

ELVIS

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Cloninger receives Elvis gifts at holidays and birthdays to add to her collection. She has a cedar chest full of newspaper accounts of the singer's life and death. Her customers often bring home trinkets from Memphis to share with Cloninger when they visit First Union National Bank, where Juanita has been employed for 26 years and is FUNB's customer service representative.

Cloninger joined the bank after her graduation from Kings Mountain High School in 1964. The popular employee initially worked as a teller. She has built up a rapport with customers who appreciate her friendliness and diligence. Many of them delight in hearing about and adding to her Elvis collection.

Juanita saw Elvis perform at four concerts and was in the audience in 6th Row Center Stage in 1976 in Charlotte Coliseum when he performed his last concert in Charlotte. She attempted to present the singer with a doll look-a-like but was unsuccessful, she said, because of the tight security surrounding the star. The next year when Elvis was in Charlotte, the doll, painted by Beverly Turner of Gaffney, SC, was presented to the singer. Juanita's friend lowered the doll from a string from the balcony of the auditorium to the stage.

Juanita Dellinger Cloninger grew up with Elvis. The music of Elvis in his heyday continues to delight Cloninger, who was active in the Gastonia Elvis Fan club for many years. The club, which was called Taking Care of Business For

Elvis, still meets in Bessemer City and Jo Ann Young is president.

Cloninger described as 'fantastic' her trip to Graceland in 1987 for the 10th anniversary of Presley's death. She was among the 30,000 people who crowded into Graceland to attend a candlelight vigil at The Mansion in 100 degree weather in August. Juanita stood in line from 9 p.m. one night until 4:30 a.m. the next morning to get to the grave site to place a bouquet of yellow roses. The bus departed at 6:30 a.m. to return the group to Kings Mountain.

"It was exciting and a once in a lifetime experience," said Cloninger.

Presley died August 16, 1977 at age 42.

A Kings Mountain native, Juanita grew up in a musical family. Her father, Thomas F. Dellinger, sister Judy Hayes and brother Wayne Dellinger played musical instruments and the brother-sister team were featured in a band called "Sweet Ambitions." Neither Juanita nor her mother played an instrument but they were big fans of the family.

Active in Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church, Juanita enjoys music. She

particularly likes Allen Jackson, a country music singer, who is famous for "Don't Rock The Jukebox." But, Elvis is the number one performer on her list of musical greats.

"No one will ever be Elvis," said Juanita, who said she had attended several performances by Elvis look-a-likes. "No one will ever come close to Elvis."

Juanita's son, John David Van Dyke III, 21, also enjoys music. He isn't as big a fan as his mother of Elvis but he enjoys the movies and likes to see the new additions to the Elvis Room.

Juanita said she stayed home

from church on a Sunday night in 1956 to watch Elvis perform on national television. She had heard for weeks that the singer was going to perform on Ed Sullivan Show and had heard him sing with Jimmy Dorsey's Band. As it turned out, her parents got home in time for the show because the preacher cut the service short so that his wife, also an Elvis fan, could get home in time for the entertainment.

Dellinger's hobby may be unique but she says it has been interesting to follow Elvis through his career and to salvage some of the brilliance of a super star in a room of her home.

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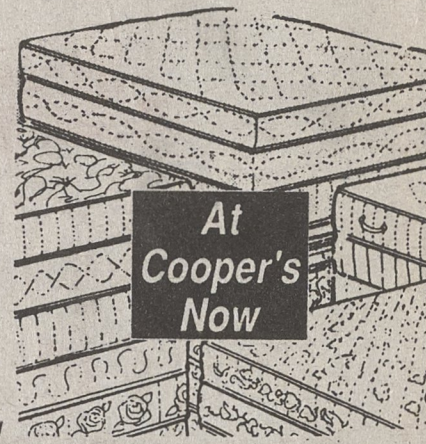
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SCHOOL BOARD

From Page 1-A

one-day work session for late February or early March and will look at changing the date of the February board meeting. Final action will be taken on a policy for instructional materials and first reading will be held on a policy called "Blood Borne Pathogens," dealing with hepatitis inoculations of at-risk employees.

The board will hire an auditor to audit the books for next year and hear a report on its Impact Aid application.

