



Fifty ~ Sixth Edition

Published, On-Line, Every Week on Friday

December 19th , 2008

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This  
Edition

# In the Best of Traditions

by John Tiley

Waxhaw  
  
 45°F  
 AccuWeather.com  
 Weather Forecast

**Cover: News**

**News, Pg. Two**  
*The New Year; profit takers playing Grinch Pain At The Pump.*

**2008** will certainly go down as one of the best Christmas Events the Town of Waxhaw has ever put on! All of the floats, the bands and fire trucks formed up to entertain a standing room only crowd.

Spending my time over by Rippington's, I was able to share the event with many friends and acquaintances I don't always seem to have time to see and, looking all around, it struck me that was the case for many of the attendees as well.

*This may take a few moments to download, so please be patient, it is worth the wait.*



*I personally want to thank Lorayn Deluca from Image Security and Chuck DeMund of the Rotary for supplying me with a great selection of photos of which I was able to produce this slide show. So without further ado, sit back, turn up the volume on your speakers and enjoy a show full of memorable moments.....*

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Honorary Grand Marshall Rufus, the Lady Cats from the Charlotte Bobcats and Emcee Ken Conrad of Oldies 106.1WOLS did a great job in kicking off our celebration of the holiday season. Of course we were graced by the presence of the towns' elite including the Mayor, Commissioners as well as just about everybody from Town Hall. Special thanks go to the Police Department for keeping everything moving along without incident.

The weather was certainly appropriate for a winter festival, cold but not too cold and the rain did hold off... even as the tree lighting was under way, only a bit of a drizzle fell. Laura Pettler Emceed the tree lighting ceremonies and graced us with a great performance as well! She is always a pleasure to listen to, what talent! With carolers and the Carolina Dance Company giving us a great performance it made for a truly memorable evening!

**Around Town:**

~ ~ ~ ~  
**Rumor Has It...**

Earlier this week, Tuesday evening to be precise, there was quite the hubbub in town. Evidently, while crossing the railroad tracks downtown it seems that a truck hauling a trailer snagged one of the rails the trains run on resulting in a damaged track. This was right before a train was scheduled to come through town! Luckily the train was stopped in time to avoid a derailment, the track was repaired and the train was soon able to continue on its way. I understand that if you were there at the time, you were able to view the latest in Military Humvees being transported on that train.

I don't believe, however, that I would like to be in the shoes of the person that snagged that track!

~ ~ ~ ~  
**Just in case you haven't had time to read about Christmas Safety...**



As the Season is upon us we are all busy with preparing our homes for the Holidays with lights, trees and decorations of all types. While we are preoccupied with this time of year it is very important to take a few minutes to review safety tips to insure we have a

*Welcome to this weeks edition of The Waxhaw Gazette! If you own a business and have any news worthy happenings planned or know of someone new coming in, send me a press release and I will be happy to include it. Contact me directly with comments or suggestions at: [jtiley@ thewaxhawgazette.com](mailto:jtiley@thewaxhawgazette.com)*

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# The New Year Ahead

*...or, more profit taker playing Grinch soon to surface!*

As the year draws to a close we, as a society look on in horror as the economy continues to disintegrate all around us while we are wondering how it all happened.

**A sampling of recent headlines illustrates what lies ahead:**

- Bank of America to Cut 30,000 plus jobs.
- Omnicom Set to Cut Up to 3,500 Jobs
- Just last month BBDO slashed 22% of its staff in Detroit
- Chrysler Agency PHD to Cut 30 Staffers
- L'Oreal to Lay Off 500 U.S. Employees
- Best Buy has already implemented cuts throughout their stores and plan deeper cuts at the first of the year.
- Having already reduced its workforce 50 percent in three years, by February Ford will have cut salaried personnel costs 40 percent
- The Madoff Scandal and the End of Hedge Funds

News just in that all three of the US Auto companies are implementing an extended holiday shutting down of their entire operations; Chrysler is closing for at least a month (if not longer and, although it is speculation, it is just a matter of how many of their plants will never re-open).

