadership take a pro-active approach to problems that are on the horizon instead of waiting until there was a crisis to deal with.

Not only did town officials take a pro-active approach, they also took a practical approach.

Instead of going out and borrowing a ton of money to overbuild a fancy new facility that would create an extra debt burden, town officials took a much more practical approach.

They have agreed to buy an existing building that is in pretty good shape and which should require relatively minimal renovation and reworking to serve the town's purposes.

And, with interest rates quite low, it's a good time to be tackling a larger capital improvements project that will prove to be a wise financial decision down the road.

In addition, the town is also working on what it calls a pedestrian plan.

That plan is designed to make the community more friendly to residents and visitors alike by improving both sidewalks and bicycle access around the community.

That's something that most communities never seem to get around to doing — and not making those

improvements is almost always a mistake.

So far, the pedestrian plan is estimated to cost about \$44,000 but, given the cost of sidewalks and other improvements, that may be just phase I of the work that eventually gets done.

In any case, making the town more accessible by foot and by bike is exactly what many people are looking forward to these days and such improvements are likely to improve growth efforts in the community.

That can mean that the community gets to grow its tax base and spread the cost of improvements over more residents.

"As more people move into town," Mayor Fonzie Flowers said in a news story, "we'll be able to spread out [our tax burden]."

"The message is that the town of Youngsville is open for business and we want residential and retail growth," he said.

"The town is going to change, drastically."

"We have a population of about 1,200 people," the mayor said. "We're expecting to double that in the next few years."

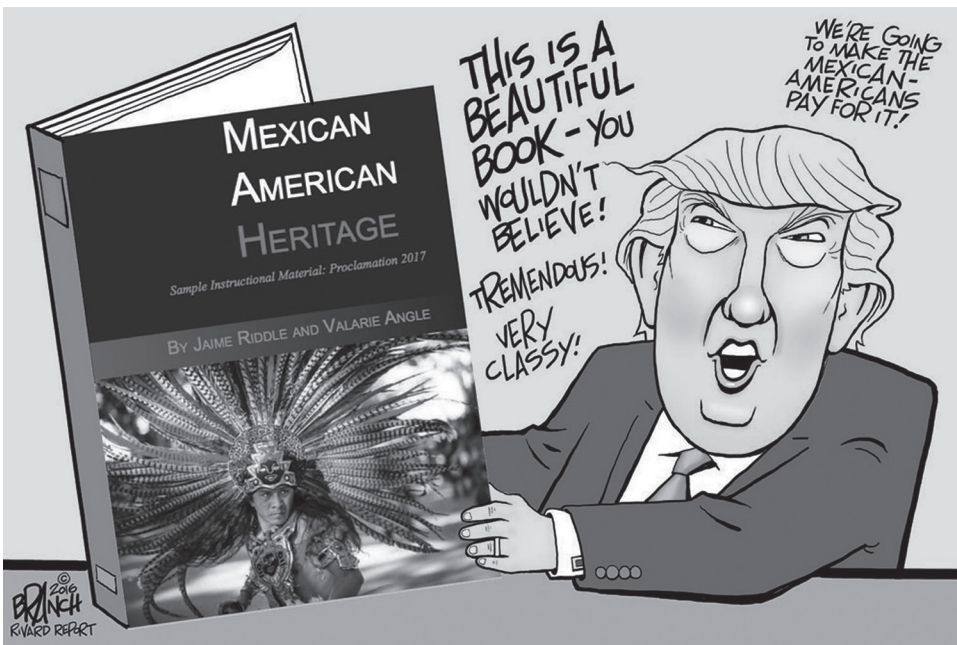
It's refreshing to see a town where the leadership is taking a positive approach to growth — and preparing to be ready to control and benefit from that growth.

Youngsville is poised to grow and grow quickly but at least its leadership recognizes that fact and is moving to position the community so that the growth is controlled and not overwhelming to the residents already there and the services now offered.

Perhaps most amazing was that the vote for creation of a new town hall and police department facility was unanimous — even when it bumps up the tax rate just a little.

That's having confidence in the future — and in building a community that people will enjoy living in.

Let's hope their confidence and actions serve as a model for other governments in the area!



# High-level math, science classes are going the way of the Dodo

I'll never forget.

One of my first student-teacher conferences was about geometry.

More importantly, it was about my inability to totally grasp geometry.

It was the first time that I had actually tried to do something and was still totally lost.

It was at that time, my teacher gave me one of the best — and at the time — strangest pieces of advice.

She advised me to study harder, work more diligently and, if need be, even take my math book with to read while I was in the bathroom.

This was back in 1990, or so, so the idea of reading while in the bathroom was incredibly foreign.

In fact, when she said I should take my text book to read in the restroom, my first thought was: Great, I can finally flush that thing and forget about the pythagorean theorem, trying to solve for 'X' and any other equations that, quite frankly, looked like the doodles of a dangerous mind.

