

Opinions

Your Right To Say It

Disappointed with schools

To The Editor:

I must say that I am pleased to see that parent concern over the new student relocating program. I hope they are taking note of the response coming from our Superintendent's office and elected School Board members. As usual, the parents' opinions are irrelevant, and we are treated as outsiders. I hope this is a good time to draw you into other school problems we have.

I have three children, one graduating this year from Kings Mountain High, one in fifth grade, and one in tenth grade at Shelby High School. I have never had a problem with Bethware. It is an excellent school, totally dedicated to its students. Our problems began at Central, at the Junior High, and the High School. So it is surprising to me to see a need to disrupt our elementary schools. As long as I have had children I have never heard of a problem in this area. If we strive to have the same standards of teaching at all our schools, I see no need to disrupt our children in this way. Our oldest children attended the Junior High when it was eighth and ninth grade combined. This was a horrible combination in which children had a party for two years. Converting to sixth, seventh and eighth works extremely well.

The Shelby Middle School has used this combination successfully as well as many other districts. I am pleased we are going to that program while we still have a building left. I worry though, how many children we lost to the old system? During this time my middle son decided to make the eighth grade a career. When we first started having problems, I visited the school to see what I could do to improve his grades. I was told he was at the age it was up to him to do the work, that it was not up to me or the teachers to go to any extra effort to help him. Listening to these words of wisdom, I backed off and my son failed eighth grade. After the first few grading periods with no improvement, we transferred him to Shelby Middle School. I was shocked to see teachers standing at all four corners of the school block with walkie talkies. This was to make sure children did not leave the school grounds after they were dropped off or left the school bus.

At Kings Mountain Junior High, I was told when I asked about kids hanging out at North Woods before and after school, it was not their responsibility to keep children on the school grounds. If you have children around this age, ask them what went on before and after school at North Woods. My son's grades improved mainly by the efforts of myself and the Shelby teachers. Report cards are issued every six weeks in Shelby. We issue every nine weeks, which is an eternity to a teenager. They goof off the first four and a half weeks, then can't catch up the last four and a half. When I asked why we use nine week grading periods I was told the teachers had voted on it. I challenge anyone to give me a reason for nine week grading periods except for teacher convenience. Not only does Shelby grade every six weeks, they also get three week reports.

What about our drop out rate? With all the attention our new program received, not once was there a mention of the hours these kids work. At one business our children are asked to close at night. This means they work til 12:00, 12:30 even 1:00 in the morning. This is not only on weekends. It includes school nights. So we adults look at this situation and decide to have the children sign a contract that if he can't work these hours and attend school full time, he or she will be fired. Some grocery stores have a similar situation where the children come in after closing to put up stock. I'm sorry, but I look at this as exploiting our children for cheap labor. If we were really concerned with our children and the drop out rate, we would have asked these companies to set more reasonable hours for students. They should take into consideration that an adult could not go to school and work those hours without creating a problem for their school situation. Again, we put a problem we created as adults, on the backs of our children to solve. Well, I hope we all sleep better now that we have done such a great deed. I know that I won't.

We have wonderful new programs set up to help our children. At Shelby High School their new program is called Comprehensive High School. The school works on two shifts, from 8:00 to 2:30 and from 11:00 to 5:00. Children pick the time convenient for them and are offered help with extra subjects before and after regular scheduled classes. If you fail a class one six week period, you can take the class over as an extra class to avoid summer school. We receive news letters from Shelby High. They give us needed information on important dates, events and new programs. These are actually addressed and mailed to the parents' home. They have also started an excellent health Care Program. They will even do throat cultures to check for strep throat. I'm not saying, take your child out of Kings Mountain Schools and send them to Shelby. I am asking why, with all the wonderful ideas and new programs in effect, right in a neighboring town, all we could find to change was a rezoning issue. We need to bring Kings Mountain into the next century. Ask yourself, "Can We Change?"

