

Opinions

Nostalgia Corner

Your Right To Say It

GARY STEWART

Editor



John will be missed

The timing didn't seem right. John Howze, 59, seemingly a picture of health, died unexpectedly last Thursday morning, leaving his loving family, friends and the entire community in a state of shock.

The popular golfer at Kings Mountain Country Club and a founding father of the club's Member-Guest Golf Tournament was preparing for retirement, a time when he would have all the time he wanted for travel, just taking it easy, or spending more time on the golf course than ever before.

Golfing was a family tradition for the Howzes. John took up the sport in the mid-fifties when he was serving the U.S. Army as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne. His sons - Gary, Mitch and Mike - grew up on the golf course and were outstanding junior players, and now compete ably in club tournaments and amateur events. In recent years, his wife, Doris, and daughter, Susan Cloninger, began playing and, like the men, became quite good at it.

John had retired five years ago from Transco Energy Company and a week later went to work for Piedmont Natural Gas in Charlotte. With his 60th birthday coming up in December, John felt it was time to retire for good. Just last Tuesday the company gave a luncheon in his honor, and Friday was to be his last day at work.

Everything seemed normal Thursday morning. John and Doris had their usual breakfast together and John was laughing and saying to Doris that after one more day they wouldn't have to get up so early. Shortly afterward he was dead of an apparent heart attack.

As word circulated around town, all who knew him were stunned and saddened. A week later they still find it hard to believe.

The Howzes moved to Kings Mountain in 1963 and quickly endeared themselves to the townspeople, and especially to the many golfers and neighbors at Kings Mountain Country Club. Some of the family's happiest moments came on the golf course and John, especially, was one of the club's most popular champions. He helped organize the first Member-Guest in 1971, but it was rained out, and John and his partner won the event in 1972, 1973 and 1975. John also won six club championships. He was always a top contender in any major tournament there.

He was active in the community, serving during the early years of the Kings Mountain Jaycees, and he was a past president and member of the Board of Directors of King Mountain Country Club.

Ironically, his death on Thursday came two days before the Member-Guest. The first round was played early Saturday so as not to conflict with John's funeral at 4 p.m. The final round was held on Sunday afternoon. Needless to say, the golfers were in a somber mood.

No doubt, though, the memory of John's dedication to the game and especially to the Member-Guest, was also an inspiration. Stoney Jackson, who like John Howze is always among the leaders in any tournament in which he competes, had purchased beautiful silver plaques for the winners in memory of John, and a huge trophy in memory of John will be permanently displayed in the Members' Room and each year the winners' names will be engraved on it. It was fitting that Jackson and his partner won the tournament.

In an emotional tone, Jackson commented, "I have won a lot of trophies in my golfing career, but this one is now and will always be the one I will cherish the most."

What Jackson and other golfers, friends and acquaintances will cherish most will not be the trophies, but the memory of a dear friend whose brief time on earth touched the lives of a lot of people in a very positive way.

HERALD LETTER POLICY

The Herald welcomes your letters to the editor for publication in each Thursday's paper. The following guidelines apply:

Keep your letters brief and to the point. Type and double space them, if possible; if not write legibly. Letters or guest columns containing more than 600 words will not be accepted.

All letters must be signed in ink and include the full name, address and telephone number of the author for verification purposes.

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

Mail your letters to The Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086. Hand-delivered letters will not be accepted.



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Advertisement from 1963 Kings Mountain Herald

Be sure not to judge other denominations

Not more than three weeks ago, I was privy to a conversation in which a longtime resident of Birmingham, Alabama was telling a new resident in town about some of the area congregations. I listened with great interest to determine in what ways she would describe the various groups. Where would she begin? What about each would be most important to her? What kinds of bedrock criteria would shape her discussion?

To no great surprise, she offered a description of six or seven groups which focused not on theology or central beliefs but upon a kind of "consumer's view" of the "market." Instead of describing what each group believed about God and God's claim upon human life, she offered a brief summary of stereotypes. I found this conversation fascinating because in my experience, I have determined this approach to "comparative religions" to be the norm in our society rather than the exception.

To that end, I have compiled a small list of stereotypes which I have heard here in Kings Mountain since that conversation. And I will leave it to your imaginations to determine whom each phrase describes.

The holy rollers, the Republican party at prayer, the Democratic party at prayer, the professors, the good ol' boys, the happy people, the feely-touchies, the people

REFLECTIONS on Religion and Life

Rev. Dick Newsome
Pastor
First Presbyterian Church



from the stone age, the dreamers, and the good, the bad and the ugly.

