

Christmas wish list for District Schools

Bob McRae
Superintendent
Kings
Mountain
Schools



The ole Christmas wish list!
-Continued recognition for the employees of this system who did such a great job with the state's ABC program last year. Quality instruction is not to be taken for granted. Our folks are dedicated to success, and results prove they are achieving that success. We are fortunate to have so many fine teachers and support people in our schools.
-More state championships for our high school's athletic teams and for the individuals who are on those teams. Recent successes by Julius Curry in wrestling, Michael Jolly in golf, and our volleyball team are fitting rewards for deserving young people. Watching them succeed reminds me of the debt of gratitude we also owe our coaches for their guidance to these students.
-More people attending cultural arts events. Sometimes I think attendance at our concerts and drama productions may be declining. We pursue excellence in this system, and our cultural arts program is a wonderful example of what high expectations for students can produce. If you've not taken advantage of these great opportunities for entertainment thus far this year, don't miss the second semester performances. You'll also want to visit our visual art displays at some of these events.
-Shorter sessions of the legislature. Sessions of the General Assembly seem to take longer each year - even the "short" sessions. This year's session did not end until October 29. Such a delay negatively impacts our ability to prepare our programs as we do not have definite allotments for state funds until after the session ends. This wish can be accomplished if members of both par-

ties put aside partisanship in the interest of efficiency.
-An additional funding source for school construction. I realize that no one likes to consider higher taxes. I'm in that group myself. However, we must realize that more students are entering our schools. They must be provided with good learning spaces. To this point there are not enough resources to meet our needs. It seems to me that a one penny sales tax for Cleveland County, dedicated to school construction, is the fairest way to accomplish the goal. A great Christmas gift would be the opportunity to vote on it.
-Something really nice for the Mountaineer Club, our athletic booster organization. This group of folks has really turned up its level of support in the last few years and is helping us provide opportunities for our students which go beyond what many systems are able to offer. It seems the members are working at our high school practically every night. They deserve many thanks for their tireless efforts.
-More people entering the teaching profession. The challenge of attracting and retaining quality teachers to our system is becoming more formidable each year. There is a great opportunity awaiting for dedicated graduates. I think our state is addressing the issue in relation to salary improvement. I hope more college students, especially more from our community, will look to a teaching career as they play their post-high school education.
-A kinder, gentler, more positive climate. Our society seems to have become more contentious. It funnels down to our children. If most of what they hear from adults is criticism, then most of what we hear from our students will be the same. Wouldn't we be well served to teach more tolerance, forgiveness, and respect for others? I know the school system would be one entity which would benefit greatly.
-A wonderful Christmas season for everyone who contributes to our success. To each of you - I extend my best wishes for a fantastic 1999!



Even an emergency landing beats that Washington traffic

Only people like Ronnie Hawkins could live through a hair-raising experience and have fun doing it.
Recently Hawkins, Chairman of the Kings Mountain Board of Education and manager of Harris Funeral Home, and his wife, Libby, flew their plane to Wilmington, Del. to visit friends.

Gary Stewart
Editor



Well, we say Wilmington. They really didn't make it that far in the plane.
As they were flying over Pawtuxent Naval Base Hawkins noticed his oil pressure was dropping, and moments later realized he had lost all power in his engine.

At that time they were over the Chesapeake Bay. While most of us would have been going into a panic, looking for a life jacket and bailing out, or at least praying, Ronnie and Libby were simply keeping cool and going about their business of making preparations to land safely.
Ronnie declared an emergency and found out they were 10 miles away from the nearest airport - in Cambridge, Md. While Ronnie kept an eye on all the controls and glided the plane gradually to lower altitudes, Libby kept a watch out for big fields in case they couldn't make it to the airport.

Except for frequent word from the tower that the plane was 10 miles, then six...five...etc., away from the airport, inside the plane it was very quiet.

Eventually after getting the airport in sight, Hawkins said he had to put the plane in a "slip" mode - in layman's terms, a loss of altitude and told the tower he wouldn't talk to them again until he was on the ground.

He cut all the power off on the plane, and moments later touched down. He had enough momentum to move to the first taxiway, turn off the taxiway and miss the first parking space by just 50 feet. Not to brag or anything, but that was a remarkable feat.

Although it probably would have seemed like an eternity for many of us, Hawkins said it was actually only about 10 minutes from the time he declared an emergency until the time they touched down.

Crashing never crossed the minds of the confident pilot and his very helpful partner.

"There was a concern, but we weren't overly concerned about it," Hawkins said. "We were just doing what we always do on trips. Libby was continuously looking on the ground for a place to land, and I was trying to talk to the controllers and get the airport in sight and judge my distance to the airport."

The Hawkins' have practiced the scenario time and time again, they said. They say the main thing is not to panic, and keep your skills up-to-date.

As a member of the Civil Air Patrol Rescue Team, Hawkins has had numerous practice sessions on emergency landings, and he has two "finds" for locating downed airplanes in the North Carolina mountains.

The experience did nothing to dampen the Hawkins' love for flying. In fact, Ronnie said, he'd be in the air right now if his engine wasn't being repaired.

The worst part of the trip, the Hawkins' agreed, was not the emergency in the air but what happened on the ground after the landing.

"We had to rent a car to go on to Wilmington," Ronnie said, "and the five lanes of rush hour traffic coming out of Washington was terrible. It took us 3 1/2 hours to get to our destination, and the whole time we were saying how grateful we were to have a plane to fly in. I'd much rather fly and have an emergency than to drive in that traffic."

