

Viewpoints

Textile program shows school-community collaboration works

Public School gets its share of criticism so it's good that when there is a success to report on the public hears of it too.

Last week was National Textile Week, and as is the custom in Hoke County where the school system and textile industry work closely together, officials at Hoke High School prepared a banquet to honor textile industry representatives. (The banquets prepared by students in the Harriet Archer's class are successes worthy of their own articles.)

At the banquet, representatives of Burlington

Industries' two local plants casually mentioned that 10 percent of one plant's work force and nearly 14 percent of the other's is made up of graduates from Hoke High's Vocational Education textile program. Considering the size of the two Burlington plants here, that's a lot of students, and represents quite an accomplishment.

The program, which apparently serves as a model for other school systems, seems to be an example of what school officials constantly harp on — successful schools depend on commitment by the community to the schools and visa versa.

Pill had better improve health

Health care is on everyone's mind. People are becoming more conscious of trying to maintain their good health. Yours truly is no exception. For years I have preached to everyone who would listen that we are responsible for our well being. Unfortunately, the best tone can do is not good enough in many cases — As I discovered years ago when I was practicing all the rules suggested for good health.

Every morning, rain or shine, I would jog or walk several miles, all for the sake of keeping my body well-tuned. Without warning I began to have a pain in my right shoulder. I was checked from head to foot without any opinion of why I was suffering this discomfort. It was suggested I spend a day or two in the hospital. When I arrived at the healing institution with bag in hand, they tossed me in the intensive care unit, and hooked me up to all kinds of instruments. To say I was puzzled is an understatement. When finally I got an answer to "why" question, I was told they were checking to see if I had a heart attack. After two days it was determined my heart was beating properly. To make a long story short I had a partially blocked artery. As the good physicians gathered around I informed them I had blown their whole theory. I didn't drink or smoke and I watched what I ate, and kept my blood pressure and weight under control. "Never mind," they said, "the pressure of your job is



A View from the Country

Raz Autry

what got you." Those all-night school board sessions will do it every time.

Needless to say, all of the above adventures came flooding back after I received the results of a blood test last week taken during my regular yearly physical. The results weren't any great surprise. The doctor said, "Everything is fine except your cholesterol. It is 285." I had danced that tune before. In fact, the lowest ever recorded for me was 210. It was taken right after the Christmas holidays. I had pigged out on all kinds of food, not being concerned about fat or cholesterol.

"We need to put you on something," said my friend doctor.

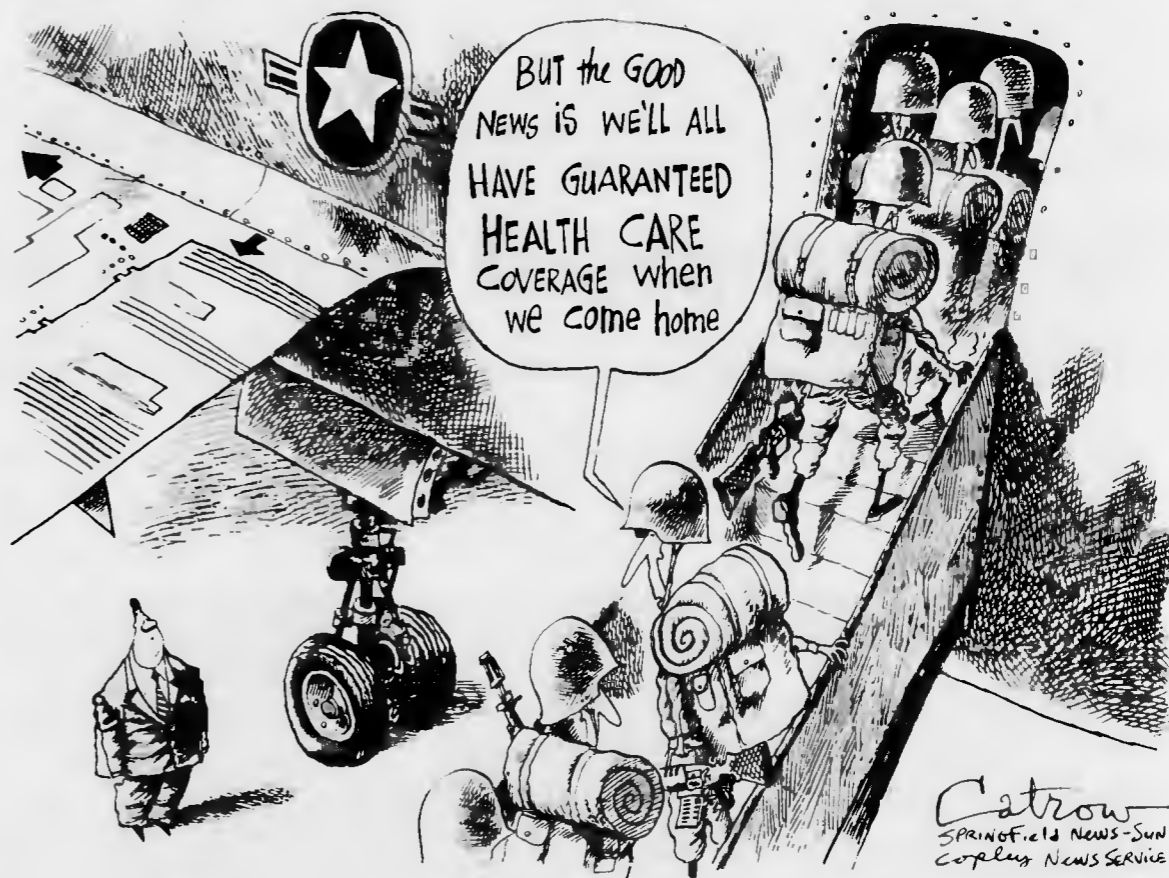
I agreed, since I had faith in his judgement, although I had been that route before. Questran was the chosen drug a couple of years ago. After taking it for sometime and watching my diet, once checked, I knew it would be below 200. Wishful thinking, instead it went to 280. "This time," I thought as I approached the drug store, "It will be different." Yes indeed, if price will bring it down, mine should be no more than 125. Fifty-eight dollars for 30 pills. Not only will such an expense make a grown man cry, it will give one sec-