I believe these kinds of descriptions (which we've all heard before) are less than helpful in a society which continues to struggle with ways to worship the same God in the face of our differences. I believe that the more we concentrate on our small idiosyncrasies, the less we are able to affirm our common convictions and deal honestly with our genuine differences of belief. Because the more we hear and absorb these phrases, the more we begin to believe them even if we have never stepped foot into another's house of worship. Imagination has a way of running away with our senses.

Therefore, I offer a cheap but possibly helpful piece of advice which I learned from my three-and-a-half-

year-old son (who is already infinitely smarter than I). One hot day in our car, Burns expressed a wish to buy something - an ice cream cone, a piece of candy, a toy. I do not remember exactly. But it was something for which we were not going to pull off the road. So instead of simply saying "no," I asked him to imagine what it would be like if suddenly we had a thousand ice cream cones - so much ice cream that the entire car was full of it from bumper to bumper. And the absurdity of it all seemed to work. Before long, the thought of his desired object was out of his mind. And we progressed merrily along our way.

So next time you find yourself imagining what some other religious group in town is like, imagine exactly the opposite. If the stereotype is of people who dance and sing in the aisles, imagine them in a quiet reverence which would make the finest medieval monk proud. If the stereotype is of cold, unfriendly worshippers, imagine them with helium balloons and party hats giving away door prizes. You just might get a chuckle out of the experience. You just might realize that the original stereotype isn't worth its weight in salt. Hopefully, in time, we will all realize that God alone is the One to judge us. And as of the writing of this article, God seems to be dealing with us odd humans just fine.

Jean McAbee

Robert E. Lee was a pretty smart fellow

How many of you saw the two-part six-hour mini series called "Gettysburg" on the Ted Turner channel? How many were nettled by Martin Sheen's portrayal of Robert E. Lee as a bumbling idiot? I was.

At first I thought I was the only one who noticed the inaccuracy. My son Jeff, a history buff, called soon after the broadcast, and let me tell you he was perturbed.

Jeff launched into a ten-minute tirade on Martin Sheen, Yankees and actors in general.

Sheen is good at trying to topple American leaders, past or present. Some of you may know of his travels to foreign countries that are not on good terms with the U.S., to lend them moral support. He went to one of the Central American countries, I think it was Nicaragua, to donate blood to an anti-American group. He has been known to showboat on the streets of Washington by sleeping out in the open with the homeless, though nobody has been found who can swear he slept out all night. As honorary mayor (the only kind they have) of Malibu, California, Sheen extended an invitation to all the homeless to come and live there. The community was rapidly overrun with pot heads and alcoholics.

Martin Sheen can be found wherever there is any kind of demonstration against his country. That is something I don't understand.

Anyway, he characterized General Robert E. Lee as being indecisive, a bully and just plain stupid in the



JIM HEFFNER
Columnist

mini series. Most of us in the South know better, but I don't know how that played above the Mason-Dixon Line.

Lee's biographers have consistently shown him to be an excellent military man. Burke Davis wrote that Lee was the "Most daring soldier of American history."

"Gettysburg" continually showed Lee at odds with General Longstreet, and he was to a degree, but the writers of the show depicted Lee as the culprit when, in fact, it was Longstreet who was difficult to get along with. He was aging and set in his ways, and there were times he resented Lee as his commanding officer.

Lee did get aggravated with Longstreet on occasion, but he respected the elder man's military knowledge and experience. If Robert E. Lee is to be criticized, it is for allowing Longstreet to get away with disobeying orders on several occasions.

Longstreet did not, however, disagree with the Confederate offensive at Gettysburg, as the movie indicated. The South had little choice. They had marched into Pennsylvania to engage the enemy because they were at war, and Lee wanted to finish the war as soon as possible. His troops were short on ammunition and food. Their choice was fight or starve.

It is true that Longstreet wanted to retreat in the direction of Richmond, but he knew he would have to fight either way, because the Southern Army was practically surrounded, and Gettysburg was as good a place as any to do battle.

One of Lee's biographers said he was a "Most imminent American strategist. His strategic powers sprang from his extraordinary brain power, his ability to put himself in the place of his opponents and his analysis of military intelligence."

That's a long way from the bumbling old fool portrayed by Martin Sheen.

