



The purpose of the Gryphon is to examine events in the school, the community and the world which affect the lives of the students of RMSH. It is the Gryphon's aim to stimulate awareness of issues, to promote a better understanding of others, and to bring about positive action where change is needed. Student, faculty and community response is welcomed and may be sent to the Gryphon, room 110; however, the editor reserves the right to withhold libelous or profane letters.

Free Lunch Abused

Where can someone get a free lunch then turn around and buy a dollar's worth of ice cream? At Rocky Mount Senior High, that's where!

This reality angers those who work or whose parents work hard for the money to buy lunch everyday. True example: One pupil in the lunch line has a wallet with a dollar bill and the jingle of small change in his pocket. The pupil in front has a wallet full of cash and a lunch ticket in his pocket. The first pupil buys two sandwiches, two fries, and a milk. Total: One dollar. The second pupil gets two sandwiches, two fries, two milks, and two ice creams. Sub-total: One dollar and 30 cents; but with a 50 cents taxpayer's discount, final total: 80 cents.

The criteria for receiving free or reduced lunches seems very limited. In fact, one must believe almost anyone can apply for and get a free lunch ticket. A senior member of the GRYPHON staff in his or her sophomore year reports putting false information on a free lunch application and receiving the free lunch ticket, no questions asked.

There is no checking to see if the listed income includes a student's part-time job income. As a matter of fact, there is very limited checking. Could the checking be limited because the forms must be evaluated and returned within ten days of receipt?

As Principal Elton Newbern said when asked about how much checking is done, the school relies on "the individual's integrity." But if there is a question of one's income, the free lunch seeker would have to come before a committee and answer questions according to Mr. Newbern.

On the free lunch application is stated: "I hereby certify that all of the above information is true and correct. I understand that this information is being given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds; that school officials may, for cause, verify this information; and that deliberate misrepresentation may subject me to prosecution under applicable State and Federal criminal statutes." Then a signature of an adult family member is required.

But someone must catch the person in a lie to prosecute, and evidently no one is checking closely enough by the size of some of these persons' wallets.

Furthermore, is it worthwhile to check carefully. Reports, perhaps rumors, circulate that a school must distribute a percentage of aid in order to receive any.

Isn't it about time action is taken? Couldn't some of this free lunch money come to the school system in the form of money for something more worthwhile. Couldn't our school control its own problem?

Financial support for public education (including this abused food program) comes almost entirely from local, state, and federal taxes. In 1960, public elementary and secondary education cost taxpayers a little over \$15-1/2 billion. By 1970 the cost had risen to a little more than \$40-1/2 billion. Maybe one reason for this increase is by the early 1970's the National School Lunch Program provided lunches for about 21 million children each year. The intent of the program is good but it has been taken advantage of.

Each year Congress grants large sums of money to local districts to provide special services for children from low income families. All districts must make these programs and other services available to each child, including those who attend private schools according to library sources. This seems to prove the point that anyone (including high-income families) can get benefits from the free lunch program. One would doubt that one who has enough money to attend a private school would need federal assistance to eat lunch.

Something must be done nationally and above all locally!

Class Competition Bad? Or The Results Better

The abolishment of class competition in pep rallies has seemingly caused a decrease in school spirit this year. The lack of spirit is evident when one walks into one of Rocky Mount Senior High's pep rallies or basketball games.

According to SRA officers class competition was stopped because once it starts there seems to be no way to stop it. A student begins to cheer for his class, and the team is completely left out of the picture. Another time the pep rally can be proceeding fine when suddenly a class banner goes up and so does one-third of the school. After this class is finished, the other two classes feel that they must retaliate and so up go their banners. During all of this, the team for whom the pep rally is being held is sitting on the floor almost totally neglected.

Despite the bad results when class competition gets out of hand, it does a whole lot of good also. Class competition has always been a lot of fun for many students. It seems that when Senior High had class competition school spirit was very high. In the three pep rallies this year, there has been one class competition, one boy-girl competition, and no competition whatsoever. Students have complained about how "dead" the pep rallies have been this year. Perhaps class competition is just the shot in the arms they need.

The answer to the problem could be found in limiting class competition in some way. If it were saved for the last cheer when the team had already left the floor, it could keep the team from being totally neglected and Senior High could have back its class competition.



EDITOR'S ECHO

Any high school student knows stress very well. Even if a person has everything he or she needs, stress is always there. There is the stress that comes from personal finances, being accepted by others and getting along with others, finding a job, relationship with parents and family, and last but not least, choosing a career or vocation. Students suffer from feelings of happiness mixed with periods of hopelessness and depression.

A teenager goes through many changes physically and mentally. He or she doesn't know where to fit in or what to do. The student only knows that school and his peers are the most important role he has to play.

Stress hurts the body, mainly the nervous system. It causes headaches, depression, and shortness of temper. The student who has to deal with stress adjusts to behavior. The

student doesn't want to act scared and down, so he has to put up a front that will eventually cause personality conflicts.

Anyone young or old having stress problems, should always pace himself and plan something in advance and be ready for the change. Opening up to a friend helps. Anyone who mopes around with problems built up inside is going to have a harder time overcoming the problems. One of the most important ways to overcome stress is to evaluate attitudes about life in general.

Negative attitudes never help.

Many people these days are experiencing some means of meditation. These people feel that meditation is the best way to let everything go. The minutes of total nothingness relieve them of all sorts of stress problems.

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