

Editorials

Courageous Principal

There will be no more candy bars or other sugary junk-food in the student store at Mitchell High School according to a report in the Mitchell Journal. Principal Darrell Ledford took the initiative of removing the tooth damaging goodies after meeting with the county's public health dental hygienist, the county school food service director and the head of the Mitchell County Nutritional Council.

"It's our commitment at Mitchell High to do what is right for the student and dental hygiene is definitely part of that commitment," the principal said.

In an effort to improve dental health and hygiene in the school and county, almost all sugary desserts were removed from the school's lunch menu and replaced with fruit and nutritional snack foods. The newspaper article said, "the students have responded very well."

It took courage for Ledford to do what he did. Most young adults don't like to be told what to eat, and many principals

would be hesitant to take candy bars out of their school stores for fear of losing profits which pay for services or equipment that the school might not have otherwise.

Ledford said there has been "virtually no drop in business since the sugar foods were removed," and he has received no complaints.

Ledford took what could have been a highly unpopular stand, especially in dealing with a generation of youngsters who have overdosed on sugar since they have been big enough to clutch a bottle of baby formula, and at a time when schools in some larger N.C. cities are toying with the idea of letting McDonald's cater their lunchrooms.

It's encouraging to see a school administrator do what he knows will benefit his students in the long run, and not bend to popular whims of the moment. His students will probably smile at him with shiny, health teeth in the future and thank him.

'182 - Acre Cranny'

Gov. Jim Hunt recently outlined plans for cashing in on an "economic chance of a lifetime" by using the proposed \$30 million microelectronics Center of North Carolina to spread computer chip manufacturers to "every nook and cranny of the state."

The governor went to California last month to sell microelectronic industry officials on the idea of locating their expanding operations in the Tarheel State. The proposed new center at Research Triangle Park near three of the state's largest universities is an attractive piece of bait to an industry which does \$8 billion in business annually. Some say that figure will go to \$20 billion by 1985.

Gov. Hunt said Friday, "We are not talking about doing something for business, we are talking about doing something for people." By giving them jobs and improving the standard of living in North Carolina. The microelectronics industry is a relatively high-paying industry which can possibly be "a second Industrial Revolution."

Our understanding of the microelectronics industry is that it is a comparatively clean manufacturing process that would

cause little pollution and use very little water. Both traits would be well suited to Western North Carolina where we are conscious of protecting the natural resources and beauty of the mountains.

We hope those in charge of promoting industrial development in Madison county will take advantage of getting in on the ground floor of this opportunity, and tell Gov. Hunt we have a 182-acre cranny that could use a computer chip plant in the near future.

Minitorial

Christmas is known as a time for giving, and most of us busy ourselves by giving presents and things to our friends, relatives and associates. It's really the easiest thing to do.

It's much harder to give part of ourselves to another person; in time, in talent or in caring.

But, which gift is more lasting, more meaningful, more satisfying? We'll let each one of you answer that for yourselves. Merry Christmas.

Heard and Seen

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Here's hoping your holiday is as festive and fun-filled as can be... enriched with a spirit of reverence and peace... enhanced by feelings of hope and bright promise.

**Much Love,
Pop Story**

Letters To The Editor

It's Hard To 'Act' Christmas

Dear Editor:

Everyone says that what is wrong with Christmas is that it is "too commercial," but that is not the trouble. What is wrong with Christmas is that it is "too spiritual" in the wrong way.

The commercial aspect of Christmas can easily be ignored or rejected by anyone who wants to take this holiday seriously. But the "spiritual" aspect is harder to separate from the true message.

The Three Wise Men, and the Star of Bethlehem, and the babe in the manger and the mystery and the miracle — all these make it tempting for us to forget what the whole story is about.

And the whole story — the whole message of the whole messiahship — can be summed up in two sentences from Jesus' own lips:

"If anyone says 'I love God' and hates his brother, he is a liar." (I John 4:20)

"Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these, my brethren, you did it unto me." (Matthew 25:40.)

This is what Christmas — the mass of Christ — must mean, if it is to mean anything. If it does not mean this to us, then when we worship is magic and superstition and idolatry.

You cannot love God without loving (which is not to say liking) ever fellow creature He made; and an act of contempt or rejection or injustice or neglect toward the least — the lowest, the poorest, the weakest, the dumbest — is an act against Him.

If Christianity does not mean this, it means nothing. If this central fact is slurred or sermonized away, the whole structure of Christianity falls apart, and we are left with nothing but another primitive "magic" religion that may comfort us but is powerless to change us.

And it is not the impious, the pagans and unbelievers, who must be on guard against forgetting this message. It is the believers, the "spiritual" people who are prone to mistake form for substance, prayers for performance, worship for practice.

Christianity is not a "spiritual" religion, like some creeds of the East. It is an intensely "practical" religion, having its moral roots in the acute social conscience of Judaism. It was not designed to change the way men think or believe as much as to change the way they act.

It is easy to think Christmas, and easy to believe Christmas; but it is hard — sometimes intolerably hard — to act Christmas. It is not our false commercialism that prevents it, but our false spirituality. Not the clang of the cash register, but the jingle of bells calling us to sentimentality, and seduces us from the year-round ministry of brotherhood.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
James H. Jones, Jr.
P.O. Box 532
Clyde, N.C.

