



The purpose of the Gryphon is to examine events in the school, the community and the world which affect the lives of the students of RMSH. It is the Gryphon's aim to stimulate awareness of issues, to promote a better understanding of others, and to bring about positive action where change is needed. Student, faculty and community response is welcomed and may be sent to the Gryphon, room 110; however, the editor reserves the right to withhold libelous or profane letters.

# Vandals Mar Class

Pride in one's graduating class is a respectable quality; however, a display of the pride should not bring degrading remarks upon the class. After three fine years in which the Class of 1977 has shown qualities deserving praise and respect, a few thoughtless persons have tarnished this record by committing vandalism.

With paint gun and white paint in hand, a group or groups of students painted "Class of '77" and "'77" many places on the school building. They painted on doors and on bricks in about 20 places around the school.

The paint used to mark the buildings will not wash off the brick walls. The only process by which the paint can be removed is sandblasting. Sandblasting is an expensive process which would cost at least \$400 in this case. But the expense of the project is not the only disadvantage of sandblasting. When the sandblasting is over, large spots of discolored brick will remain until the bricks fade; if the paint is not removed, future classes must endure this stigma.

However, the cost of the removal of the paint is not the important issue. The fact is that a group or groups of people defaced public property. This offense is punishable by a fine or up to two years in a youth camp.

Principal Elton Newbern offered a \$100 reward for information leading to the conviction of the perpetrators but several groups have already been caught without the use of the reward. The students who were caught will pay for the cost of sandblasting the brick and painting the doors.

Mr. Newbern commented that most of the students were "apologetic" and they offered to help repair the damaged places. The students seemed to realize something they didn't think about when they committed the act. Mr. Newbern also said that they came to see the permanence and seriousness of their actions after the possible consequences were explained.

This act of vandalism is not a good occurrence in any way for anyone involved at the present time. But in the future perhaps more thought will come before anything as foolish as this ever happens again. Once a student weighs the pro and cons of an enterprise like this, he will probably abandon the idea.

## Test To Pass

All North Carolina High School students will have to meet minimum standards in essential skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics if a bill introduced in the General Assembly passes. The bill, which has passed the House, but has yet to be voted on in the Senate, calls for a competency test to be administered to every high school junior. Unless the student passes the test, he will not receive a diploma; however, the test will be available for retaking. The bill sets an appropriation of \$271,750 for the first two years.

The test, which is meant to be a measuring stick for identifying strengths and weaknesses in the education system, has met widely varying responses. The North Carolina Association of Educators issued a statement against the bill stating, "Rather than producing a solution to a child's learning problem, standardized testing tends instead to produce an atmosphere where test scores are used to identify desirable versus undesirable school systems, good versus bad teachers, smart versus backward children." However, in a poll taken by the Association of Classroom Teachers, a branch of the NCAE, 73 per cent of the responding teachers advocated a test, while 20 per cent disagreed and seven per cent stated no opinion.

The ambition of the bill is praise-worthy. It intends to uplift the quality of education in North Carolina so a diploma will have value once again. But perhaps the problem of illiterate graduates could be solved much more practically and much less expensively. By resurrecting more stringent standards in public schools and relegating the social promotion to its proper place in limbo, the problem could be solved, the test would be unnecessary, and the money could be diverted to other purposes.

## Spirit Bids Farewell

In September 1974 the spirit of Tillery Street called out to over 500 young persons, "Come ye in to learn." And the spirit gathered the newly-come young into its nondescript wandering buildings. Some days the spirit was inspired creating perfect days, and the young students laughed, loved, and learned joyfully of books and humanity. Other times the spirit was "coming down with something." The students were weary, they wept or quarrelled, and they learned nothing from books and painfully of man's shortcomings.

However the spirit is only allowed three years, and now it must bid farewell to the Class of '77.

The spirit speaks: "Good-bye Class of 1977. May the Greatest Spirit bless your myriad multifaceted personalities. I'm so glad you came to Senior High. Your laughter has dented my walls while your pain has rent my foundation, but your youthful enthusiasm and faith in the future restores me. March on now! Go out to serve! Take with you love for each other and use this love as a seed to plant a bigger love among men of all races, creeds, and nations. Remember all your experiences here. Let both the joy and sorrow lead you to great happiness, for your experiences here can serve as the radar of your future."



**VANDALS STRIKE:** Student vandals struck the school with paint. They marred not only the school but their class.

## EDITOR'S ECHO

By Keith King

It's not often that a major problem arises in student government. However, when trouble occurs it demands swift, decisive action.

Rocky Mount Senior High had one such crisis to present itself recently. It seems that a misunderstanding developed during the course of student elections concerning the opportunity of a number of students to vote. During second lunch the day of the elections the number of ballots at the poles was depleted. Some of the students who had come to vote were unable to because of the shortage. They were told by members of the Elections Committee to return at the end of the school day at which time the students would be allowed to vote.

After the election results were announced, some students protested saying that they were not allowed to vote and thus not allowed to support their candidates. Eventually the students filed a formal complaint. The Elections Committee took immediate action on the complaint. At a special meeting, the committee listened to the protesting students and after careful deliberation decided that the students lodging the complaint were not actually denied the right to vote, but merely "inconvenienced" as to the time that they were allowed

to vote. The committee resolved that the incident did not warrant new elections and informed the entire student body of the situation and the Committee's decision in a bulletin the following day.

The bulletin, however, left one with the impression that the inconvenience was caused by an error on the part of the student council advisor, Miss Kate P. Kitchin. This was not the case. On the day of the election Miss Kitchin was required to attend a meeting of guidance counselors, even though she had asked to be excused due to the elections. Upon being informed of the situation which had developed at the polls, Miss Kitchin took action to alleviate the problem. But before she could reach the polls, she discovered that the voting place had been closed, according to schedule, precluding any chance of the students being allowed to vote until after school. Still, Miss Kitchin had taken all the steps she could to insure justice to every student.

Such equitable, open and expedient action on the part of the committee and such dedication on the part of Miss Kitchin can only be admired. The handling of such a crisis so effectively should make each student proud that he is associated with such a conscientious and efficient student government and administration.

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