

Viewpoints

Stand on child abuse is curbing problem

Last week's Superior Court conviction and sentencing of a man accused of child abuse marks a new trend in law enforcement in Hoke County and could be a sign that local efforts are paying off to curb one of this nation's most devastating crimes.

The 24-year-old county resident was charged with submerging a three-year-old child's hands and arms in scalding water and causing second and third degree burns. The defendant was found guilty and sentenced to five years in jail.

The child probably will remain scarred the rest of its life. A conviction may not have been possible if the local Department of Social Services, the health department, the sheriff's department and members of the district attorney's office had not worked together as a team.

Although lately there seems to have been a rash of physical and sexual child abuse cases being reported in Hoke County, authorities feel the number of incidents have not increased, only the public's

awareness of the crime.

Local workshops have been held with teachers, law enforcement authorities and social service workers to make them all more aware of the signs which are a tipoff that an incident might have taken place.

National television shows about abuse have encouraged adults to start listening to children and to report the crimes.

For example, after watching a nationally televised program last week which encouraged children to tell parents if they had been abused, a young St. Louis boy reported a sexual attack to his mother and an arrest was made. Once arrested, the man admitted sexually assaulting numerous children.

The U.S. Senate is holding committee hearings on child abuse and is considering new laws which would make it easier to get the crime out of the homes and into the courts.

Under the plan now being considered, victims would no longer be removed from the home, but the perpetrators would be kept away. Video taped testimony would be allowed in court. The interviews would be conducted without family members present.

Editorial

Had such a federal law, or a law like the one passed by the North Carolina Legislature last July which allows hearsay evidence, been in place two years ago, the outcome of a Hoke County sexual abuse case involving an infant child might have been different.

Evidence might have also been stronger last spring in Hoke County District Court with a case involving a physically abused child.

Last week's conviction can also be linked to a stronger stand on prosecuting abuse cases being taken by the district attorney's office and by a new level of cooperation from the district court.

The courts of the country and this county are finally beginning to recognize that home is not a sanctuary when it comes to child abuse.

Researchers have shown that many child abusers were once abused children, which is an indication that the problem, like an infectious disease, in some cases is self-perpetuating.

It is encouraging that those who are able to effect a cure and to make a difference in the lives of Hoke County abused children are doing their job.

Perhaps the efforts being made today will slow the occurrences of child abuse in this county and will cut the odds against future generations of children being infected with the disease.

Letters To The Editor

Nelson should be more cautious about private schools

Dear Editor:

Last week, your paper quoted remarks made by school superintendent Nelson which were very uncomplimentary to private schools in Hoke County. Whereas, I am certain Dr. Nelson could not have been referring to the Raeford Kindergarten and Day Nursery, yet, the article was unclear as to just whom he meant.

The Raeford Kindergarten has offered quality kindergarten to the children of Hoke County for over 30 years, far longer than kindergarten has appeared in the curriculum of the public schools. Our teachers are not only well educated, but talented, capable and dedicated.

In the future I hope that Dr. Nelson will choose his words more carefully and that this paper will take more care in clarifying the information it prints.

Sincerely,
Eleonor E. Scull
Director

At present time, we do not have the final figures, but we do have enough facts to know that this was a big success again this year.

Each year we are overwhelmed that so many people join with us in our effort to raise funds to support our Hospitals for Crippled Children and our Burn Institutes for Children--we are deeply grateful.

James R. Attaway, Chairman
1984 Annual Fish Fry

Republican convention like watching pep rally

Dear editor:

Luckily it happens just once every four years, but watching a political convention is an experience hard to describe in any form anybody who didn't see it can understand.

It's sort of like a disorganized high school pep rally with nobody directing the cheers.

At the Republican convention, every time a speaker mounted the rostrum and prepared to unleash his oratory, delegates would begin yelling and stomping. Sometimes they held him up for 10 or 15 minutes. I got the impression they didn't want to hear what he had to say. Then when they saw they couldn't head him off and were in for it, they quieted down. But let him pause at the end of a sentence, even to just take a sip of water, and the yelling busted out again.

If you want a convention to run on time, don't allow your speakers to pause between sentences.

Delegates don't pay any attention to what a speaker's saying, but if he pauses they think he's said something worth yelling about.

I was completely bumfuzzled during the acceptance speech of Mr. Reagan.

There was some mighty thirsty delegates here, I said to myself, because at every few sentences he spoke they interrupted and began yelling "Four more beers!"

It was explained to me they were saying "Four more years."

Some pundits say political conventions are now out of date and unnecessary, that the platforms and the nominations are like some hay I've got out here on the ground -- already cut and dried, that all a convention does is bale it, regardless of the protein content.

Yours faithfully,
J.A.



Reagan pledges for no tax hike are not just campaign rhetoric

The perception is, so we read, that President Reagan is eyeing votes in November with repeated claims he doesn't plan to increase income taxes in 1985 if elected.

It may be good politics, but the word we read from some of his closest advisors is that the president not only means what he says but has held that view consistently, and that recent campaign pledges on this subject are nothing new.

