

Viewpoints

Nursing home needs attention of locals

The way things are shaping up, most residents of Hoke County may not live long enough to see the opening of a nursing home here unless a campaign is launched to cut through the political red tape tying up the facility.

In the past two decades, many Hoke County residents have been content to sit back and let Raleigh shape the destiny of the county, and as a result, we have been left waiting.

For example, when we were promised by state officials in 1968 and 1972, that U.S. 401 would be widened to four lanes, we believed them and did little to guarantee the pledge. Despite the fact the widened highway link with Fayetteville might have meant a saving in lives, and its construction could have meant this county would no longer occupy the position of having the lowest per capita income in the state, no work has been done on the project. After 20 years, we are still fighting the battle for the improvements in 1985.

Had we leaned heavily on state officials and had we been more insistent during the last 10 years, the construction of U.S. 401 might have already been finished.

Now we are faced with a similar problem trying to garner a nursing home for Hoke County.

Although we are one of the few remaining counties which do not have a nursing care facility, officials in the state Department of Human Resources do not seem in a hurry to get us one.

Applications for the facility were filed over a year ago, but because of a painfully slow, politically pockmarked system of approval, construction of a nursing home here has not moved any closer to reality during the last 12 months.

Squabbling over who will construct the facility is now in the appeals process and could delay the project indefinitely.

In the meantime, as the state drags its feet, Hoke County residents still face the burden of having to travel to surrounding counties to visit loved ones confined to nursing facilities, and patients must leave familiar home surroundings to obtain long-term care.

The lack of a nursing home in Hoke County is not just an inconvenience for those needing the care. It is a financial and emotional encumbrance which does not need to exist.

A nursing facility is also one of those factors which is considered by new residents, particularly those of retirement age. It is probably safe to assume potential Hoke County taxpayers have been lost to surrounding counties because there is no care home located here.

If Hoke County is ever going to have a nursing home, then local residents must fight for it.

We encourage elected officials and community leaders to push the Raleigh bureaucracy for a settlement of the dispute over the Hoke County facility and get construction started.

This county can not afford to wait for our problems to be solved by others. Hoke residents must take charge of our own future.

'Pork Barrel' stance costing Martin votes

Two months ago, North Carolina Gov. James G. Martin gained statewide voter sympathy by taking on the partisan members of the legislature, but now that the general assembly has adjourned, the governor's attack on the solons' special appropriations money seems ill-timed and can only lose him support in the future.

The governor is correct to question some of the programs which are receiving "pork barrel" funds, but holding up the entire bill because of a few bad apples is not good politics.

Most of the programs funded by the pork barrel bill are legitimate and are designed to make North Carolina a better place to live and work.

If the governor cares about correcting the abuses of the pork barrel, now is the time to start by proposing new strict guidelines for next year's funding.

A joint legislative conference committee is being organized to review the pork barrel matter this month. The governor has an excellent opportunity to make political hay by introducing a proposal to the group for future spending.

Martin is gaining little by holding up the 1985 pork barrel funds, other than the wrath of voters who have already spent the money they were promised by the legislature.

We encourage the governor to release the appropriations and to work for a 1986 bill which distributes the money equally to all members of the general assembly for use on deserving projects.

The upcoming Turkey Festival sounds so exciting I'm really starting to feel the part...



Madilyn



Oh I just love stuff I can really get into!

May 8 & 9 1985

Winners turn defeats into victories

If baseball can drop sports and go on strike, I can drop a political column for a week and write about sports -- about winning and losing. Here goes.

One famous coach said, "Winning is not the most important thing; it is the only thing." Sometimes I believe that. But usually when I think of winning and losing, my mind goes back to Davidson.

When I played basketball there for Lefty Driesell, winning was very important. We worked for it in practice every day. Lefty's red-covered play book was a guide to winning the Southern Conference Tournament. That goal was practical, it was "doable," it was believable, and we worked hard to do it -- but we never did.

I will always remember that afternoon -- in Richmond, 20 years ago -- after we lost the opening game in the tournament by four points. Looking back now, it was a miracle that we made it to the tournament at all, that we even came close. We just were not that good -- but we thought that we were winners, and we were crushed.

Lefty should have been crushed too, because he wanted it even more than we did. But what did he do? He told us all good-bye that very afternoon. Thanked me and the other seniors sincerely for all we had done. He patted all of us on the back. He assured us that the sun would rise the next morning just like it always did. Then he hurried out to his car and got out on the road recruiting new players for the next year.

It was a good trip too. He brought back Dick Snyder -- perhaps the greatest basketball player ever at Davidson -- later a great pro. With Fred Hetzel, Barry Teague, Don Davidson, and Terry Holland, they made little Davidson

one of the best teams in the country.

If Lefty had let losing defeat him that afternoon in Richmond, we would have understood, because he had worked two years to win that tournament. We would have understood, but we would have never gotten great basketball in Charlotte in the 60's. For some of us, life just wouldn't have been the same.

But for Lefty -- that time -- losing was just another step in becoming a real winner.

That afternoon in Richmond comes back to me, as do Lefty's later successes, whenever I lose. Whether it is an argument, or a case for my client in law practice, or a basketball game in the "old man's" league that lets me play in the winter, or a close election -- whatever kind of loss it is, that afternoon after the Southern Conference Tournament in Richmond comes back to me.

During my election campaign, someone told me something very wise. It came at a time early on in the campaign when I was having a hard time finding people to say yes to my requests for support. Everywhere I turned, there were lots of no's.