I didn't flush that book. I buckled down. I got a pretty decent grade in the class. And I've learned the pleasure that can come from reading in the restroom.

Well, I came across a story this week that shows more and more students are losing out on that learning experience ... and no, I'm not talking about reading in the bathroom.

According to a USA Today story, a report from the Education Department's Office of Civil Rights shows that



## Carey's Corner

Carey Johnson

fewer than half of the country's high schools offer calculus courses and only 63 percent offer physics courses.

What's more, according to the report, between 10 to 25 percent of high schools failed to offer several core courses in the typical high school math and science education, which would include classes like Algebra I and II, geometry, biology and chemistry.

As an aside, if I'm getting this right, fewer schools are offering higher level math and science classes, while at the same time, physical education classes and the art and music classes are getting slashed — and don't get me started about schools no longer teaching cursive writing — it makes me wonder just what "are" they teaching in schools nowadays.

But I digress.

What's even more concerning about the loss of math and science courses in high schools is the kinds of students missing out on these learning opportunities.

According to the study, there is a racial disparity: 25 percent of the schools with the highest Black and Latino populations did not offer Algebra II — a third did not offer chemistry.

There are reasons, the study suggested, such as lack of resources, staff and not enough student demand.

Now, while I'd like to tell you that I use algebra, geometry and trigonometry and physics on a daily basis, I'd be lying.

However, I do use the skills I learned, such as problem solving and critical thinking.

And my truly basic understanding of physics does allow me to get into heated debates about time travel on one of my favorite shows, "The Flash."

Science also allows me to get into heated and fantastic debates about why Superman wears a cape: besides the fact that it looks cool in CGI, theoretically, it does help with his flight aerodynamics.

So, yes, it bugs me that high level science and math courses are being offered at less than ideal levels.

It puts Black and Latino students further behind the 8 Ball; it takes away a discipline that spurs critical and analytical thinking for all students; and it removes their enjoyment of bathroom reading.

The only positive is that I still get to hold onto a "back in my day" story, such as, back in my day, we had to take Algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus and physics, while playing dodgeball in gym class, while playing the recorder in music class and painting a water color in art class — with no water, mind you — while traveling uphill the entire way, in four feet of snow.

Ah, the good old days.

The Franklin Times

Since 1870

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### Advertising:

Donna S. Cunard, advertising/business mgr.

Libby Kearney, advertising consultant

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## Letters Welcome

The Franklin Times welcomes and encourages letters from its readers. To be considered for publication, letters must be signed and must bear the address and telephone number of the writer. The phone number will not be printed, but may be used for verification purposes. Letters should be no longer than 350 words.

The Times reserves the right to edit letters for length, grammar and good taste.





# My Turn

Continued from page 2b

The first and obvious question is who arranged for the county to get all these dogs and who signed the contract, assuming there was a contract, guaranteeing their care and their futures?

In corporate America, where I spent a good many years, contracts aren't signed by one person who is the only person who knows what they contain. There are copies made, usually a vote somewhere up the corporate ladder authorizing the contract and more executed copies made and filed than is possibly necessary. And they are filed in different places!

These days, with computer storage so cheap and easy, there ought to be system where all these agreements are stored electronically — and backed up either to the cloud or to another site.

So why didn't this happen here?

The answer we've gotten so far — and it amounts to raised eyebrows and a shrug — seems to indicate that no one knows for sure what the heck happened.

That raises a huge question: How many other deals are there out there

like this one? Deals that could be extremely costly to taxpayers and which could catch us all by shock and awe!

If it is possible — and it appears to be possible — that one person, unauthorized and unbeknownst to anyone else in the county, can simply sign contracts that obligate the county, that is a huge potential administrative problem!

Beyond that, it makes us look like a bunch of country rubes just ripe for the picking by a con man with a scheme to separate us from our money!

Once again, this entire situation underscores a lack of accountability, an absence of oversight and a lack of policies that protect taxpayers from this type of ... do we call it incompetence, ignorance, lack of oversight or simply a lackadaisical attitude? (You get to decide which word fits best!)

**Some speculation**

Okay, although we are in the business of reporting the news, there comes a time when perspective should permit some speculation, especially here on the editorial and op-ed pages where opinions are the whole point.

This is what could have happened, based on what we know.

I suspect these dogs were obtained under the administration of the former sheriff, Jerry Jones, who saw a chance to get something for nothing for the county and jumped at it. Why he thought he needed eight dogs is still a mystery.

After his election defeat, Jones cleaned out the office to make way for

Sheriff Winstead — and records were destroyed in the process.

In fact, four women spent several days literally shredding garbage bags full of documents and taking some to animal control where they were burned.