I don't think so. Not until the parents and the kids take back the control we have lost in this school district. We need a change, from administration all the way down to staff in our schools. If they don't think our children are their main reason for being at their job, we don't need them. Contrary to what they think, they do answer to us as parents, but if we just complain to ourselves and take no action, it will stay the same or even get worse. We can't blame the system any more. The fault is ours. As parents we have abandoned our children by our indifference. We have given them a few minutes to complain to a neighbor or our friends about situations we refuse to take the time to correct. I would hope, in our old age, our children can remember we truly tried to make a change for the better. If they remember only that we did not have time to make a difference, maybe they will feel they have no time for us.

Sincerely, Brenda Jenkins, Kings Mountain.

Nostalgia Corner



GROVER HIGH CLASS OF '43-Pictured are members of the Grover High School Class of 1943 as they posed for a photograph in the 10th grade Front row, from left, Miriam Martin, Doris Huffstetler, Reba Rippey, Mary Lou Beam, Dixie Smith, Ruby Sanders; second row, Miss Pinnix, teacher; Betty Hardin, Lenora Bird, Mary Priester, Bonnie Moss and Augusta Pharr; back row, Lalon Franks, Cecil Green, Frank Neal, Robert Dixon, Broadus Beam, Jim Yarbro and Hayes Ledford. The Classes of 1941-44 will hold a first-time reunion Saturday night at 6 p.m. at Holiday Inn.

Golden Gloves boxing, once popular, now becoming extinct

What happened to amateur boxing in this part of the country?

I've been watching all the news outlets but so far I've seen nothing about a Golden Gloves tournament anywhere in North or South Carolina.

When I was growing up in the fifties, there was a tournament somewhere every week, beginning in December and running into late March.

There was the Silver Gloves in Gastonia, Golden Gloves events in Mt. Holly, Hickory, Greenville, High Point, Durham and the big one in Charlotte. I'm sure there were others that have slipped my alleged mind.

I participated in several of those tournaments (don't ask me how I did), and enjoyed them immensely. The Greenville meet was an especially good event, but they were all well-managed and a lot of fun.

Some of the boxers were outstanding. The Gastonia Red Shield Club had Denny Dockery, Bobby Gillespie, Keith Uren, Jerry Carpenter, Mack Passmore, Jerry Stratton, Johnny Haines and several others--good boxers one and all, and some of them might have been several cuts above good.

Denny Dockery was, pound for pound, as good an amateur fighter as anyone who ever pulled on the gloves. He was fast, confident, ring-wise and could punch like a mule-kick. Bobby Gillespie won his share of bouts, also. Mack Passmore owns several Golden Gloves championships from all over the state, as does Keith Uren.

One of the best fighters I ever saw was Ricky Ballenger from Gaffney. He was really impressive. I have no idea whether he still lives in Gaffney, but I'd like to know.

Durham had an excellent boxing team, with Jerry Loy, Benny Deaton, Curtis Ennis and Bobby Hinson. High Point had Jerry and Jimmy Skeen, both good fighters. Greenville boasted the likes of Guido Carpi and Bill Godfrey. Charleston had Sonny Snell, Gene



McCarn and Filipino Ramirez--all fast and good ring craftsmen.

One of the best teams in the state, if not the best, especially during the decade of the fifties, was Mt. Holly. Coached by T.L. McManus, the Mt. Holly team almost always carried one of the team trophies home from every tournament they entered.

Mt. Holly fighters that may ring a bell with some of you were T.L.'s brothers, Dink and Jim. Between them they must have had over 500 amateur matches, and I'll bet they lost less than 15 between them. Then there were Frank Brewer, Berle and Max Davis, Jack Martin, and a host of others.

The Mt. Holly and Charlotte teams always had a rivalry going. Some of the Charlotte team members were Billy and Ronald Short, Jack Gilbert, Butch Flowe, David Mills and Bobby Headdon. They were coached by Lou Kemp and were always a force to be reckoned with.