He told me, "There are always lots of no's on the way to a yes. Every no you gets puts you closer to the yes than is bound to be there."

He also said, "No doesn't mean just no. It means not now, based on what you have told me so far. No may mean come back later when we both have different information or a different viewpoint."

How right he was -- so many of those early no's turned into the most enthusiastic yeses on the next try.

That is the way it can be with losing and winning. If we approach it positively, losing can put us that much closer to winning.



One on One D.G. Martin

Losing does not have to mean defeat. It can simply mean, "Now now, maybe not this thing, this time, but there is something later if you hang in there."

This month, we mark the 40th anniversary of the most humiliating defeat a nation has ever suffered at war. The first atomic bomb and the total destruction and defeat of the armed forces of Japan have come back in vivid detail. At the same time, we hear and read more about Japan's growing dominance in the world economy. Where did it come from? We are told that the seeds of Japan's economic victory grew out of its defeat 40 years ago.

A similar story with an individual. Who is the most successful businessman in the U.S. today? Lee Iacocca? Where was he, where was his company 6 years ago? He had lost his job at Ford. His company -- Chrysler -- was given "no chance by nobody." Two losers? NO. Iacocca had lost. But he wasn't a loser. He made his loss just another step towards winning.

Listen to the news; read this newspaper. Every day there is the same story -- just with different people or groups.

Take NBC. Two years ago it was written off as a major network. It looked hopeless. Even Fred Silverman couldn't save them. Would you have wanted to go to work for NBC three years ago? But those people who were there went back to the drawing boards. The loss became a challenge to do something better. Now they are the darlings of the entertainment

world -- the biggest winners.

Closer to home. Think about Frances Crockett, the owner of the minor league baseball club in Charlotte. A few weeks before the season began this year, she woke up one night to learn that her stadium was burning down. It was a great loss -- sure. But did it make her a loser? -- Never! A new stadium built almost overnight. Her unwillingness to let misfortune become defeat turned the fire into the beginning of a great victory this year. When she is old and telling her grandchildren about her long career as a baseball team owner, what year do you think she will talk about with the most pride? No question about it. She will talk about the year of the great fire.

Think about Steve Walsh. Today, he is one of the most successful real estate developers in the southeast. But a few years ago he was written off by most people as just another loser -- of many -- in the real estate world of the 70's. Nobody would lend him a dollar. Today, he would tell you that those troubled times were part of the foundation of his current success.

What is the message from all this? Here is what I think that it all means:

Being a winner doesn't mean that you never lose. All winners do. Being a winner means never letting a loss defeat you. A winner always turns that loss around and finds some way to turn it into a step towards a bigger win down the road.

Being a winner means never letting a loss defeat you.

What do you think? Have you ever turned a painful loss into an important win. Write me at the following address: D.G. Martin, P.O. Box 37283, Charlotte, N.C. 28237.

Bird doing job of chimney sweep

Oscar fell down our chimney the other day and ended up in the wood stove. It was his 14th trip down the two-story pipe in the last six months.

"Oh, I see Oscar is back. If he falls in one more time before winter, we won't have to have the Sweep this year," my wife said, as we released the soot-covered bird from the belly of the stove.

Unlike the first time, getting the bird out of the stove has gotten to be old hat.

The liberation method works well, although the neighbors might think it strange.

We close all the doors in the room, pull down the window shades and open the back door. Once Oscar sees the light streaming from the doorway, he heads for freedom with little difficulty.

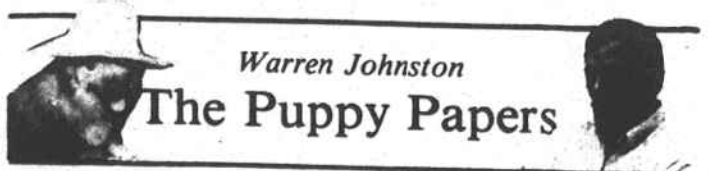
The excitement is now limited, but there is still a big crowd that turns up for one of Oscar's coming out parties.

Calhoun and the three cats clearly remember the fascinating time they had during Oscar's first trip and would not miss the subsequent events for anything.

When Oscar is flapping around in the metal stove pipe, the other animals get pretty excited. They rush into the room before the doors close and hover quietly, waiting for the stove door to open.

The first trip down the pipe caught us off guard. All the animals gathered nervously around the hearth, mystified by the scuffling and clawing coming from inside the stove.

Naively, we opened the stove door to find out who had dropped in. Oscar flew out, and the race was on.



Warren Johnston

The Puppy Papers

All six of us took up the chase and tried to catch the bird as he artfully flew from one room to the next.

The cats knocked over chairs and broke lamps, leaping for Oscar, who was desperately bouncing off closed windows. Calhoun, who was frustrated by his own inability to fly, got into the fray by encouraging the felines with constant high-pitched barks and by smashing potted plants.

My wife and I fell over tables and slipped on rugs, trying to influence Oscar's flight toward an open door.

"He's coming your way," I'd yell as the bird swooped over my wife's head, and just before the herd of animals knocked her off her feet.

After about an hour, Oscar finally grew weary of the fun and flew out the door.

We fell exhausted into a heap of broken furnishings. Since then, we have successfully limited Oscar's visits to only a few minutes.

However, we are hoping he will drop in one more time before winter, so we won't have to call the Sweep.

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