ond thoughts about the price of living. In addition, the men and women in the white coats who dish out these expensive pills give you a sheet of instructions, which also list the side effects. The paragraph is titled "Less common side effects." It further states they may go away during treatment. Such pleasant feelings include constipation, diarrhea, gas, heartburn, stomach pain, dizziness, headache, nausea, or skin rash. To give one hope the paper states, "If they continue or are bothersome, check with your doctor. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor, nurse or pharmacist."

If there are any side effects other than the above, your wife won't need to contact anyone except the undertaker. Now I am telling you folks if this pill doesn't work I am throwing in the towel. In two or three years, if a study suggests that cholesterol is not the culprit, those who have such a problem will be as mad as the sitting hen when she discovered the rooster has a harem.

Don't get me wrong, I still believe in doing the right things for your body. However it does shake me up when one of these famous studies says that exercising will only make you live a couple years longer. Apparently this study was done by couch potatoes.

My parting thought: "Money doesn't grow on trees," said the showgirl, "but some limbs have a way of attracting it."



Cartoon by Springfield News-Sun Copying News Service

Want one, gotta buy them all?

Several years ago, a mail-order publisher offered a set of books on dinosaurs, and the one on Tyrannosaurus rex really caught my son's eye. But this was a smart publisher. I could buy the T. rex book only if I also bought the 28 other in the series.

There's something of the same strategy at work in the five issues that go before North Carolina voters on November 2. Four bond issues totalling \$740 million and a constitutional amendment are being packaged as one vote. Advocates of any one set of bonds, or of the amendment, are being told that they should support all five issues.

On one level, voters won't have the ability to pick and choose among the projects they wish to support. A graduate of N. C. State's engineering school might want to support the construction of a \$35 million research center at his alma mater, but to do so he also must support a \$5.4 million physical education building at UNC-Asheville. That's because all of the university's \$310 million worth of projects are wrapped up in one package.

The same holds true for the \$250 million for community college campuses, the \$35 million for state parks around the state and the \$145 million for water and sewer bonds. Voters who want funds for any one of those projects must approve funding for all of the projects in that same category.

During the 1993 session, legislators made no secret of their "want one, gotta buy 'em all strategy." They put something for every region, every campus, in each of the four different bond packages.

In committee, it was noted that the water and sewer money probably wouldn't be needed by the state's large cities. They have the borrowing authority to get this money directly in the bond markets at low interest rates. But legislators rejected an idea to take them out of the package out of fear that voters in those cities would then vote against the issue.