I have absolutely no idea what those documents were but it's not out of the realm of possibility that the contracts covering those dogs were included, either accidentally or intentionally.

When this was happening, the county manager's office was notified and put on notice about the destruction of documents paid for by taxpayers and which were county property.

It was suggested that the county have someone watch over the process — or perhaps call in the SBI to make sure taxpayer interests were being protected ... but, to my knowledge, nothing happened.

And now, we apparently have a missing contract.

Gee, wonder if there could be a connection?

And are there any other important documents missing?

Earlier I mentioned how contracts are handled in corporate America — and I can assure you that if procedures were this lax, heads would roll up and down the corporate ladder!

The same should happen in local government but, obviously, that ain't happening and isn't likely to happen anytime soon.

Sleep well ... maybe someone is looking out for our best interests!

# Senator Burr refuses to do his job, but you're his boss

My attention has been focused on Raleigh of late.

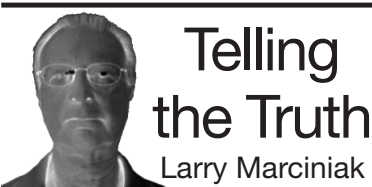
The other day I decided to take a gander at what our Senior Senator Republican Richard "Bank Run" Burr was doing in Washington; the answer came back not his job.

To Burr's credit, unlike his fellow Republican George Holding, who is supposedly representing many of us in the House, (and is running to represent us all), at least he hasn't been caught napping on national TV.

Burr is among those who are blocking the confirmation hearings and vote on Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland.

It seems they believe in some right wing mythological interpretation of the Constitution that says the President really isn't the President in the last year of their term.

This situation has moved well beyond a philosophical difference over Supreme Court nominees; it is an open defiance of the Constitu-



## Telling the Truth

Larry Marciniak

votes were cast by Republicans and Burr was among them. He is part of a bloc that refuses to confirm any Obama nominees.

You may want to circle today's date on the calendar.

It is a rare day that I'll say something positive about Senator Thom Tillis; even he voted in favor of Hologate's confirmation.

Obviously it wasn't difficult for a Republican to vote to confirm if Corker and Tillis did.

Burr appears to have a serious reading comprehension problem or simply doesn't want to be a United States Senator.

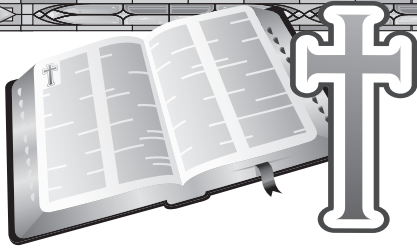
If it's the former he poses a danger to America.

If it is the latter, he needs the voters' help.

Burr is running for reelection in November. What would your boss do if you showed up for work and then proceeded to not do your job?

On Election Day you are the boss.

# CHURCH NEWS



## YOUTH DAY

Youth Day will be held at Walnut Grove Baptist Church on Sunday, June 26, during the 9 a.m. worship service. Pre-K through college students during the past year will be recognized. The speaker will be Minister T. J. Walker Jr. Music will be by the Walnut Grove Youth Choir.

## MUSICAL PROGRAM

A musical, "The Home of the Brave," created by Deborah Craig-Claar and arranged and orchestrated by David T. Clydesdale, will be presented by the Louisburg Baptist Church Chancel Choir on Sunday, June 26, at 7 p.m. The musical is directed by Libby Cox and will be narrated by Dr. Reggie Rushing.

The church is located at 302 N. Main St., Louisburg. A nursery will be provided.

## PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY

The 8th Pastoral Anniversary of Pastor Ronald T. Davis will be held Saturday, June 25, at 5 p.m. with a music and praise celebration and will conclude Sunday, June 26, at 4 p.m. Guest speaker will be Pastor Melvin Jackson, accompanied by members of Mitchiner's Grove Baptist Church.

Services will be held at New Level Community Church, 310-3 S. Bickett Blvd., Louisburg.

## YOUTH DAY

Youth/Graduates Recognition Day will be held Sunday, June 26, at Jones Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Warrenton.

Guest speaker will be Pastor Alton Jamison from The Cathedral of Faith Church, Baton Rouge, La.

## YOUTH DAY

The annual Youth and Academic Achievement Day will be held Sunday, June 26, during the morning worship service at Union Grove Baptist Church.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Perry's Missionary Baptist Church, 2269 Laurel Mill Road, Louisburg, will have Vacation Bible School, Monday-Thursday, June 27-30, from 6 to 8 p.m. There will be classes for all ages. If you need transportation, call (919)853-2919.

## HOMECOMING/REVIVAL

Homecoming services will be held at Jones Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 148 Jones Chapel Road in Louisburg, on Sunday, June 26, beginning at 10:45 a.m.