NEW PASTOR

From Page 1-A

Latin American countries including Brazil where they were involved in mission work in Recife.

Before coming to Kings Mountain Mitchell helped raise funds for Han Nam University in Korea, agreeing to do the job after his friend, the president of the University, asked him to help out in the fund raising effort. Mitchell has also visited in Korea several times.

He is involved in discipleship training with John Haggai in Singapore and last year spent a week in Venezuela and lectured in church leadership.

Both Mitchells speak Spanish and Grace, who has taught both English and Spanish, speaks Spanish fluently. The couple also enjoy a "Great Books" study group which meets in Dallas.

Mitchell's military experience came during World War II when he trained as an officer to lead a battalion of boys in Peru. The young men were required to take the military training before they enrolled in school.

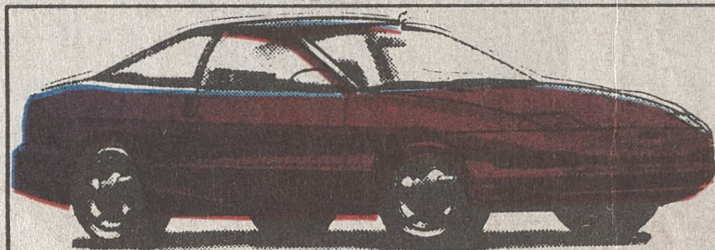
Mitchell says he has enjoyed all aspects of his career, from teaching young children to college age students. He admits that the teaching profession is more stressful than the active ministry but says that teaching fulfilled a goal that he began when he trained in New Zealand to teach young boys at a Presbyterian Boys School. He was a missionary teacher for nine years.

The Mitchells, who reside on Allison Court, have two daughters: Alison Lenox, who teaches Spanish in Salisbury City Schools, and Marion Mitchell of Kings Mountain.

Mitchell retired at 65 in 1989 to enjoy traveling with his wife and to enjoy reading and family but when a call came to become an interim pastor in Charlotte he decided the call could not be turned down. The call to serve from the pulpit was too strong.

The Lord works in mysterious ways, affirms Mitchell. It was just after he completed his work in Charlotte that he was called to the Kings Mountain church to succeed Dr. Eric Faust, who had accepted a call to a church in West Virginia. Although Dr. Mitchell had previously been preaching at Sunday services in Charlotte, Mrs. Mitchell was a member of the local congregation. Now they attend church together. Mr. Mitchell's place is in the pulpit and Mrs. Mitchell's place is in her familiar pew.

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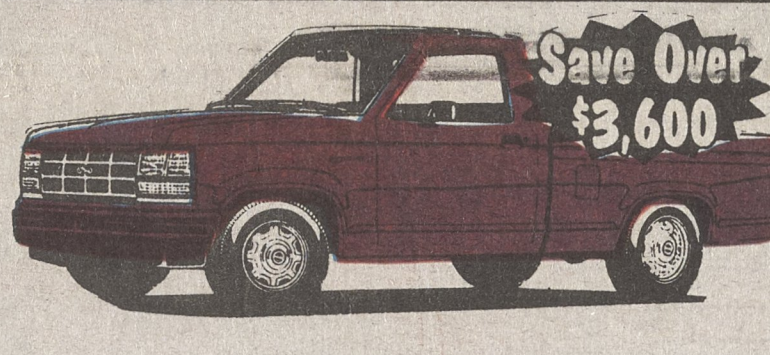
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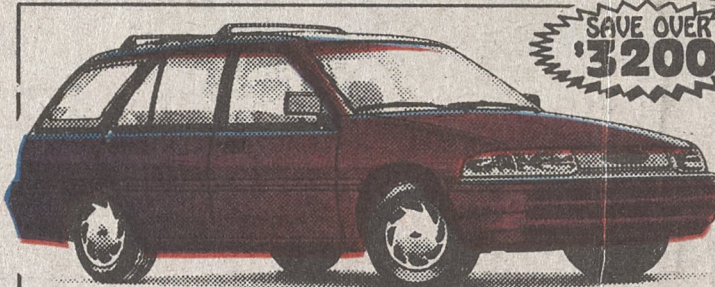
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