I called T.L. McManus the other night just to chat about those days. He told me he coached Mt. Holly for 22 years. I thought it was longer than that.

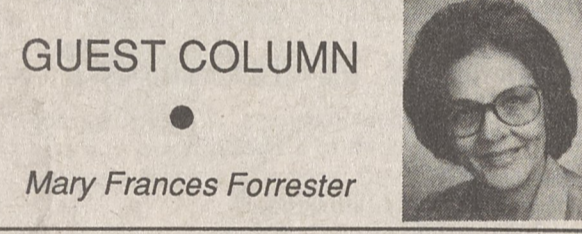
"I really miss it," he said. "You know, we used to have 10 or 11 tournaments a year in North and South Carolina. I don't know what happened to them. It's been several years since I've participated, but I enjoyed every minute of it."

Senator and wife always on the go

On Tues., Jan. 29, the day before the General Assembly convened for the 1991 session, Jim was feted to a farewell luncheon. Hosted by one of the local nursing homes where he is the medical doctor, it was a fine occasion with most of the area officials present. There were a lot of testimonials, compliments, expressed expectations, and even a few promises. A most touching moment was the gift of a handcrafted flag holder presented by one of the nursing home residents. It will have an honored place in his office.

We left for Raleigh early that evening and stopped along the way for dinner. Arriving at our home away from home (herein referred to as our place) about 9 p.m., we finished listening to President Bush's State of the Union Address that had been on the car radio. We went to bed early so we would be ready for the events of the first day of this new adventure as N.C. State Senator. The responsibility of representing 370,000 people in four counties (who are the best people in the state of N.C.) made us heady with anticipation. We slept sound and well.

The morning of the opening session was warm (60 degrees) with slow rain and fog. We worried about those driving in for the day as we dressed, had coffee and a light breakfast. We left at 9:45 for the swearing in ceremony. I wore my chartreuse campaign jacket over a black knit dress and knit derby hat. Since that jacket had been worn throughout the campaign, it de-



served being worn for the honors of the day. We parked in the designated parking lot under the Legislative Building. Walking under an umbrella, we went first to the N.C. Medical Society Headquarters a block away. After meeting the staff, I walked four doors down to the Bailey Tucker House for a reception honoring the legislator's spouses. I met Senator Carter's wife on the way and we went in together. This event was hosted by Lt. Gov. and Mrs. Jim Gardner, but Mrs. Gardner was sick and so Lt. Gov. Gardner was on his own with all those ladies. He did an outstanding job; I couldn't help but muse whether I could have handled a like situation in reverse. Jim remained at the Medical Society Headquarters to meet a bus load of district supporters due to arrive anytime. We appreciated the Medical Society letting us use their facility for a gathering point.

Everyone arrived at the Senate Chamber just before noon. My designated seat was in the back on the floor

Letter Policy

The Kings Mountain Herald welcomes your letters to the editor for publication in each week's paper. We ask that you follow these guidelines when submitting letters:

Keep the letters brief and to the point. Type and double space them, if possible, and sign them in ink stating your name, address and telephone number for verification purposes. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

The Herald reserves the right to edit any letter for spelling, good taste, libel, slander or any other reason, and reserves the right to reject any letter for any reason.

Mail your letters to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, N.C. 28086. Hand-delivered letters will not be accepted.

News Deadlines

The Kings Mountain Herald welcomes your news items for publication in each Thursday's paper. We ask that you follow these deadlines when submitting material.

The deadline for social news including weddings, anniversaries, reunions, engagements, birthdays, club news, church news, etc., is Friday at 5 p.m.

The deadline for A section news, including community and school activities, sports news, etc., is Tuesday at 5 p.m. News of Tuesday night meetings and other activities will be accepted until 10 a.m. on Wednesdays.

Call your items of interest into the Herald at 739-7496 or bring them by our office on East King Street at Canterbury Road.