Early on, backers of the bonds sought to spread that strategy across the different bond issues. They recognized the dangers of separate constituencies campaigning for separate bonds. Some might be stronger than others, and might inadvertently lead to the defeat of some. Or, given public concern about debt and government spending, none might be strong enough to win alone. So a coalition was formed.

In some cases, the coalition seems to make sense. Those who support university funding would appear likely to support community college funding. Those who support parks would be naturally allied with those seeking water and sewer bonds.

At least one combination, however, appears difficult to reconcile. The state's environmentalist are working for state park bonds, and are also endorsing the economic devel-



Watching

Paul T. O'Connor

But environmentalists know that the park bonds face a tough test at the polls and that their best chance for victory lies in an alliance with the state's monied interests that are supporting the other issues and the amendment.

None of that applies to voters when they enter the booth on November 2. Inside the curtain, voters can pick T. rex without buying stegosaurus.

opment financing amendment that could take away the public's best chance to stop — through rejection of local bond issues — some questionable construction projects.

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Letters

Disappointed County went unrepresented

To the Editor:

On Saturday, October 16, the Hillcrest Volunteer Fire Department held its Open House celebration to dedicate the new fire station building. Prior to the celebration, 80 special invitations were mailed out and the general public was cordially invited via *The News-Journal*.

The Hillcrest Volunteer Fire Department is the oldest in the county

as it was established in January 1964. Since that time the Department has unselfishly served the Hillcrest Fire District, the city and county.

The Board of Directors and members — through their own dedication — had the new state-of-the-art fire station erected.

Much to the embarrassment and at the disappointment of the department, and noted by all present, not one of the appointed or elected Hoke County Officers was present; only City Officials were present and they did express their pleasure and appreciation to the department and (See LETTERS, page 3)

We welcome your letters

Letters to the editor are encouraged and welcomed. Writers should keep letters as short as possible. Names, addresses and telephone numbers should be included and all letters must be signed. Names will be printed, however, other information will be kept confidential. We reserve the right to edit letters for good taste and brevity. Letters should be received by *The News-Journal* by noon on the Monday of the publication week.

The best ideas come from below

"Are you aware that you and your colleagues haven't found anything new?"

That question from an education expert didn't sound like much of a compliment to Harvard Professor Richard Light. After all, Light had been proudly telling the expert about the results of several years of hard work aimed at improving teaching and learning on the Harvard campus. Led by Professor Light, a group of Harvard faculty had organized an on-going seminar on assessment to explore ways that Harvard teachers could teach better and Harvard students could learn better.

Some of the ideas that the group adopted have had a profound and positive effect on teaching at Harvard. Professor Light described the development of some of those ideas to members of the governing board of North Carolina's public universities at their conference in Boone a few weeks ago.

For instance, Light and the Harvard assessment group wondered whether writing skills could be taught more effectively. You'd think that all students admitted to Harvard would already be good writers. Most are. but, as the assessment group



One on One

D. G. Martin

found, about 15 or 20 percent of their freshmen were poor writers. About half this group improved dramatically while at Harvard. The other half didn't get much better. The members of the assessment group decided to try to find out why.

The group followed one entire class of poor writers through their freshman year — and got an answer to their question. Here it is: All poor writers were required to write a lot of papers and turn them in for review. All of them got written comments from writing instructors on each paper. Some, but not all, instructors also wrote suggestions about how to rewrite the paper to make it better — and they required the students to do the paper again. Maybe you guessed the result. Those who got specific suggestions for improvements and rewrote their papers became much better writers. The other didn't improve much.

Result: All writing instructors at

Harvard now give specific suggestions and require rewrites of each paper.

When the assessment group decided to explore the study habits of Harvard students they found that students who prepared for class in small study groups were more likely to succeed than those who always studied alone.

Result: Harvard professors now divided their classes into small groups and encourage them to meet regularly. From time to time, professors visit the small group meetings to answer questions and participate in the discussions.

The assessment group wondered why some Harvard freshmen make an easy transition to college life, and others don't. To try to find out the answer they surveyed 120 Harvard sophomores with similar backgrounds and records. Half had a good freshman year. The others had a tough time. The difference, the group found, was one word — "time." The students with time management skills succeeded. Those without the ability to budget their time did not succeed.

The group continued its research by having a large group of freshmen (See MARTIN, page 5)