It has also been circulating in Washington that a bankruptcy would actually be advantageous... it won't work, at least not like it has for the airlines. With an airline, you buy one ticket at a time for a particular travel date. Two, three hundred dollars and it is used up in a day or two. Just who would spend tens of thousands of dollars on a car whose manufacturer might not be around in a few months or even years to warranty the vehicle or even supply replacement parts? Bankruptcy in the auto business is the kiss of death!

And all of this is just a harbinger of tough times to come. The New Year will arrive and with it the dominoes will continue to fall, the banks are still sitting on the bailout with no effect felt, just more companies and people suffering under their unwillingness to extend credit. Hundreds of thousands of people are yet to be layed off which makes it all the more unlikely we will have a very prosperous new year so, for right now, make sure to take the time and be with those close to you and give thanks for what you have had. In all likelihood, you could bet it won't be so good next year.

**Which prominent American said:**

*'I believe that banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies. If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation, then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around the banks will deprive the people of all property until their children wake-up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered.'*

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**Is Your Tree House Getting A Little Too Small?**

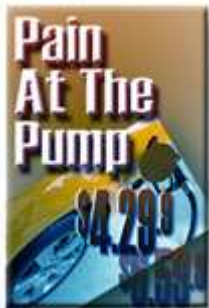


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## Prices for gas in the Waxhaw area...

	3/20/08	12/19/08
Texaco:	\$3.19.9	\$1.61.9
Pure:	\$3.24.9	\$1.61.9
Little General:	\$3.24.9	\$1.59.9
Shell:	\$3.24.9	\$1.61.9
Wax. In n Out:	\$3.26.9	\$1.59.9
Mineral Springs:		
M. S. Grocery	\$3.20.9	\$1.61.9
Texaco:	\$3.21.9	\$1.61.9
BP on New Town	\$3.21.9	\$1.61.9

*Editors Note: Usually I personally check the prices posted for the above companies. However, occasionally when time is short I call the stations on the phone to check for current prices. If no pricing is offered the above reflects the last visually confirmed pricing.*

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## In Response to: Rep. Myrick Votes No on Automotive Industry Bailout.....

A Waxhaw Gazette Reader takes issue with your stand on the auto companies. Read their take and lets see what you might have to say? Rebuttals are welcome Senator.

**I'd like to comment on the following press release you published in this week's Gazette. I have used the article to organize my thoughts. They are inserted in bold font after the appropriate portion of the release.**

(Washington, DC) – US Representative Sue Myrick (NC-09) voted no today on the proposed financial bailout for the automotive industry. The bill, H.R. 7321, provides up to \$14 billion in loans to US automakers. It passed by a vote of 237-170.

“There is no guarantee this bailout will be the last for the auto industry,” said Rep. Myrick. “I opposed this bill because it would create a government ‘car czar’ to oversee the domestic auto industry without the authority to ensure the Big Three address their underlying structural problems. Unless the domestic car makers make substantial changes to fundamentally change the way they do business, the reality is they’ll need additional taxpayer assistance in the very near future.”

**In general, how is this different than the Financial Bailout/Rescue/Whatever other Sugar-Coated name you want to call it? But there are several points in this paragraph that deserve specific comment:**

“There is no guarantee this bailout will be the last for the auto industry,”

**It sure wasn't for AIG. They already GOT more money and this was shortly after they were caught spending money that I could never spend for their “top performing salesmen”. Who said, “No” to them or took back the hand-out? The auto executives were severely chastised for taking their corporate jets to their first round of hearings in Washington. Why is that different than the enormous spa bills? Is there a different standard being applied?**

I opposed this bill because it would create a government ‘car czar’ to oversee the domestic auto industry without the authority to ensure the Big Three address their underlying structural problems

**What attempt has been made to insure the Financial Industry address their “...underlying structural problems...”? I certainly haven't heard about any. And the same people are still in charge with the same bonus incentive structure that caused the crisis. The only difference that I can see is that they have additional billions of dollars of taxpayer money to “play” with.**

