

GRYPHON EDITORIALS

Gryphons ARE Good Sports

The behavior of slightly over one percent of the student population of Rocky Mount Senior High during and following the RMSH-NNSH game has brought severe criticism and even condemnation to the entire student body.

Vandalism is criminal; poor sportmanship is reprehensible. The majority of RMSH students recognize this and regret any such display, especially injuries. However, this majority is naturally resentful when adults, students, and even newspapers imply that all RMSH is smeared with the taint of poor sportmanship. Certainly, if damage done at RMSH on the same night were done by Northern students, all Northern students should not be blamed.

Such behavior is not condoned at either school. Silence concerning the matter serves as a sign of not making things worse; but as an admission of guilt.

Possibly a study and survey need to be taken concerning this matter. Perhaps the rivalry is too stiff and needs some softening up by not playing for a year or two. Or maybe afternoon games are in order for the two schools. These possibilities seem to be very strict measures, but if people continue to complain about RMSH's "childish" behavior, these measures could be taken into consideration.

A more reasonable suggestion is to throw away the word "revenge." One bad deed does not deserve another, and that goes for NNHS and RMSH. The two schools are very close in location and should come together at times other than ballgames. An interchange of school policies, of choral concerts, and yes, of even social events could be worked out if only that dumb word, "revenge" were omitted from the vocabularies of both schools.

Any RMSH student worthy of the name is a good sport, and nobody will tell the Gryphons differently. All the articles and editorials in the world couldn't change the pride a true RMSH student has for his school. It's something that comes from working together. Though strange as it may seem, the ugliness following the NNHS and RMSH game has not split the school; instead it has unified the students to work harder to receive the respect a great school like RMSH deserves.

Lunchroom Getting Crowded

Any student who has not eaten in the school cafeteria during the past week would hardly recognize it with all the recent improvements. The lunchroom has been transformed almost overnight into a modern facility serving a wider variety of foods than ever before. But there are still problems.

With all the additions to the menu, a number of students are eating in the cafeteria who used to go out or bring their lunch from home. They find that now they can get many of the things at school that they used to have to run over to Bradley's to buy. The variety is endless — milkshakes, potato chips, cookies, French fries, and desserts.

This increase in people has caused the lunch lines to grow to such lengths that it often takes most of a student's time just to buy his lunch, and after fighting his way through a tremendous line, he either does not have time to eat or no longer wants his food. If a student were to try to look through a window into the cafeteria, he would be confronted with an endless wall of people waiting patient — or impatiently — for their lunch.

After buying lunch, the student then faces the challenge of finding a seat. It is not unusual for a student to have a chair stolen right out from under him. Lunch has become, for many people, unpleasant, despite all the new delicacies.

Improvements have been made in the food; now the RMSH cafeteria needs improvement in efficiency. Lunch is the only time students have free during the day. Their meal should be relaxed and cheerful, not uptight and ill-tempered because of long lines or a lack of seats. The simplest solution would be more lines, but that would only take more seating space. If the students show a concern by moving through the lines rapidly and respecting others rights, than possibly the obvious solution of a longer lunch period could be considered.



But will we ever get rid of the rock throwers?

The Soapbox

The violence in Kanawha County, West Virginia which erupted over several textbooks which are being used in the schools has not been lessened with the school board's decision to return them to the classrooms.

The controversy over allegedly "anti-religious, Communist, pornographic" textbooks began when a member of the school board, Alice Moore, complained that they encouraged disrespect for authority and religion and contained obscene language. A "typical" attack on religion was a poem by black writer Gwendolyn Brooks which said, "I think it must be lonely to be God. Nobody loves a master . . ." A question in one of the books "subverted" the morals of the students. It read, "Most people think that cheating is wrong . . . Do you think there could ever be a time when it might be right?"

The purpose of education is to inform, to raise questions in inquisitive minds, and to encourage careful thought on all phases of life. If one group of people begin to stifle the yearning for wisdom in the name of patriotism, religion, or puritanism, people everywhere are affected by it.

This incident is not the first in which over-protective parents have tried to smother their children into silent acceptance or their own ideals. A few years ago over-zealous parents burned every copy of the book *Slaughterhouse 5* that they could get their hands on to "protect" their children from its contents.

This type of conflict stifles causes rebellion rather than aids the young person, for change is a permanent part of American society. For American youth to cope with this change, they must be encouraged to explore new ideas and to move forward rather than to always look to the past. After all if parents have built a firm foundation of high ideals, it is hardly likely to be shaken by any book.

Editor's Echo

by Cathy Allen

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Senior High's Student Representative Assembly has been named one among nine "Honor Councils" in the state. A Honor Council Certificate distinguishes a student council as one of the best high school student councils in the state.

Our SRA has been named Honor Council for the fifth straight year, plus last year it received the Louise B. Hunter award, the highest award given to a student council in the state.

Why does our SRA rank so high among student councils in the state? First we need to examine the purpose of the student council.

Today's student structures are moving towards building greater student participation. School's student "councils" are becoming student "governments."

Traditionally the sole purpose of the student council was to promote school spirit; to raise money; to sponsor academic, recreational and social activities; and to improve school facilities and campus area. All of these are still part of the purpose of the student council, but today student councils serve another purpose too.

Student councils are fast becoming a governing force. Students are beginning to

create responsible student representative organizations that can have a role in the decision-making powers in school.

We received student council distinction because our SRA is serving as a definite force in our school. Our SRA is not another "club-like" organization which only plans and organizes activities such as the junior-senior dance, pep rallies, and entertaining assemblies. Granted that these activities are planned through the SRA, but the business is carried out through committee work, and not during the SRA sessions themselves.

The SRA sessions provide a time for students to deal with school problems and discuss solutions. For example, at the last SRA meeting the problem of study hall students being unable to use the library during class reserved periods was the major issue. Mrs. Davis, the school librarian, explained that the system of reserved library time is set up in the hopes of promoting a better work atmosphere for research classes, but the library is always open to those students who need to use it.

The SRA can continue to serve as a force only if the students make use of it. I strongly urge all students to exercise their right and privilege to have a voice in school affairs.

Members Form Committee

Members of Nash County and Rocky Mount School boards will be selected to form a committee to study a state survey report on school planning, dealing with problems which relate to both school systems.

The committee approach was decided in early November during a joint meeting of the two school boards in Nashville. At this meeting, highlights of the study on the Nash County School system were reviewed. But the two main issues in the report as it relates to both school systems were not discussed in detail. These issues are a recommended merger of school units and what to do about Rocky Mount's proposal to make school district lines the same as the city limit boundaries.

THE GRYPHON
Member of Columbia Press Association
Member of Quill and Scroll

PUBLISHED  MONTHLY

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