

Clearing Off The Editor's Desk

Unfinished Business

After a week's vacation, I had intended to write some sort of editorial this week, but a few things which came up during my absence needed to be cleared up first.

Let me begin by thanking Chick and Elizabeth Squire for the fine job they did while Cheryl and I were away. Readers should recognize Liz's byline from the many features she has contributed in the past year. Both she and Chick are old hands at newspapering, and The News Record was in good hands while we took a short break.

Now let me clear up some misunderstandings that have cropped up in the past few weeks. Although most of the response we received was favorable, we have also received several complaints from readers regarding our recent experiment with Tom Gilmore as "editor for a day." A few readers called in to say that the treatment we gave the story amounted to an endorsement of Gilmore's candidacy.

If this is the impression that was made, it certainly was not intended. Tom Gilmore is a fine man, and the people of North Carolina will be well served should he be elected next year. However, there are a number of other candidates who are equally qualified to lead the state. The News Record will maintain our policy of being politically non-partisan and will not presume to endorse any candidate for governor.

The "editor for a day" idea was my own, and I believe it worked well as an experiment for both the candidate and myself. I will endorse any suggestions that will help politicians and the press to better understand each other's position. Invitations have been extended to other candidates to become the "editor for a day" here at The News Record. Carl Stewart, Jr., a candidate for lieutenant governor, has accepted my invitation and will sit in as guest editor on Sept. 30.

Our "editor for a day" idea needn't be confined to public officials. If any of our readers would be interested in spending a day with me as a reporter, I would be glad to have you along. You won't get paid, and you may wind up putting in anywhere from 10 to 16 hours, but I can guarantee you won't be bored.

We also received a number of complaints concerning our coverage, or I should say our lack of coverage, of the accomplishments of the Mars Hill All-Star baseball team. Some explanation is in order here. As most of you are already aware, The News Record has only one full-time reporter — myself. Because of our

small staff, it is impossible for us to provide coverage of all the events that take place in Madison County and the surrounding area. We have to rely on information from our readers for many stories we publish. Babe Ruth League baseball is a prime example of this sort. With youth leagues operating in Marshall, Mars Hill and Hot Springs, it is physically impossible for us to provide in-person coverage of these athletic events.

Much of my time is spent covering football, basketball and baseball programs at Madison High School and Mars Hill College. With the responsibility we have for providing coverage of the courts and government meetings, there is just no time available to cover sports beyond those offered at these two schools.

We are not aware of the tremendous success our Mars Hill All Stars were enjoying until well after they had won the state championship. When we were informed, we responded quickly. The day after we learned of the story, we went to Mars Hill to take a team picture and congratulate the team for their accomplishment. The picture and story were to appear in last week's paper.

However, as sometimes happens, a more important story broke before we went to press. The tragic double murder of Grady and Bonnie Gahagan required that news space which was to be devoted to the baseball team be used instead to provide the latest details of the slaying.

My substitute editors, Chick and Elizabeth Square, made the decision to hold the baseball story for this week. They made the correct decision and provided our readers with fine coverage of the tragedy.

Let me close by adding one more note. When we designed the walls in our office last winter, I purposely had them built without doors. My office is open at anytime to the people of Madison County. If, at any time, you feel that The News Record has failed in its mission to provide you, the readers, with accurate news coverage, please stop by and let me know.

As I've said many times before, The News Record is your newspaper. As our readers, your opinions are very important to our successful operation. Many of you have filled out the reader surveys we have been publishing and I hope many more of you will send them in before our Aug. 19 deadline. In past weeks, we've offered free papers and classifieds to those who submit the completed questionnaires. Let me sweeten the offer further. The News Record will buy a dinner for two, at the Madison County restaurant of their choice, chosen at random from all the surveys we receive before Aug. 19.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:
Crime happens somewhere every second, the news is always full of it, we hear it, and we are sorry for the victim, but it really doesn't totally sink in until it happens to someone we know.
Recently, two people whose family contributed greatly to the history of Madison County were killed. I was not related to them, but my uncle by marriage was their nephew. This

is a sorrowful time for their family and it all seems so pointless, no matter what the motive was.
I never knew Mr. Grady Gahagan personally, but I know that he was very kind to my grandparents for many years until their deaths.
To those of you who never knew Miss Bonnie Gahagan, she was a very independent lady, she was a very caring, hard working, religious

woman who treated everyone with kindness, lending a helping hand to those in need. I remember visiting her home as a child and how fascinated I was by the big house that sat peacefully by Laurel River and held so many wonderful memories from the past.
After the death of her mother, she lived alone for many years not being afraid and always trusting people. To those of you who knew her

know what a gracious, manly, sweet lady she was who would hurt no one.
It is so sad that these two people's lives met such tragic endings. They were both elderly and Mr. Grady in poor health, I doubt that either of them could have defended themselves.
Sondra J. Tipton
Wilmington, N.C.