Lee took over the Army of the South when they were short on supplies, rations and competent commanders. The loss at Gettysburg can be traced to those very shortages, as well as the absence of J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry, which is another story. Lee didn't point out any shortcomings except his own. Taking full credit for the Gettysburg defeat.

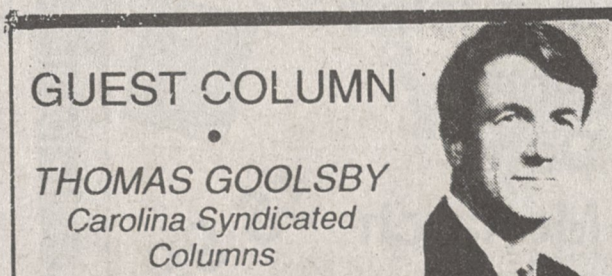
Sometimes I wonder about people such as Sheen. Ed Asner, Jane Fonda and Mike Farrell.

Free-spending legislators like to live high on hog

Our free-spending legislators finally approved a budget and called it "quits" for the short session. Besides passing the largest spending plan in the history of North Carolina - over \$10 billion - our pork-loving politicians managed to spend all of our unexpected \$1 billion revenue windfall. Forget the fact that during the last short session in 1991, our state suffered from an over \$1 billion revenue shortfall. Forget the fact that the politicians raised the corporate income tax rate to the highest in the Southeastern region and promised the tax would only be "temporary." It appears that in this case "temporary" does not conform to any definition found in Webster's Dictionary.

It is, however, painfully apparent that our politicians have no trouble understanding the definition of "spending." The highlights of the pork-barrel budget deal are enough to make any tax-and-spender green with envy. From \$7 million for the "information highway" to \$4 million in grants to historical, cultural and "artistic" groups, the pork barons showed no control when it came to giving away our money.

It seems hard to believe that prior to the short session, many of our politicians actually teased us with talks about a possible tax rebate. Far from giving



GUEST COLUMN
THOMAS GOOLSBY
Carolina Syndicated
Columnist

North Carolinians a tax rebate, our legislators only managed to put less than two-tenths of one percent of the budget into savings (\$214 million). Additionally, three-quarters of the money placed in savings was required by law.

The pork barons lavished cash on their local communities in the time honored tradition to ensure themselves re-election in November. Representative David Diamond, a Surry County Democrat, sent \$9.5 million to Appalachian State University for a new basketball arena and convocation center. Dan Blue, Speaker of the House, directed \$7.7 million to his alma mater, N.C. Central University, for a new Biotechnology Center. George Daniel, a Caswell County Democrat,

locked onto \$6.5 million for the Centennial Center (basketball arena) at N.C. State University, where he is an alumnus and a big basketball fan. Mark Basnight, the Senate leader and a Democrat from Manteo, sent an \$800,000 plum to his constituents for the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum and another \$5 million in "seafaring swag" for the Elizabeth II historic site in Manteo.

Our politicians apparently believe that they can spend us into prosperity. However, the only people spent into prosperity are the politicians themselves. They used pork-barrel projects to guarantee their re-election and they used the \$1 billion budget windfall to boost their own pensions by 44 to 50 percent.

It's time to call a halt to our ever increasing state budget and the ever increasing taxes required to support it. The recent shameful spectacle of unchecked pork-barrel spending should sound the alarm for voters across North Carolina. The November elections are fast approaching and we have a chance, as taxpayers and voters, to demand more fiscal responsibility. Wouldn't it be nice to finally hold some of the pork barons responsible for their actions by denying them further opportunities to belly up to the public trough?

Kings Mountain Herald

Established 1889

Published Thursday at East King Street at Canterbury Road, Kings Mountain, North Carolina 28086.

USPS 931-040, by Republic Newspapers, Inc.-2nd Class postage paid in Kings Mountain

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Darrell Austin Associate Publisher
Gary Stewart Editor
Elizabeth Stewart News Editor
Shirley Austin Advertising Representative
Bill Fulton Advertising Representative
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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Gaston & Cleveland Counties: 1 Year \$17.00; 6 Months \$10.00. Other NC Counties: 1 Year \$19.00; 6 Months \$11.00. Outside NC: 1 Year \$22.00; 6 Months \$12.50.

REPUBLIC NEWSPAPERS, INC.



Member North Carolina Press Association

Postmaster: Send Address Changes to:

Kings Mountain Herald, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086
Back issues, one month or older, when available, are 70¢ per copy.