Mr. Reagan has crusaded against big government for two decades. He therefore probably means exactly what he says. If he refuses to increase income taxes, as he insists he will, he's balancing the risk of continued deficits against the risk of causing a recession by a tax increase.

KEY RACES . . . North Carolina is having one of the key races for the United States Senate which, is attracting the attention of politicians over the nation. It will be a hard battle, but sometimes it's harder for a new man to win than the candidate challenger. Both candidates are well-known throughout the state. Jesse Helms is the incumbent, and Gov. Jim Hunt is the challenger.



Cliff Blue

People and Issues

One of the most fascinating races in the House this year is in Florida's 4th District. There Congressman Bill Chapell (D) is running for a ninth term in Congress, and the outcome of this race could have national repercussions. We read that Chappell, a former Speaker of the Florida House, a farm boy who has made good.

FOOD HOPE . . . An idea just ten years old holds out great hope for improving the world's food supply dramatically--and perhaps preventing some of the starvation and malnutrition now expected in coming decades as population expands.

Writing in the Christian Science Monitor Peter Tonge reports that the tyroponics system of growing plants in soilless containers filled

with a nutrient solution is a major success in its pioneer effort in Lucerne Valley, California.

PROFIT SHARING . . . President Reagan, in a speech to automobile workers, recently, advised union leaders to show some restraint in demanding wage increases. What the president fears is another round of sharply inflationary wage hikes, gained by a strike threat, forcing higher automobile prices.

When GM and Ford presented new-contract proposals to the United Auto Workers Union recently new benefits were offered, but in the form of bonuses and other non-inflationary income hikes.

Auto companies are earnings record profits and workers have a right to share in good times, but not at the risk of higher prices for new automobiles.

TEACHER IN SPACE . . . President Reagan announced recently that a school teacher will be the first observer to soar into space as a passenger in a shuttle mission late next year or early in 1986.

Fish fry was big success

To the Editor:

As Chairman of Mecca Shrine Club's recent Fish Fry and on behalf of all its members, I want to express our sincere appreciation for the wonderful support we received again this year.

A special thanks to The News-Journal and its staff, and to the Radio Station WSMR and its staff for their interest and support in promoting our Fish Fry and for being on site the day of this event--the coverage we received was just great.

We also say thanks to all of the merchants, businesses and industries in and around Raeford who displayed their support in so many different ways; to all of the people, especially the ladies, who gave so freely of their time to assist in cooking and serving; and last but certainly not least, to all the wonderful people who came out and bought fish plates because without your support there is no way this fund-raising event could be successful.

Political futures hinge on the Cubs' play

The other day I noticed my dog Calhoun and I had developed a new level of communication.

I was reluctant to mention it to anyone, except the dog. However, the feat was so remarkable that after a few days I told my wife and couple of friends.

"I've got this ESP thing with Calhoun," I said.

Of course, they all had a good laugh. They made jokes about my level of intelligence being the same as a dog's, and howled when I told them I was on the verge of being recorded in the annals of science.

When I persisted in talking about my discovery, my wife suggested that I show the "good" doctor at the state mental hospital my new trick.

"But in the meantime, why don't you spend a night or two in the yard exchanging thoughts with Calhoun?" she quipped.

Earlier, before the ESP breakthrough, I had not noticed I had any ability to talk to Calhoun. I would tell him to sit. He would stand. When I would ask him to roll over, he would scratch his ear.

I tried to discuss the Hunt-Helms Senate race with him. He only yawned.

"I don't think Calhoun cares who wins the Senate race," I had told my wife.



Warren Johnston

The Puppy Papers

"He cares, but he is looking for a third candidate," she had said. On the day of the communication discovery, Calhoun had been conducting a survey of the neighborhood's dogs to determine the local favorite in the Presidential campaign.

Opinion was running two-to-one in favor of Reagan. Calhoun is a Democrat. He appeared to be feeling perplexed by the outcome of the poll.

I noticed his bewilderment and was thinking of cheering him up with the reward of a beef bone from the freezer.

Apparently picking up on my thoughts, Calhoun broke off the survey in the yard and rushed to the freezer door.

I noted the telepathic link, and thought up a few tricks to prove my case before I rewarded him with the bone.

I thought him to sit. He did. I thought him to bark. He responded.

ed. I thought him to roll over, and he looked like an Olympic gymnast.

"If he hadn't read my mind, he would not have known I was thinking of breaking out a treat. He got to the freezer before I did. And how about those tricks?" I excitedly told my wife later.

"All that proves is that great minds think alike," she retorted. I was unsure of the gist of her meaning, but I took it as a compliment. After all, Calhoun is believed to have one of the keenest political minds in the area.

"What did you learn from him?" she asked with a wry grin. I had learned a great deal. Calhoun had told me to forget about the political races and to concentrate on baseball.

"It all depends on the Cubs. History will repeat itself.

"If the Cubs win, so will the Democrats," he said. Recent attempts to re-establish the ESP link with Calhoun have failed. He is back to standing when I ask him to sit, and yawning when I inquire about the Senate race.

However, I did overhear him on the telephone making an airline reservation to Chicago, and I noticed that he has added a "C" to his baseball cap.

