

Opinions

OUR VIEW

Second Chance

Woody Fish, Gardner-Webb College's football coach, is a proven winner.

As a high school coach, he took a school (Bessemer City) which had the longest losing streak (58 games) in the history of North Carolina prep football and turned it into a winner. His last year there, his team won its conference championship and participated in the state 2-A playoffs.

When Gardner-Webb wanted to strengthen its program, the Boiling Springs Baptist college turned to one of its products—Fish. In a short while, Fish worked the same magic as he did at Bessemer City, turning the Bulldogs into a winner and claiming a conference championship and a berth in the NAIA national playoffs last fall.

Now, Fish is taking on a challenge which will have all the eyes of the college football world focused on the small Cleveland County campus. Fish last week signed former University of North Carolina star running back Derrick Fenner to an athletic scholarship.

Fenner was the leading rusher as a freshman at UNC two years ago. But between his freshman and sophomore seasons, the Maryland native was charged with murder and possession of cocaine in his home state. The murder charges were later dropped and another man was convicted in the case. But before that happened, Fenner spent over a month in jail, and during that time he had a lot of time to think about his life.

After the court cases were history, Fenner returned to UNC to resume his academic and hopefully his athletic-career. He enrolled in summer school and successfully passed his work, but the UNC athletic department ruled out his participation in football.

With the help of a former UNC assistant coach, Lawson Holland, Fish and Fenner were put in contact with each other. After lengthy consideration by Fish and G-W President Chris White, the school decided to give Fenner a chance to resume his football career.

Gardner-Webb, no doubt, will be the subject of much criticism over this decision. Already, at least one coach in the SAC-8, John Perry of Lenoir-Rhyne, has publicly criticized the decision.

Was it a decision based solely on what Fenner can do for the school's football program, or was it a decision based on what the college, which is a Baptist institution with strong religious background and emphasis, can do to help Fenner?

Only time will tell. We hope Fenner will make the most of this opportunity, that he will be a good example on and off the field to area youth, and show the college football world that he deserves a second chance.

The ball is in his hands now.

Building Block

The city's latest comprehensive pay plan will get a lot of scrutiny over the next several weeks and months. Almost all of Kings Mountain's 170 employees receive raises under the program.

The pay plan came as a result of a recent study by consultants, Municipal Advisors Inc. of Virginia Beach, Va. They reported that most of the city's pay scale was too low and that it needed to be adjusted to bring Kings Mountain in line with other area municipalities.

It's a big step for the city, costing nearly \$212,000 more in salary expense annually. However, it was a necessary move. If Kings Mountain is to attract and hold qualified employees, it must be able to pay competitive wages.

The \$212,000 in salary increases was put into the city's current budget, and is taking into consideration the overall financial picture of Kings Mountain.

The city has steered through some choppy waters the past several months—from identifying numerous dealing with a state imposed moratorium on additional wastewater treatment, to settling the Crowders Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant issue. All are vital to the future of our community, and so are city employees, because none of it works without them.

We see the implementation of the pay plan as another building block for the future economic growth of our community.

Cartoonitorial



Looking Both Ways

(Ed. Note: With the writers' strike in full swing, all writers in the country refuse to perform. We can't tell any difference in Rusty Gates for some reason.)

One reason we have so many stories about our neighbors is that we have so many neighbors. My sister Pearl Gates used to tell me that so many people moved in and out because they found better jobs or nicer houses, but I always thought they just couldn't take being that close to us for very long.

It wasn't that we were so bad; it was just that they wanted us to be so much better.

Take Chester Drawers, for instance. His family moved in across the street from us and stayed only two weeks. The third day we taught him how to make a dandy soup by taking a large spoon and mixing up all the eggs, shells and all, in one of Pop Corne's hen house nests.

The fourth day we showed him how to put a hen to sleep by holding out one wing and gently folding the hen's head so that it had its head under its wing. Then you can let the wing down and the hen will think it's dark or something and will stay that way for 10 or 15 minutes.

Mr. Corne worked as a meat cutter at a grocery store down the road, and when he came home one day he found all of his chickens sleeping peacefully on their backs in the middle of the road.