Our View

KM can be proud of their champions

Nothing brings a small community together like sports.
Kings Mountain has been fortunate this fall to have two of the best athletic teams in its school history - the women's volleyball team and the men's football team.
The volleyball team recently won its first-ever state championship by rolling up a 34-1 record and defeating East Chapel Hill in the state finals in Charlotte.
The football team recently won its first-ever Western Regional Championship, and last week took on Winston-Salem Carver in the 3A state championship game at UNC's Kenan Stadium.
Although the Mountaineers lost 33-28, our hats are off to them not only for winning 14 games - the most ever in a single season by a KMHS team - but also for the way they conducted themselves on and off the field.
Win or lose, the Mountaineers, their coaches, and their fans had class. Although they're disappointed now, we feel like in time the sad feelings will turn to joy because the players will learn from this experience and will appreciate the accomplishments they made along the way.
Developing and continuing a winning sports program takes a lot of effort and support from a lot of people.

First, the Kings Mountain Schools administration deserves a lot of credit, starting with Supt. Bob McRae and filtering or down to the local schools' administrators, teachers, coaches, and support personnel.
Kings Mountain District Schools is well-respected throughout the state, and that's a big asset when recruiting outstanding teachers and coaches to guide your young people.
Head Football Coach Ron Massey and Head Volleyball Coach Dianna Bridges deserve our support and appreciation for building a program all of the community can be proud of. And, we're not just talking about wins and losses here. Both are tremendous influences on young people, and are the type people you want running your programs even if they aren't winning championships.
Hats off, also, to their assistants and support personnel who work tirelessly - often behind the scenes - to make athletics a memorable experience for their players.
And, above all, thanks to the athletes who not only have the skills and physical ability to win ball games, but do well in their studies and act like ladies and gentlemen on and off the playing field.
Because of your efforts this year, Mountaineer fans will have a lot of moments to remember -



HAWKINS

Letters to the Editor

Democrats will do anything to save Clinton

To the editor:
After watching the House Judiciary Committee hearings on the possible impeachment of President Clinton, it appears to me that the liberal Democrats and their supporters are desperate and will do anything to save this man's hide.
The liberals are more than willing to place President Clinton above the law and will excuse anything he has done just to keep any conservative out of the White House. The hysterical ranting done by the Democratic members of the Judiciary Committee was, at best, laughable, and, at worst, embarrassing to listen to.
The Democratic members of the Committee played on the apathy of the citizenry, and the fears of their constituents. The measures they tried to take to let the President off the hook showed that the lies Clinton told during a civil deposi-

tion and to a Federal grand jury were excusable while over 100 people are now sitting in jail cells for lying in similar circumstances. For some reason, they believe it is all right for the President to lie and do other things, but it is not all right for anyone else to do so. They have all but said that the laws do not apply to this man. Well, the last I checked, President Clinton was neither a king nor a god, and he should be held to at least the same standards as the rest of us.
I truly believe that the liberals and many of their supporters would rewrite the Constitution, the Ten Commandments, the Bible, and thousands of years of Judeo-Christian standards just to keep President Clinton in office. The desperate measures they are trying to resort to will tear this country apart, but they do not care, just as long as Bill Clinton remains in office. In

their near-maniacal zeal to save President Clinton, they are almost subversive, and even potentially dangerous to our nation's liberties.
I hope that President Clinton's supporters will see that they have made themselves accessories to the acts he has committed in office, and I hope they find ways of explaining to their children and grandchildren why they should be good and obey the law, but that it is alright for President Clinton not to. The liberals are extremely short-sighted in this regard, and the damage they are doing will be felt for many years. If they are as concerned for "the children" as they say they are, they will condemn President Clinton's actions and support his impeachment.

John Scott Hardin
Herdon, Va.

Letters to the editor

We appreciate your letters to the editor and encourage you to write. Because we receive so many letters, however, we must impose guidelines to ensure that as many readers as possible are able to share their views. We therefore limit the number of letters that any one person may have published to one a month. Also, we ask that you keep your letters short, no more than two pages double-spaced or one page single-spaced. Handwritten letters are accepted, but must be legible.
We will not publish letters from anonymous writers; names, addresses, and phone numbers must be included. We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar, punctuation, clarity, brevity and content.
Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Monday of the week they are to be published. Mail letters to The Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086 or fax them to (704) 739-0611.

Corrections & Clarifications

We will correct any substantial errors that appear in the newspaper or clarify any statements that are unclear.
To request a correction or clarification, call the editor at (704) 739-7469 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday or fax (704) 739-0611.

Looking Back

(From the December 17, 1964 files of the Kings Mountain Herald)
Dicey Fabrics pledges \$5,000 toward the construction of Gamble Stadium at Kings Mountain High School, bringing the total pledges to date to \$7,500.
George B. Thomasson will succeed Senator-elect Jack H. White as

judge of city recorder's court effective January 1. On the same date, William White, brother of the senator-elect, will become the court's solicitor, succeeding the judge-elect.
Rev. George Moore, pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church, has been elected president of the Kings Mountain Ministerial Association for the coming year.

Hubert McGinnis, 210-pound Mountaineer center, has accepted an invitation to play in the 1965 East-West All-Star football game in Greensboro.
Mike Ballard scores 19 points to lead Kings Mountain High's basketball team to a 78-31 win over Lowell Holbrook.