

THE AMEN CORNER

TO MY READERS: I'd like to step out of the "Amen Corner" for just a few minutes, if I may. The column this week won't be the normal one; and in case I don't get a chance to do this later, "Thanks a million!" for all the kind things that you've said to me about my little pieces of nonsense. It's something of an ego builder to find out that people are actually reading my words and not just using them to line the bottoms of their birdcages. If I've given you at least one chuckle over the last two-and-a-half terms, then my ambition in life—to make people laugh—has been realized.

But to get to the purpose of this week's column. The people on this campus who really know me are aware that the Ron who writes those crazy columns every week isn't always as funny (if that's what you can call it) as the "Amen Corner" would indicate. Like most people whose lives are built around lightening life's load through a little humor, I also have a serious side that comes out once in a while, but not often. Most recently, it came out about three years ago when a friend of mine was killed in an automobile wreck. If you've ever lost a friend of a loved one in a wreck or through illness, you know that it's a difficult experience to go through. This young man was a classmate of mine at A-B Tech. His death hit all of us very hard, especially those of us who knew him as a quiet person who was always smiling and who never had a harsh word for anyone—a rare person in this society.

The morning following his death, I sat down and wrote out a short eulogy to our friend. I didn't write it for any kind of personal glory; just to put down a list of feelings. Period. So, if you want to get a glimpse of the other side of a comic; a clown, if you will, read on. Next week, we'll get back to sub-normal, I promise.

I read the other day that a friend of mine lost his life in a car accident. You say, "So what? Lots of people die in car accidents. What's new about that?" Have you ever lost someone you liked because of an accident on the highway or anywhere? Someone you knew you could trust with a deep, dark secret? Someone you could talk to and know that he'd listen? Somebody—I don't know—somebody, you know?

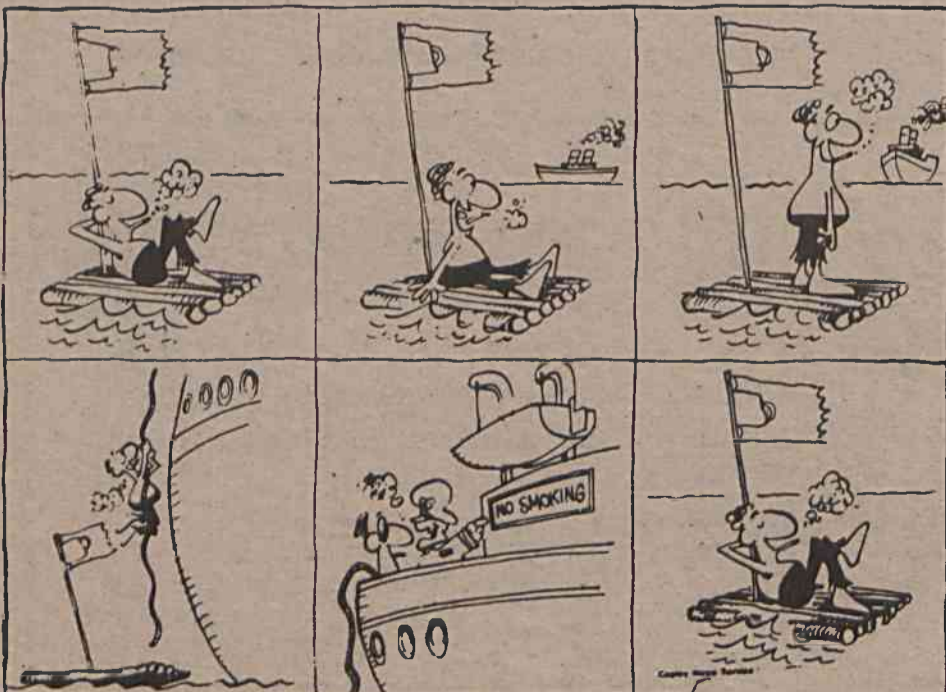
A friend is a person who likes you because you like him. You get to know him through acquaintances at work, at church, at school, wherever. The bond of friendship comes together the first time you meet and strengthens as to, e goes on. When times are bad, a friend is the natural in a score of otherwise flat notes; someone who is never sharp unless it's necessary. A friend is the sunshine and warmth in a life of dark and cold; a smile, a wink, a pat on the back, an "Awright!" when you're a winner; and a "Shake it off, Man. You'll make it," when you're a loser. A friend is someone to be a friend to. He is someone you get down on your knees and thank God for at the end of the day. It's part of your life.

