

Student Perspectives

The "RIGHT" Side

By Ralph Powell and Chris Lindstrom

Pro-choice

We feel that we can safely assume that everyone would agree that the public school system is in dire need of reform.

The United States is among the top in per capita spending per student on education then any other country in the world. Yet, the United States consistently remains towards the bottom in test scores. Doesn't something look wrong here?

We believe that it is not the lack of monetary or material resources that causes this outrage. We argue that it is because of the money spent on sex education, protection for students, distribution of condoms and multi-culturism that has permeated our school systems. Other modern industrial nations leave these burdens to the parents or guardians--where it should be.

Our public schools are infested with drugs and violence, which is not conducive to a proper learning environment. Could these be the reasons that other countries are ahead of us in test scores?

What the republicans strongly advocate are giving all students, rich or poor, from all ethnical backgrounds, equal opportunity to choose where they want to attend. This would be brought about in the form of a voucher sent to the parents in the amount of what the government spends for their children to go to public school.

This program would give parents the choice of sending their child to a private school, if they want to. Thus, alleviating the parents of the burden of sending their children to a school which they disapprove of.

In Greensboro, N.C., \$6,000 a year is spent per student to send them to public school. Many schools, like Greensboro Day School, cost significantly less and offer smaller classes, stronger student/teacher relationships, there is virtually no crime, a 0% dropout rate, higher test scores and a 100% college acceptance rate.

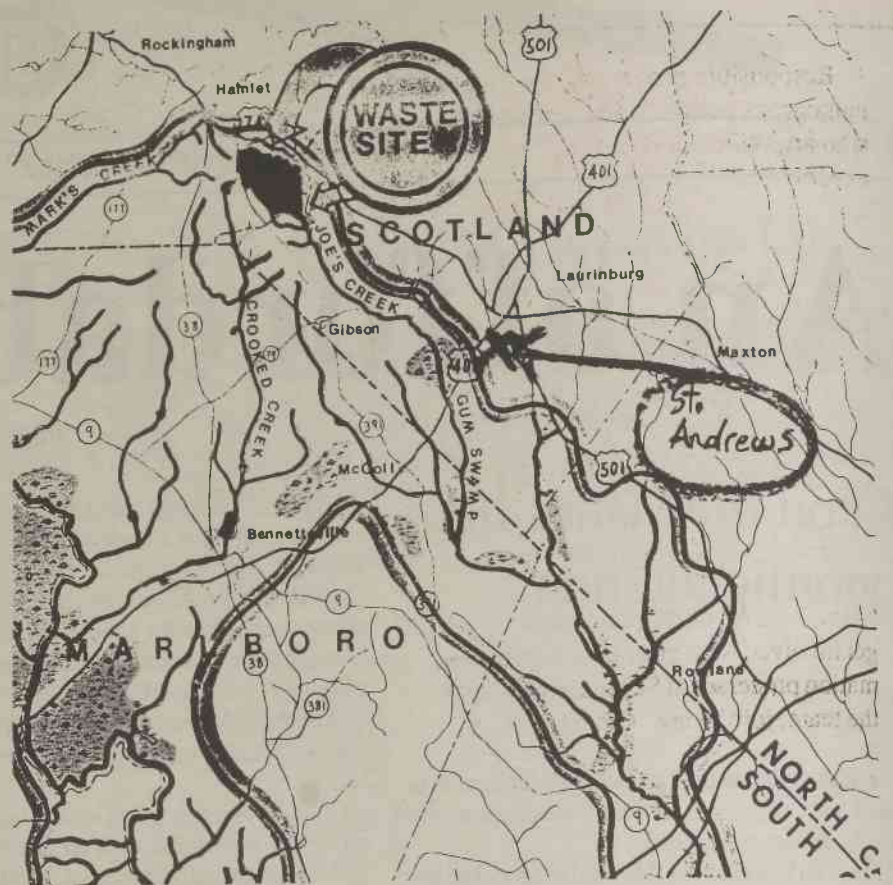
Some private schools cost less than half of the allotted \$6,000 for public schools. Vadaia Christian School cost only \$2,000 per year to attend. It doesn't take an economist to figure out the more logical choice.

With the voucher system, there would be competition between public and private schools, forcing the public schools to provide a higher quality education.

President Clinton is a big advocate of the public school system, yet he doesn't feel that it is worthy enough for his daughter. Though President Clinton has the money to exercise his choice, the majority of us do not. With the voucher system, all Americans would be given that choice.

So, why does Clinton adequately oppose the voucher system? He claims to understand the problems of the United States, and that he fights for individual rights; therefore, we believe it could be expected of him to support the freedom of choice.

We challenge President Clinton to re-examine and institute the voucher system because the students of America would be the beneficiaries of the voucher system. They are the future of this great land, and they rightfully deserve the best education possible. God bless the United States! Don't blame us, we voted for Bush!



Don't dump on us

By Gregg Phelps

Until several weeks ago, the people of Scotland County, in a large part, were unaware of the low level radioactive waste dump site that may be chosen ten miles upstream in Richmond county.

Driving down Hwy 74 towards Hamlet and seeing the anti-waste dump signs, or reading the Laurinburg Exchange, the reality of the situation becomes evermore apparent. So why should this issue bother the Richmond/Scotland community anyway, despite its close proximity? Why should the St. Andrews' community be concerned about this issue, since (for the most part) our stay here is only temporary?

Serious questions should also arise when considering the economic, political, and environmental ramifications for this site selection. In fact, it is no coincidence that the Richmond County dump site is a top contender (verses Wake/Chatham counties a.k.a. Raleigh area) for the dump location, and Richmond /Scotland counties are some of the poorest minority populated areas in North Carolina.

The Richmond/Scotland county areas are not as populated as other areas such as the Raleigh area, capital of North Carolina. You don't have to be a scholar to recognize these political undertones. Bob Bierbaum, a St. Andrews' video production professor, believes it is such a political matter that he is taking the issue to Washington, D.C. by foot (estimated at 35 miles a day) from the proposed waste site to rally support for this cause.

From an environmental standpoint, it would not be a wise decision to put the waste dump in Richmond county according to Wayward-Clyde Consultants, Inc. (WCC). WCC, an independent Geological firm, was hired to survey the hydrogeological site where the dump would be located and pronounced it unsafe due to the sandy makeup of the ground. Absorbtion would be excellerated into the surface and ground water if radioactive leakage occurred. The leakage could then be carried down Joe's Creek to the Little Pee Dee River, and onward to the Pee Dee River; both rivers are a large supplier of water for South Carolina residents.

True it will be a long time before we can find an alternative to nuclear power, and we need to find a place to dump our waste. This part of North Carolina is not the solution.

This site will be the second one in the Southeast (after Barnwell, S.C.). That means that waste would be trucked in from Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Florida, and South Carolina. In short, this is a matter of safety and health.

It was proven in the last presidential election that youth have a voice and are being heard (Rock the Vote, etc.), and the people of Laurinburg and Scotland County need our help. I have illustrated the hazards, and the injustices of the situation, now it is time for you to judge for yourself, and act.

Support can be given through political action, fund raising, and publicity committees to the cause. Contact Gregg Phelps (5598 Albemarle, suite 7 rm. 146) or Amy Snow(5348) for more information and literature. When it's said to "Keep North Carolina Green," let's keep it in the vegetation sense.