T.L. still keeps track of most of the guys he coached. He told me where some of them were working and how they were doing. Many of them remained in Mt. Holly.

He mentioned Frank Brewer and we got to talking about how unlucky Frank was. One night, during the Hickory tournament, Frank, who was an excellent boxer, was fighting Bobby Gillespie. It should have been a close bout. As they met in the center of the ring, Gillespie threw a bunch that caught Frank on the thumb and broke it. Once in a fight in Belmont, a fighter stepped on Frank's foot and he fell. The other guy just kept standing on the foot and Frank couldn't get up. The referee counted him out. Frank met Mack Passmore one year in Charlotte, and he was expected to win big, but he caught Mack on a good night. Mack just kept throwing right lead after right lead and it seemed as though every one of them caught Frank flush on the jaw. Mack won a unanimous decision.

Brewer died in a house fire in Savannah, Ga., a few years back. Seems he went to sleep smoking and caught the couch on fire.

Of all those years, there are two fights that stand out in my mind. The first was between Dink McManus and Jerry Loy in Gastonia.

They went at it hammer and tongs for three rounds, neither giving an inch. T.L. says Loy won that bout, but I seem to remember Dink as the victor. He's probably right.

The second fight was a match between Denny Dockery and Jack Gilbert in Hickory. Denny had beaten Jack a week earlier in Gastonia on a disputed decision. Forgive me, Denny, but I think Gilbert won that fight. But, in Hickory, Dockery won decisively. It was no contest.

I could go on and on. Maybe local amateur boxing calls for another column. I'm just getting warmed up.

of the chamber itself. Visitors, guests, and spectators sat in the gallery on each side above the Senate Chamber. Those who could not find room remained outside the closed doors. Their only reward was in just being there. I was awed by the thought of all those who walked this way before and left their footprints in these great halls.

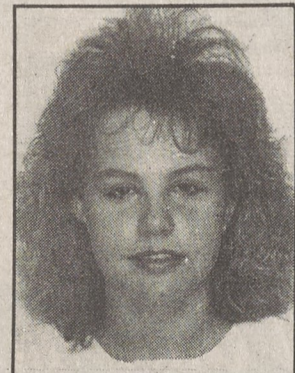
The Opening Session and Swearing In Ceremony lasted about two hours. Each legislator was sworn in with a Holy Bible inscribed with his name. I knew that would become a coveted family treasure. After the ceremony, there was a reception for the legislators and their immediate family at the Governor's Mansion, hosted by Governor and Mrs. Martin.

With a short break for freshening up, there was an evening reception and dinner. These were hosted by a large number of businessmen and interest groups. It was a sea of new faces and we felt quite alone even though we were enveloped by people. Being able to sit down for the dinner was a welcome relief to my feet!

The excitement of the day was wonderful. The ceremony and protocol interspersed with celebration was stimulating and humbling at the same time. I commented it was much like the bride and groom on their wedding day. The celebration, congratulations and sharing of the moment will always be cherished, but the reality of the commitment and the seriousness of the task is just under the surface of the occasion. When you wake up tomorrow...the real work begins!

Sidewalk Survey

What does Kings Mountain need that we don't have?



DEBBIE PARIZO
More activities for young people.



KELLY ROBERTS
A Taco Bell restaurant.



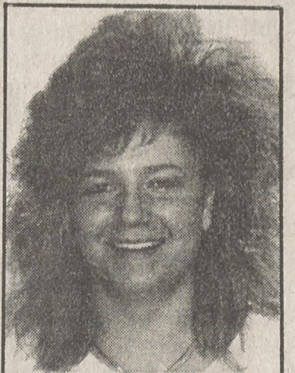
CRYSTAL LAUGHRIDGE
Somewhere for kids to hang out. A teen club.



NICOLE WALL
A Burger King.



TRACY BYERS
A big shopping mall.



ANGIE HAMRICK
A movie theater.