A friend for life is a friend forever. Having someone like that close by in a time of tragedy or in a time of real joy can be the ultimate high. You don't need Pot or Coke or Pills or any type of drug. All you need is a friend. Period.

To a person who is lonely; literally with no one in the world to turn to, someone who he can call "Friend" can be like finding the pot at the end of the rainbow, Gold and all. It can be like finding a treasure trove, a gold mine, a bonanza. It's an ego builder. You think down deep inside that the world hates you and that you're inferior to all around. Then you find that there IS someone who cares. He might be the only one within a 100-mile radius; still, he's one person who respects you, understands you and helps you. That's a friend.

I read the other day that a friend of mine lost his life in a car accident. It's awfully easy to lose your life, but it's awfully hard to lose a friend.

RON CALDWELL



editorials

Last issue of THE RIDGERUNNER offered an editorial concerning a service which was becoming a burden to the students who used it; this week, however, I'd like to comment on a service provided by this school which is not appreciated by the students as much as it should be. The Ramsey Library is one of the most useful and informative sources of information in this community and definitely the most informative on this campus. During a recent interview with the university librarian, Mr. Blowers, I had the opportunity to hear some of his views on the operation of the library. Mr. Blowers informed me that he is indeed interested in having student input (in the form of suggestions in the suggestion box) in the operation of our resource center.

Not only does the library offer more than 100,000 books and many dozen periodicals, it also offers to the student a quiet place to study or write a term paper (on one of the typewriters provided by the library). There is also a snack area on the lower level which has a drink and candy machine, tables, and chairs. Food and drinks are prohibited in all other areas of the library but this lounge has been provided for the students' comfort.

A new area featuring current periodicals of student interest has recently been established. This area contains such magazines as PEOPLE, NATIONAL LAMPOON, TENNIS, and many others. It is arranged in a cube-shaped reading area on the lower level near the foot of the stairs. Its use is encouraged and paperback books from the collection may be checked-out at the front desk.

In the next issue of THE RIDGERUNNER a feature article will be written concerning the many facilities of the D. Hiden Ramsey Library and their use by the students. Meanwhile, I would like to take advantage of this space to encourage students to use and learn from the resources of the library.

SWE

COMMENT

To The Editor:

I wish to bring to the students a problem which has existed for a long time. The problem is the lack of an adequate communications system for our Security department. At this time, the only form of communication available to the Security officers, is a one-way beeper system. This system is in repair as often as it is in use.

I propose that a minimally adequate communications system would consist of

less than three, and possibly four, hand held two-way radios.

For Security not to have adequate communications with one another in case of emergency or otherwise, is comparable to a university without instructors.

I hope the Administration will seek out funds with which to supply our Security officers with this most essential necessity.

Sincerely,
Concerned Dorm Students



GARY STONE—Candidate for Vice-President—Junior

Hello. I would like to take this opportunity to ask you to vote for me for Student Government Vice President on February 15. My name is Gary Stone and I feel that I am the most qualified candidate. I think much can be accomplished with hard work and determination.

One of the primary jobs of the Vice President is the Chairmanship of the Student Senate. This requires a thorough knowledge of the Senate and its procedures. Since I am the only candidate who has been elected to serve as a Senator, I feel that this qualifies me in that respect. I have also had additional experience in directing and presiding over meetings as a Senate Committee chair-

man and as a chairman of various campus organizations.

Another facet of the Vice Presidency which I see as important is the ability to communicate with other students. I have written for THE RIDGERUNNER and have been a DJ for WUNF-FM. I also worked on the "1977-1978 Student Guide" and "The Summit."

The Vice President should also be familiar with all parts of U.N.C.-A. life. Having been both a dorm and commuter student I am able to appreciate both perspectives. I feel that this is very important.

I believe that I can be a good Vice President for you. Thank you for your time and interest and be sure to vote.