

# GRYPHON EDITORIALS

## Coach Hicks Goes To Parker

All good things must pass, and so it is with the parting of Richard Hicks from our school. He left on September 25 his position as assistant principal to fill the office of principal at J. W. Parker Junior High School. It will be difficult to find a person to take his office and to manage the responsibilities, both the pleasant and the unpleasant ones, that accompany an assistant principal's job with the dignity, fairness, and efficiency with which he handled them.

Mr. Hicks established with many students a rapport which served to endear him to them. Not all students, however, appreciate our former assistant principal. These students are the ones who were sent to Mr. Hicks to be disciplined. Surely Mr. Hicks did not enjoy this part of his job, for it could be pleasant for no one. These students more often than not failed to see the even-handedness and justice Hicks utilized in his unwanted task. The man was fair in whatever he did.

Coach Hicks' absence will also be felt in our loss of him as our head basketball coach. His part in the development of our team is unestimable.

In a job that would try the patience of the most temperate man, Richard Hicks has indeed done a commendable job. We wish him luck in his new position.

## Litter Becomes An Eyesore

One of the problems that is always noticeable at Rocky Mount Senior High School lies on the ground. This is the ever-present problem of trash on and around the school campus. This problem is growing day by day and will soon become uncontrollable if it is not stopped. The litter collects mostly during the two lunch periods when people do not or will not take the short time needed to deposit it in one of the nearby trashcans.

Of course, there is always the argument that there has to be something for the special detention students to do during the hour after school. But for someplace that students spend one-fourth of their day or longer, it seems that they would at least like to be in a clean place instead of a dirty, littered area.

Everyone seems to be conscious of the environment being polluted, but they do not realize that littering is the most common and one of the worst pollutants. Keeping our trash off the ground and in the trashcan is one of the responsibilities we must bear to keep the land we are living in a little bit cleaner.

## Got The Back-to-School Blues?

**Editor's Note:** In an effort to increase participation in the Gryphon, some space will be reserved each issue for student contributions. The staff reserves the right to edit any contributions.

As many of you know (and a few of you don't) school has started once again. And, quite possibly, you are finding it hard to sleep now that you are faced with the overexertion and everyday stress and strain of secondary education.

For example, around 11 p. m. you suddenly realize that your model of the White House for Mrs. Bazookalooka's history class is due in ten hours and you are all out of sugar cubes. You start to worry, presumably because the last time a kid failed to turn in a project in Mrs. B's class he disappeared and was never seen again. By 11:59 you remember that Mrs. B has to defend her Mid-Atlantic Wrestling title tomorrow and the project can wait. You finally go to bed only to discover that you cannot sleep. "This," you say, "will never do." You remember that a glass of warm milk will usually do the trick, provided that you can find a warm cow at 1:00 a. m. You can't. In a feeble attempt to

make yourself drowsy you go out and start to mow the lawn. In a short time your neighbors let you know (usually with both barrels) that this method will not work. Your lawnmower now full of buckshot, you go back into the house to listen to some oily man talk about piston rings on television.

Then, feeling a strange urge to get back to your coffin before the sun rises, you decide that you've had enough. You head for the nearest bottle of sleeping pills, hastily swallow a few dozen, and, now heavily sedated, you slip silently into oblivion.

You finally come to in Mr. Twidwit's fourth period English class and you don't know how you got there or how many days you've been there. Even worse, you notice that you are taking a test. Not only are you unfamiliar with the material on the test but you don't even know what to put in the "name" blank.

When you finally grasp reality again you decide that it is impossible to be witty and intelligent if you cannot remember what your name is. There must, indeed, be a better way to go to sleep. And I assure you, my friends, that there is. Just make a tape recording of your science teacher's next lecture on "Theoretical Inertia Forces and You." If that doesn't put you to sleep, nothing will.



## The Soapbox

By Terri Gardner

Fear is an element with which the majority of high school students are familiar. It introduced itself in the 1960's with race riots, shattered windows, and deadly bullets. It burned, looted, killed, and crippled. Then, for three years,

it slept, loosening its stranglehold on the hearts of the people. They slept, too, comforted by their enemy's silence. But on September 5, 1975, it raised its head from slumber in the fragile hand of a red-hooded figure. President Gerald R. Ford was luckier than his

predecessors; the gun in the hand of Lynette Fromme did not go off. But what will happen next time?

Since the attempted assassination of George Wallace in 1973 which left him crippled from the waist down, numerous government officials have supported the enactment of a stiffer gun control law. Opposition has been encountered, however, from private citizens who fear they will be left defenseless against criminals, who will obtain weapons illegally if necessary. The only other solutions are to remove public officials from contact with the public, thereby removing the assassin's target, or to tighten the security around them. President Ford insists upon keeping contact with voters, stating, "I have no intention of allowing the Government of the people to be held hostage at the point of a gun."

Security, then, is the only answer. Since the attempt on Ford's life, the Secret Service has tightened its security, using, it is believed, more agents and mingling them to a greater extent with the crowd. President Ford is also believed to be wearing a bullet-proof vest. The press needs to tighten its security, too. The swing through California which introduced Ford to Lynette Fromme was preceded by a detailed release of his agenda; anyone could know where the President would be and when he would be there.

Fear has awakened, and it will flower into life in the dark special news bulletins which too often spell death unless the public is prepared to meet it.

## Bicentennial Contest Announced

"Bicentennial Seniors," a \$112,000 scholarship program for high school seniors who will graduate with the class of 1976, is being launched this month by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Complete details on how to participate in the program are available now at the guidance office or from room 006.

One national winner will receive a \$10,000 scholarship, and 102 state winners will receive \$1,000 scholarships under the program.

Winners will be selected first locally, then on a state-wide level. Two winners will be chosen in each state and the District of Columbia. Each of the 102 state winners will also receive an all-expense paid trip to Williamsburg, Va., from

January 16-19, 1976, to attend seminars on educational and social issues and to be on hand for the selection of the national winner.

Competition will include the preparation of a minute-long television script to be patterned after the CBS television network's 200 years ago today "Bicentennial Minutes;" a commentary discussing the relevance of the "minute" for today and the lessons it contains for the future; and a current events examination emphasizing issues and events from the past year.

The program is administered by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and is funded by the Shell Oil Company. Applications must be filed by October 6, 1975.

## Editor's Echo

By Terri Gardner

The public too often takes its newspaper for granted; it fails to realize how closely its personal freedom is tied to freedom of the press. The week of October 5-11 has been proclaimed Newspaper Week '75 to emphasize the importance and service of the press in a free society. The week is basically in recognition of professional papers, but its goals and ideals are equally applicable to high school newspapers.

The duty of a responsible press is to report the news as objectively as possible, but its effects are much broader than simply informing the public. By forceful reporting and vital editorials, the press can bring to light incidents which might otherwise escape into anonymity. It can stimulate thought on current topics, provide solutions, and suggest change.

The circulation of a school paper is, of course, much smaller than that of a daily or national paper; but even so there are issues which are of concern to its student body and community and which as such should be reported equally as well as any national paper would report an issue of national importance. It is this aim which the Gryphon hopes to

achieve throughout its reporting this year. But no paper can be successful in this attempt to inform the public of the issues and to bring about positive change if the public itself is not responsible. It is up to the individual to question the events around him and, above all else, to expect the best possible reporting from his press. Dual freedom means dual responsibility.

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Advertising Manager  
Business and  
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