

On Television

School Superintendent Rolland Jones Talks About 'Our Weaknesses, Strength'



SGT. WILLIAM JOHNSON
...Central Piedmont Student

Sgt. William Johnson Is Firing Instructor

SGT William Johnson of Charlotte, a member of the weapons committee, gives firing instructions from a tower to soldiers firing the M6 RR at Fort Polk, LA during annual training.

Members of HHC 3d Bde (AIT) and the weapons committee of the 108th Div (Tng) commanded by LTC Edward C. Moon, Jr. located in Charlotte, N.C. are doing their two-weeks (28 Aug. thru 8 Sept.) annual training at Fort Polk, LA for the first time.

SGT Johnson is married and a student at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, N.C.

Mrs. Simpson To Head Public Service Office

Mecklenburg County Manager Glenn C. Blaisdell today announced the appointment of Mrs. Rita Adams Simpson as Mecklenburg's Public Service and Information Officer.

Mrs. Simpson will assume her duties in mid-September and will succeed Mrs. Marilyn M. Bradbury.

Mrs. Simpson has served as editor of the "Call Quest" column of The Charlotte-News for the past year and a half. During the previous four years she was a copy editor and religion writer for the paper.

From 1965 to 1968 Mrs. Simpson was director of alumnae affairs for Queens College. She has also worked as a reporter for The Charlotte Observer.

A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Mrs. Simpson majored in English and was a columnist for The Daily Tar Heel. She also attended Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Ga.

Good evening. The Quality Education Committee has asked me to discuss with you tonight the State of Our Schools - our weaknesses, our strengths, our future.

Our weaknesses are as clear as the numbers on a printed page. Hundreds and hundreds of our children drop out of school each year. Many more read below grade-level.

We have just 20 specially-trained corrective reading teachers for 40,000 elementary school students. That's one of these teachers for every 2,000 children. Despite increasing recognition that the early years of a child's growth and development determine what will happen later - whether in high school, college, or in the job market - we in Mecklenburg County have entered the 1973-74 school year with only one counselor for all our 40,000 elementary school students.

Using a conservative estimate, we probably have about 4,000 children in our school system with learning disabilities. These children, most of them with at least average intelligence, find it hard to read or to concentrate.

They become discipline problems. We have a total of 26 teachers to help these children. We have properly emphasized helping children as early as possible, so 20 of these teachers are in the elementary schools. Another six are in junior high schools. But we still find ourselves without even one of these teachers at the high school level - where the frustrated child too often hurts others along with himself.

Some of our weaknesses are more subtle. The community has endured several years of sustained trauma - centering on the schools. Just as the child from a broken home,

where the parents are constantly at one another's throat, frequently has great difficulty in school, so children of a broken community, one in which various segments are constantly sniping at one another, are educationally disadvantaged the day they walk in the schoolhouse door.

The pervasiveness of a community at war with itself inevitably affects children. Just as many adults of both races fear to walk through some parts of their community, so do many children fear to walk in some parts of their communities - their schools. In many cases, the fears of our children stem from real incidents; in many cases, they stem merely from rumor. Either way, the fear is real, and it is a problem all of us must deal with.

Our strengths can be found with our weaknesses. Within our community, people have been working from the start of the desegregation trauma to make our schools work. Principals and teachers have come up with new ways to meet a new situation. Many students have taken it on themselves to make the schools a place where learning happens. And parents by the thousands have come into our schools to tutor, do paper-work, staff the health room - do, in other words, whatever they could for the sake of their children.

These resources - these human resources - are our greatest strength.

These resources include students like those at West Charlotte, whose fierce pride in their school would not let them tolerate those who might want to make trouble.

There are the parents at Double Oaks who persistently and successfully demanded a better deal for their school.