All but three or four of them, that is. A fellow came by and wanted to buy a few chickens and Chester sold them to him for 10 cents each. A couple more chickens kept on sleeping when a delivery truck came down the road, and Chester sold these for five cents apiece, since they seemed a little shopworn.

We told him he ought to charge more, because you don't see many chickens with such interesting shapes and attitudes, but he wasn't much of a capitalist.

He wondered what to do with the money, and somebody suggested that he could buy peppermint candy with it down at Ab Scod's old store. He didn't know about the store so we took him in to let him see one of the 19 or so wonders of this part of the world.

The real wonder of it all was that Ab could stay in business. He was tall, skinny, and uglier than a mud fence after three days of rain, and he was grouchier than he was ugly and stingier than he was grouchy. His temper was another thing. It made all the other parts of him seem pretty by comparison.

While Chester was ordering his candy, which was on one of the top shelves, a few of the guys helped themselves to some licorice sticks and ran, and Ab came thumping down the ladder and cussing and running and trying to find something to throw at the same time.

The next day we told Chester how to spend the



Rusty Gates

rest of his money. And when he had done so we showed him how to roll cigarettes with the sacks of Golden Grain tobacco and wrapping papers he bought.

The lessons took place in the woods just outside town, and for the better part of an hour, during which time Chester and others set new Olympic records for smoking the most cigarettes in the least possible time and chewing licorice sticks between times.

It was a lot of fun till we tried to get up and found that the big oak trees wouldn't stop going in circles, along with the rest of the world. To make the afternoon more interesting, some of us noticed that Chester's face was roughly the color of the leaves on the trees and was getting greener by the second.

That was when we realized that much the same thing was happening to us, and we were all about as pretty as Jimson weed smells.

Now flu makes you sick, and so does the galloping crud. We also found out later that seasickness is fairly interesting and can take up a lot of your thinking time if you get a good case of it.

But nothing could compare with Golden Grain sickness. Those of us who could rolled over and lost our breakfast and last night's supper, and a few even went for everything they had eaten during the past two weeks. It wasn't a pretty sight, and the sound did not give the Briarhoppers anything to worry about in terms of musical competition.

About dark we were able to get to our feet, stumble home, and explain why we didn't especially want turnip greens and onions for supper that night. We did take time to dump Chester on his back porch before we staggered home.

His family moved away the next week, after we showed him a few more good times. We haven't seen him since. Another thing we have not done since is smoke a cigarette or kiss a girl who has or be able to stay in the same house where someone did.

We were six at the time, and we learned that six is a wonderful age to give up cigarettes—for life!

Your Right To Say It

How Big Is God?

By Phillip M. Squire, Pastor
Resurrection Lutheran Church

I have been getting a good laugh and cry from all the so called religious persons who are protesting the movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ"; as if God is so small that he needs defending. It reminds me of when the movies "Jesus Christ, Superstar" and "Godspell" were both picketed.

It is strange to me how anything that is contrary to what the Bible literally says destroys someone's faith. It is as if there are these religious people who are acting as Big Brother, to protect others from what they are themselves afraid of.

I remember as a high school student and as a college student reading Kazantzakis' book, "The Last Temptation of Christ." The book did more to strengthen my faith than to tear it down. It made me realize that my God was greater than what was written. If all my God could do, was that was written in the Bible, then my God was very small and weak. This God certainly needed me to change the world for him. But my God doesn't need me. My God is the one who has saved me and offered salvation to the rest of the world; not by what I have but by what God has done through Jesus Christ alone.

More than once I have come to the conclusion that Socrates was misquoted. He is supposed to have said "the unexamined life is not worth living." What I think he said was that "the unexamined faith is not worth living." If my faith is so small that things opposite to it can tear it apart, then I am in real trouble. My faith is not something that I have found in a book called the Bible. My faith is given to me by the supreme creator, by the eternal power, the heavenly Father. My God brings me to faith - it is God's gift to me. I do not believe in God because of the Bible, I believe in the Bible because of God. The ones afraid of this movie have it the other way around.