Annual revival services will begin Tuesday, June 28, to be held at 7:30 each evening. The Rev. Michael Alston, pastor of Old Liberty Baptist Church, will be the guest evangelist for the week. Different choirs are invited to render music each evening.

## CHOIR ANNIVERSARY

The Mass Choir of Haywood Baptist Church, located at 149 Rocky Ford Road, Louisburg, will observe its 23rd Anniversary on Sunday, June 26, at 3 p.m. Appearing on the program will be choirs from South Main Street Baptist Church, Jordan Chapel Baptist Church, the Kittrell Mass Choir, the Christland Singers and the Haywood Baptist Church Male Choir.

## YOUTH DAY

Youth Day will be observed at Nelson Chapel Baptist Church on Sunday, June 26, during the 11:15 a.m. worship service.

Guest speaker will be the Rev. Micah Mason, associate minister of Pilot Baptist Church. Music will be by the young people's choir.

## CHILDREN'S DAY

Allen Chapel Baptist Church will celebrate its annual Children's Day service on Sunday, June 26, at 10:45 a.m. The speaker will be Minister Stephen Williamston, associate pastor of Macedonia New Life Church of Raleigh.

## YOUTH DAY

First Baptist Church, Franklinton, will celebrate its quarterly Youth Day worship service and annual Graduates Recognition Day on Sunday, June 26, at 11 a.m. Pastor André Johnson will deliver the message and the Junior Choir will render the music.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Hawkins Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 2199 Grove Hill Road, Franklinton, will host Vacation Bible School on Saturday, June 25, from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The theme is "Faithbook—The Bible." All are welcome to share in the fellowship, food and fun.

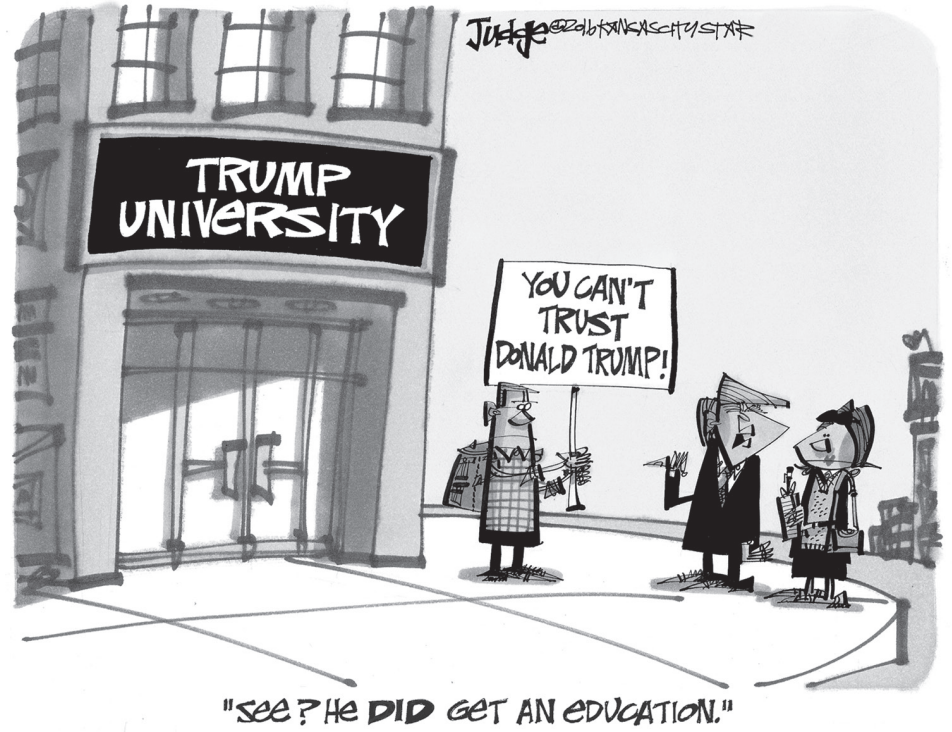
## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School at Pearce Baptist Church, 4634 Pearces Road, Zebulon, will begin Friday, June 24, 6-8 p.m. Dinner will be served.

VBS will continue on Saturday, June 25, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (lunch served). Pick-up time on Saturday for pre-school students will be 12 noon and pick-up time for Kindergarten - Youth will be 3 p.m.

On Sunday, June 26, VBS will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will end following the morning worship service. Adults are also welcome to attend.

Letters to the editor always welcome!



# SAVE US...

These beautiful animals are at Franklin County Animal Control, 351 T. Kemp Rd., Louisburg, NC, just waiting for someone to give them a home. For adoption information call 919-496-3032. Please hurry!

**ZENA:**  
5 yr old female, spayed, shots. Loving, talkative, great personality!

**BETSY:**  
Female gray and white, 10 weeks old. LOTS of adorable kittens!

**JILL:**  
Spayed Female, Husky/Shepherd mix, 1 year old. So cute!

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