Library Workers Are Praised

Dear Editor:
I would like to thank the ladies who work at the Marshall Library. They are helpful and friendly. They take time to assist you in any

way you need. They are especially good with children as so many seem to love to go there.
Madison County is indeed lucky to have such fine women

in an important job as this. They are our good will ambassadors. I have heard many people comment on how well they were treated by the Marshall Library. These fine women deserve a lot more praise than they have been

receiving. They have been extremely helpful and good to me in the years I have been going there whether it was to get a book or in my research. So I would again like to say thank you and to keep up the good job because we do care.
Thank you,
Rita M. Murray
Marshall

Heard And Seen

By POP STORY



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the three Babe Ruth baseball teams of the Mars Hill area on winning the District One (16 years old) championship; the championship of the District One (15 years old); and the fine team of the Bambino Division. The All-Star team also won the State Championship and represented the state in the national playoffs where they were runnersup. These accomplishments were made possible by fine leadership and excellent player personnel.

I congratulate the managers, coaches, and especially the young players of our county.

THOUGHTFUL FRIENDS

Sandy Marler, who works at Social Services here, brought my wife a 10-pound cabbage last week. The cabbage was grown by Sandy's mother-in-law, Mrs. Curtis Marler of Big Pine. This will certainly make a lot of slaw. Thanks, Sandy. We'll enjoy every bit of it.

I also want to thank Judson Edwards, of Beech Glen, for supplying us with delicious cucumbers, tomatoes and corn. Judson's really a very fine friend, although he usually beats me in checkers. Really, Judson, win or lose, I enjoy playing you, Carroll Radford, Bill Clouse, Harold Reid, Talmadge McLean and the others who enjoy playing checkers. I just wish more fellows like to play. Lib Roberts has also brought us tomatoes.

FOOTBALL DRAWS NEAR

It's hard to realize that the 1983 football season is just a few weeks away.

The Madison High Patriots open the season against Edneyville High School at Edneyville on Friday night, August 26. One week later on September 2, the college season opens. The Mars Hill Lions opening game is set for September 10 against Concord College at Concord, W. Va.

So all these high school and college games will on tap at the same time the major league baseball teams are battling for their division championships and the following playoffs...and then the World Series.

To further complicate matters, the National Football League will be started.

It's a great season for sports fans, believe me.

C & D NOW MADISON HOUSE RESTAURANT

Having eaten many times at the former Ivy Steak & Fish House, and for many months at the popular C&D Restaurant near Mars Hill, it is hard for me to remember that the present name is Madison House. Located just above the Madison Manor Nursing Center, it continues to serve fine food. The staff is composed of Terry Livingstone, Lee Ewart, managers; and Becky, Annette, Amy McClellan, Marie Meadows, and Polly Dunn.



Steve Ferguson

Leave em Laughing

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: Starting this week, the column will be published monthly due to the fact that this writer is defecting to Chapel Hill to become a Tar Heel. Hopefully, I can throw one together once a month just to let you know I'm still alive.)

I did it myyyy way.
I've really enjoyed the past 79 columns over the last year and a half. I love writing, and I love the people I write for. Switching from a weekly to a monthly column will be a difficult adjustment for me, but a necessary one.

Anyway, I wanted to leave you smiling like any good comedian should, and the most laughs usually come

from the "Don't You Just Hate" columns.