Unless the domestic car makers make substantial changes to fundamentally change the way they do business, the reality is they’ll need additional taxpayer assistance in the very near future

**Once again, as before, AIG certainly has.**

Rep. Myrick instead supports an alternative plan set forth by Republican House leaders. The plan requires that the automotive industry restructure - the way they do in business - by setting firm goals. Rather than using taxpayer money to provide loans to the auto company, the Republican alternative would use government-backed insurance to attract private investment. Additionally, unlike H.R. 7321, the Republican plan would set firm goals to address the legacy costs of union-negotiated wages, and health and retirement benefits that impede domestic automaker competitiveness.

**Catchy phrase, “...the way they do in business...” but basically a cop out. Give me an example of a “...business...” that is demonstrationally better for “..setting firm goals...”. And, where is the “...private investment...” going to come from? Banks won't even lend to other banks. Maybe we could sell GM to the Chinese, Ford to the Japanese and Chrysler to the oil cartel (they might not be so intent on destroying us with \$150 per barrel oil if they had a significant, direct financial investment in the US economy), What “...legacy costs of union-negotiated wages, and health and retirement benefits...” does Representative Myrick propose to change? And what signal would the “...change...” send to other, legally negotiated contracts? Maybe we could “...change...” the negotiated golden parachutes given to executives who have done nothing more than drive their companies into the ground. Or,**

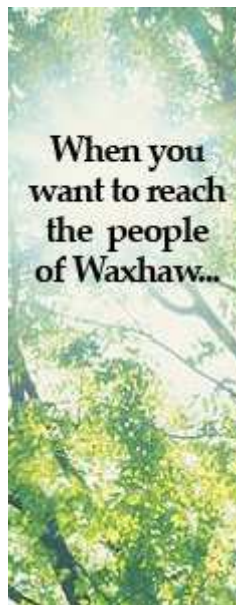
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When you want to reach the people of Waxhaw...



maybe, we could address the "...legacy costs..." of the retirement and the health care benefits given to current and retired members of both the Legislative and the Executive branches of our government. Somehow, it always seems easier when someone else has to do the sacrificing.

To accomplish these restructuring goals, companies are urged to use a structured bankruptcy to bring all of the stakeholders to the table to determine the best way forward.

I certainly am one of the millions of Americans who is going to rush out to the "fire sale" and plop down \$20,000 plus of what's left of my retirement money on a car that I might not be able to get a needed part for next year or to be able to find a technician to perform the tune up or any of the other "after sale" necessities automobile ownership brings. Representative Myrick may have that kind of money to burn, but I, at age 65, sure don't, especially after my retirement savings have already taken such a hit that I'm going to be forced to continue working until...? And how is the economy going to rebound if we add millions of current workers to the unemployment rolls as a result of the failure of the auto industry?

"This isn't an easy situation, but compromises must be made. People have to work together, and this problem has to be solved without the government taking control of the industry," said Rep. Myrick

I agree wholeheartedly with "...This isn't an easy situation, but compromises must be made. People have to work together, and this problem has to be solved...". But you might insert a couple of words into this "works-in-theory" statement. Change "...compromises must be made..." to "...compromises must be made that won't further destroy the American way of life..." and amend "...People have to work together..." to "...all Americans, including our elected officials who are basically shielded from the economic pain experienced by their constituents have to work together...".

This didn't start out to be and isn't intended to be anti Sue Myrick (or anti-anything else for that matter). She certainly is thrust out center stage by situations like this. But she chose to put herself into that spotlight. I didn't choose to have my retirement trashed and the way of life I have struggled to achieve thrown away so that other, basically un-principled individuals could profit.