A Different Perspective

Dear Editor:

Since I just received my first copy of your newspaper, I thought I would take a few minutes to comment on your publication and life in general from this side of the county, at least as I see it.

You know, sometimes it takes a view from a different perspective to sort of put things in not in order, then at least in a more real light. My different perspective stems from the fact that I have only lived on Spring Creek for the last year moving here from San Francisco. Needless to say, things are a bit different here from Haight-Ashbury.

First off, let's take a few shots at the News Record. Great paper. It's exactly what a county-wide paper needs to be. Emphasis on local affairs and news, and not on things that are better reported by the large publications. I did see some things, however, that I found interesting when viewed from my perspective.

I saw this picture of some guy who shot a white deer on Hot Springs Mountain in your paper. Wonderful little human interest article about the guy having to prop the gun up with a stick. Now don't get me wrong, I'm all for harvesting game and using our resources and stuff like that. I just wonder at the brains involved in shooting what might be the only white deer in Madison County. You know, kind of hogging it all to himself. There are probably a lot of folks out there who would have loved to see a deer such as that in the wild. Ah well. You can bet your bottom bippy that if there are any more of the little critters running around out there that their days are numbered.

If any of you deer are reading this, it's time to take cover less you want your picture in the paper — framed by some guy's pickup truck hood — with an eight-six in your cranium. Fun in the woods.

Things are real neat around here. The big news is the forming of a PTA at Spring Creek Elementary. For as much noise as this has created you'd think somebody tried to build a Nike

on the creek. Paranoia reigns supreme. The people who have lived here most of their lives (henceforth called the "Insiders") think the people who have "just" moved here (henceforth called the "Outsiders") are "trying to ram stuff down our throats."

The Outsiders worry what kind of education their kids are getting by those "whose world-view consists of a quick ride from Thrust to Bluff." So they argue. And, work out power plays to keep the power in the PTA all in one faction's hands. Or, they think up ways to pull their kids out of school and reduce the student population to the point where the school would close. Guess they don't think of compromise.

If I seem confused by all this, let me add that I'm not at all. Living here is truly a joy and I enjoy the people very much. The way of life around here is actually very easy to understand. For example, when I first moved here I stopped off in Hot Springs on the way to the new house. I spied the ABC store in Hot Springs, so I pulled up to buy some beer. I was told that they sold no beer because Madison was a dry county. Oh. I go to an ABC store to buy some good ole ABC and they tell me they don't sell it because the county is dry. Made me glad I had read Catch 22.

So life goes on on this side of the mountain. I wonder how things are in Marshall. It's so far away, I went there once. It only took me one and a half hours to get there. In that time I could have gone to Asheville or Newport. I'd think the business people of Marshall would like to change all this. The same folks in Hot Springs probably wouldn't.

This letter is not necessarily a letter to the editor. It is a product of poor TV reception. Besides, I don't know anyone else to write to. Have a nice holiday season.

Tim Morrissey
Route 1
Hot Springs, N.C.

Living and Growing

Hitting Forty Can Be A Traumatic Point In Life

By CARL MUMPOWER, M.S.W.

Tom is generally a quiet, conservative, and easy going fellow who's been the stable sort most of his life. He has a nice family, with 3 kids, a good wife, an attractive house, and a dog that doesn't mess up the carpet or bark at the neighbors. He's worked for the same company for 15 years and is known by his friends as a good all around guy.

Recently Tom began to do strange things. He discarded his ties for open collars and gold medallions. His tasseled loafers have been replaced by white tennis shoes, and his

pants have gone from conservative wool to denim blue. The other day Tom ran out and traded his family wagon for a 1959 British two-seater sports car that "runs well every once in awhile." He's been jumping out of bed every morning and doing all kinds of exercises and drinking ground soy beans and cactus juice for breakfast. He's taken to pinching all of the office girls and recently had his wife's beautician give him a curly permanent, after she dyed all of the grey hairs blond. Tom's wife, kids, friends, boss, and dog think he has gone crazy. He hasn't — he's just hit forty.

Forty, that magical age

when our waistline begins to go, the wrinkles become more entrenched, and our ego takes a dive for the bottom. Some men take it in stride and keep on moving, for others, it's a pretty traumatic point in life. Tom fits into this category. He's trying to regress to those happy younger years and stop the process of time. Unfortunately for Tom, it can't be done. Tom figures that he's probably going to die of a heart attack in the next month or so, and that he might as well anyway, because he's probably finished as a man. His 30 inch waist has grown to match his age and his old military uniform fits everywhere except in the seat, shoulders, chest, and waist. Tom figures he is on the down hill side of life, with one foot in

the grave, so he's going to make up for lost time.

Forget it, Tom, you're fighting a lost battle. If we live, we all hit forty and there is not too much that you can do to stop it. Sure, changes do occur as we get a little older, but look at some of the positive aspects. Usually the older we are, the wiser we are. Gray hair on the temples adds a touch of "sophistication" to our appearance. You're no longer living off of \$25 a week, and you don't have to worry about pimples or being too young to buy a beer. You've got a nice family, you've got a lot of good friends, and you're sitting pretty. Relax, Tom, and enjoy it. You've got it made, but I've got to admit I'm glad it's happened to you and not me ...

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All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.
—Edmund Burke