I believe that God is laughing at our antics against Hollywood movies like "the Temptation" and crying that we continue to allow the Bakkers and Swaggerts to take the name of God in vain. We let them hoodwink and dupe all kinds of money out of people who believe that they are giving to the church in the name of Christ. If that money is for the proclamation of the Gospel, where is the mission and the ministry? Where are the poor fed, the naked clothed, the sick comforted, the ill restored to health, the homeless given shelter, the jobless employed, the grieving given relief?

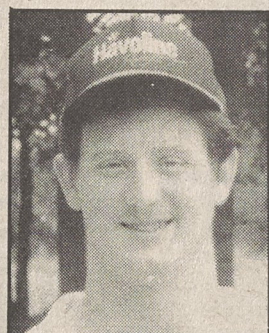
This Jesus, who has come as Savior of the world, was tempted in every way we are according to scripture (Hebrews 4:15) but never succumbed to it. I ask what is so sacrilegious or blasphemous about an artist fantasizing about the humanity of Jesus as he hung on the cross dying? That is probably the hardest thing for us to understand about Jesus: that he is 100% divine and 100% human at the same time. This Jesus is the one who hangs on the cross as Savior of the world and yet cries out in his humanity, the cry of all "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me" (Matthew 27:46). This divine Jesus is also the one who agonizes with God in the Garden of Gethsemane as to whether he must die to save the world (Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 19:32-42; Luke 22:39-46). And we let some movie artist destroy our faith by his fantasizing about what went on in the mind of Christ while he hung on the cross?

Since we are sinful human beings, we don't understand everything there is to know about the divinity of God. At the same time, because of our sinfulness we don't understand what it means to be fully human. So why are there those who feel that God is so little that they have to defend him? I do not need somebody to act as censor for my God. My God is big enough to overcome all that is opposed to his teachings without my help. My God calls me to be faithful - nothing more, nothing less. I do not need others to tell God, what God can or cannot do. If your God depends on you, then your God may not be big enough to handle the cares of the world and you might ask yourself why.

My God still surprises me; still holds mystery for me; still remains the supreme authority above anything I say or do. My God has revealed truth to me through the Bible but my God has not stopped there. My God is greater than any book (John 21:25 and Exodus 3:14). If you have never seen the movie and it still offends you, then you may need to ask yourself how big is your god?

SIDEWALK SURVEY

QUESTION: Should Sen. Dan Quayle's National Guard Service and Possible Family Influence Used To Get Him In The Guard Be Considered A Campaign Issue?



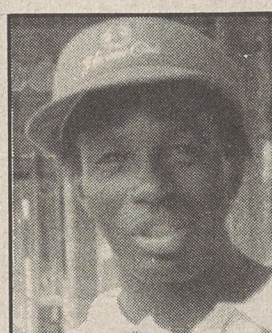
Gerald Gladden

"No, because it was too far in the past and the Democrats are just digging it up just to find something negative."



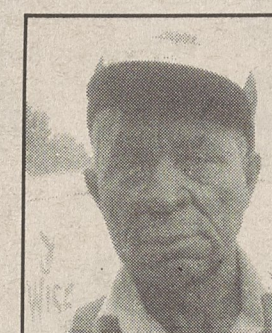
Ginger Hall

"I think that should be in to the National Guard to avoid the draft; however, if they had sent his unit to Vietnam, he would have gone."



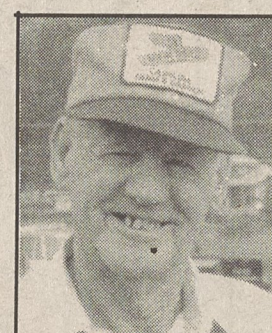
Steve Jamerson

"No, I don't think that should be an issue in the campaign, but anytime you're running for public office, all phases of your life will be an issue."



J.D. Oates

"I don't believe so. If he was in the National Guard, I don't think they have any reason bringing that up. He did his duty."



Arthur Biltcliffe

"Yes, it is. It isn't right just because they had power and money. Ordinary people have to do their civic duty or go to jail!"



Ron Prince

"No. What's it got to do with it? He's done nothing that a bunch of others wouldn't have."

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