DR. ROLLAND W. JONES
...Heads City Schools

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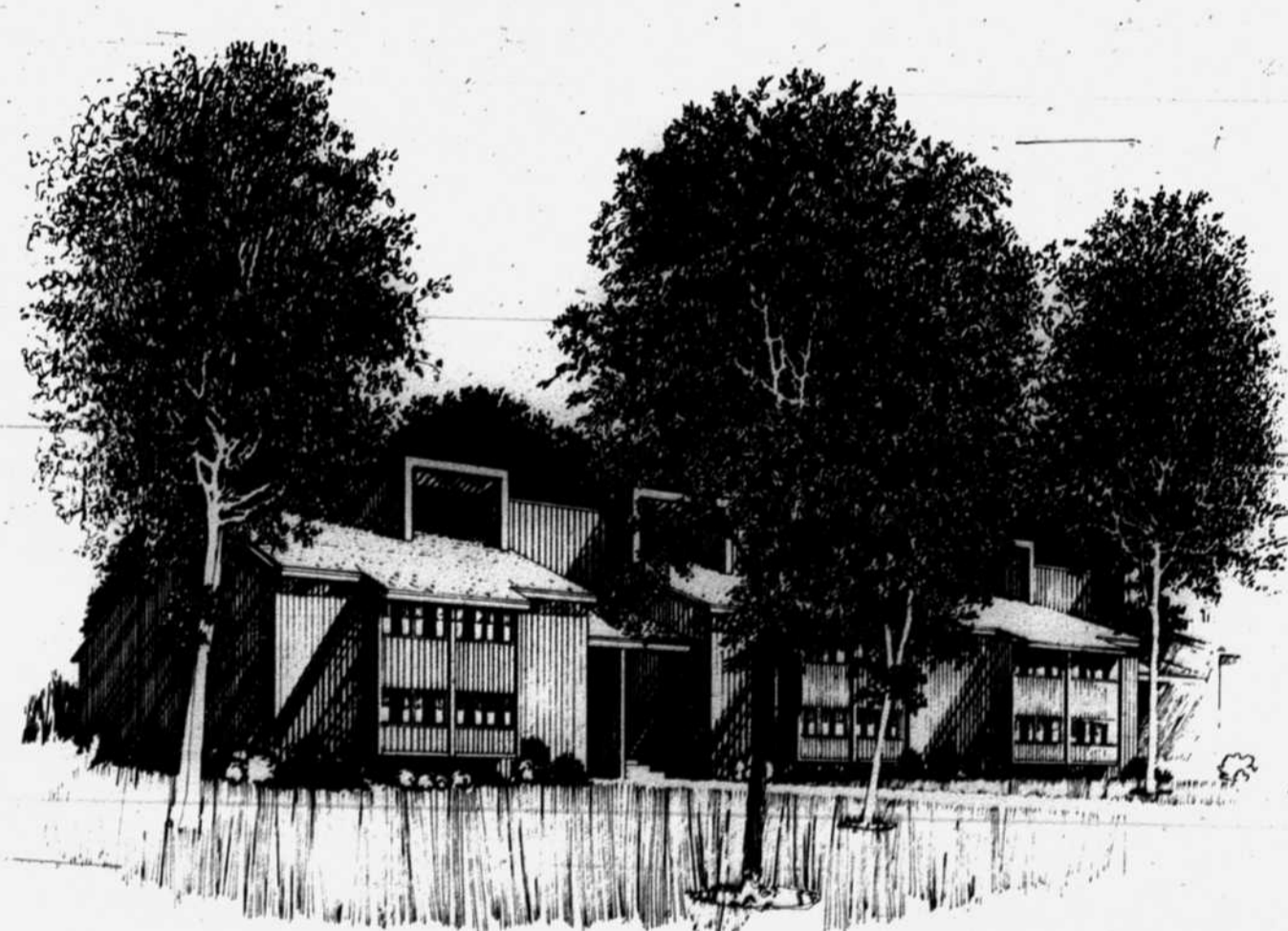
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