Not meaning to leave on a sour note, I thought Love Is...would be a good thing to pick on. You've probably seen the Love Is...cartoon in other papers — you know, the stark naked boy and girl always depicting some aspect of love. I don't believe they tell the whole story, because love is...
...monthly payments on a diamond ring.
...wearing clothes you swore you'd never put on.
...feeling guilty about holding hands in church.
...worrying about your breath.
...buying an exercise bench

just to impress her.
...buying \$100 jeans just to impress him.
...spending \$100 for prom clothes you're not really comfortable in, anyway.
...resisting the video games when you're with her.
...letting her give you lessons on color coordinating your clothes.
...kissing their pictures goodnight, every night.
...worrying when they're five minutes late.
...earning a very bad pair of chapped lips.
...waking up in the middle of the night wondering if they're thinking about you too.
...having the comfort of a

wife, the joy of children and the security of a good divorce lawyer to back you up.
...having sweaty palms, but because you're about to meet her Dad.
...wearing minimal makeup, because you're about to meet his Mom.
You realize, of course, that love has nothing to do with your brain. It's all emotional involvement.
That's probably why its so much fun.
ED. NOTE: Good luck in Chapel Hill, Steve. We'll miss you.

Living And Growing

By CARL MUMPOWER

The lady was pretty upset. It seems that her neighbors across the street were a loud and outgoing bunch who enjoyed noisy music, shooting guns, fusing, drinking, and general hell raising. Her concern was not with changing their chosen lifestyle so much as trying to keep it from interfering with hers. Subsequent calls to the Sheriff's Department educated her to the fact that there's not much these fellows can do about neighbors who disturb the peace. It seems that some of our representatives in Raleigh had done away with the statute that gave law enforcement people some leverage in dealing with people who do in fact disturb the general peace.

Although it can be argued that people who create traffic jams by going to work each morning are disturbing the

peace, or that hollering children in a playground are doing the same, I suppose we are talking about what's the norm for a society like our own. We've all got the right to do our own thing, but how far should we be allowed to intrude on the thing of others? There's not much doubt in my mind that you won't find any beer joints going up next door to any churches in this part of the country. Folks wouldn't sit still for it. Is it any less wrong for a fellow to set up his own private "joint" next door to someone with a less "active" style of living? There's little difference in my own mind, except that the latter case involves one person, and the former group has a great deal more power to influence the rules.

I was a bit surprised by this lady's call. She even went so

far as to ask me to help. I'm afraid that I'm not in the editorial department, and I told her so. Nonetheless, I thought her situation a sad one that might have something for you and I.
She may or may not be able to do something about these less than considerate folks. That would imply that our legal system is a bit lacking in justice in her situation. But does that necessarily mean that there won't be justice? I think not.
Justice prevails in our world. In addition to the legal system of justice that we have, there's a spiritual and moral umbrellas that protects us. However, unlike our legal system, the process of justice is not so often a visible and understandable one. Therein lies the rub. We tend to assume that because we don't

see justice, that it doesn't exist.
Justice, as dealt out by the natural system of life, is most often a quite and subtle force. It walks softly, serving its function in a deceptively powerful way. Those who chose a negative or destructive path in life, I believe, will one day experience that power.
I don't mean to be too abstract or melodramatic. It's just that we have some trouble understanding things we can't see. So it is with justice. It's there, always, doing its job in helping keep some order in our world. It may work slowly and behind the scenes, but it does do its job. Like a silent friend, justice is by our side. There's some solace when we're wronged in remembering that friend. He never sleeps...

THE NEWS RECORD
ESTABLISHED 1901 • NON-PARTISAN IN POLITICS
Box 369 • Marshall, N. C. 28753 • Phone: (704) 649-2741

Robert T. Koenig, Editor
Cheryl W. Koenig, Advertising Manager

James "Pop" Story
Steve Ferguson
Columnists

Dot Shupe
Emma Lou Wambles
Contributors

Published Weekly By The Madison County Publishing Company, Inc., USPS 388-440.
Second Class Postage Paid at Marshall, N.C. 28753 and at additional mailing offices.
Subscription Rates in Madison and Buncombe Counties - 1 Year \$5.72, 6 Months \$4.42.
Outside Madison and Buncombe Counties - 1 Year \$8.75, 6 Months \$7.00. N.C. Sales Tax Extra.
Send address changes to the News Record, P.O. Box 369, Marshall, N.C. 28753.

North Carolina Press Association

Road Projects

(Continued from Page 1)

board because the three projects are "out of priority," Ponder explained. He added that the Route 1114 project, plus work being done in Buncombe County, would result in a new road along Bear Creek that would cut traveling time to Asheville to 15 minutes instead of 45 minutes.

Ponder also discussed with the board a proposal to extend Interstate 26 roughly along the route of the present U.S. 23 through the county to Tennessee, and told of his contention that road improvements brought about by renewal of the Appalachian Regional Commission's status by Congress would be a better plan for the county.