And finally, three comments that I would like to make:

- When Enron Management "cooked the books" and destroyed their company, they went to prison. Everybody was outraged at how men of principle could use their positions for personal gain without regard to the trust they had been given. Is the financial meltdown any different? Didn't management "cook-the-books" with their credit default swaps? Wasn't this dishonesty even more egregious, threatening not only the US but the entire global economy? And yet who is being held accountable? No one! Instead, these same individuals are being given billions of taxpayer dollars to play with and told to continue "business as usual". It appears to the little guy (me) that if you have a big enough lobbying effort putting a large enough amount of money into the campaign funds of the big guys (policy makers), you can get away with anything.
- I have always considered myself a middle management level person. As such I have always known that I needed to contribute many times the value of my salary and benefits package to the company or I would be out of a job. I have often wondered how much the CEO, CFO or other top manager contributes to justify their enormous salaries. I mean, it isn't that they personally bring in the money. They set the direction, but it's only through the efforts of their organizations that the companies are profitable. My question was answered recently when I realized that if they were dishonest and incompetent enough, the government would give them billions of dollars. In other words, now they can justify their compensation packages by having brought in all that taxpayer bailout money.
- The auto industry right now affords people in power the target they need to have it look like they are out there really working for "Main Street". After all, everyone can see an automobile. It's a tangible object. Not everyone can see or even imagine a credit default swap. By the way, according to a segment presented on the PBS News Hour, **the credit default swap is an item that was made illegal back in the early 1900's and re-legalized by the 2000 lame duck session of Congress.** It only took 8-years to send the global economy into a tailspin by using these re-invented "bets on whether bad loans would go into default". They were used by the financial industry to further boost profits after upper management abrogated their fiscal responsibility by making bad loans to individuals that they sold a bill of goods to. Yes, the people using "creative financing" to buy

**homes they could never afford are to blame. However, equally to blame are the lenders who sold their industry for short-term, personal gain. But the financial industry is an intangible, not the easy target that the see-it, touch-it, feel-it automobile is. I believe it's time to extend the same rules to service industries that are being applied to manufacturing industries**

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*"Always do right - This will gratify some people and astonish the rest." -- Mark Twain*

## And now, Our Weekly Dose of Humor directly from the Internet.....

bits and pieces that your Editor will not testify to for correctness, accuracy nor even believability but they are certainly humorous? So Enjoy!

### The Blonde Antelope



### Dog's Best Friend.....AWWWWW

Too precious ..... hold onto your hearstrings!

The deer followed this beagle home ... right through the doggie door ...

The owner came home and found the visitor had made himself right at home. This hit the 6 o'clock news big time.



### I found it...

And you thought there was no such place, huh????

You will all be so pleased to receive this..... How many times have we been 'up there without one!'

My work is done.



## MIND GAME

This is strange...can you figure it out?

Are you the 2% or 98% of the population?

Follow the instructions! NO PEEKING AHEAD!

\* Do the following exercise, guaranteed to raise an eyebrow.

\* There's no trick or nasty surprise.

\* Just follow these instructions, and answer the questions one at a time and as quickly as you can!

\* Again, as quickly as you can but don't advance until you've done each of them ... really.

\* Now, scroll down (but not too fast, you might miss something.)

Think of a number from 1 to 10

Multiply that number by 9

If the number is a 2-digit number, add the digits together

Now subtract 5

Determine which letter in the alphabet corresponds to the number you ended up with



**THIS IS INDIA. IT IS WHERE YOU CALL WHEN YOU HAVE A TECHNICAL PROBLEM WITH YOUR COMPUTER.**



(example: 1=a, 2=b, 3=c,etc.)

Think of a country that starts with that letter.

Remember the last letter of the name of that country.

Think of the name of an animal that starts with that letter.

Remember the last letter in the name of that animal.

Think of the name of a fruit that starts with that letter.

Are you thinking of a Kangaroo in Denmark eating an Orange ?

I told you this was FREAKY!! If not, you're among the 2% of the population whose minds are different enough to think of something else. 98% of people will answer with kangaroos in Denmark when given this exercise. Keep this message going. This one is actually worth sending on to others. Forward it to people you know so they can find out if they are usual or unusual.

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