

Y2K nail biting

The official Federal report on the Y2K situation has the government biting its fingernails. The question now is, where will the clippings land? After a year of investigation, the Senate committee which looked at how prepared the nation was has reported that all segments of the U.S. infrastructure were "at risk" for Y2K glitches.

The study was wide-ranging in the material it covered. Everything from small businesses to the Social Security system came under scrutiny. Also taken into consideration was the level of preparedness of America's foreign trading partners.

All in all, banks were given high marks for their work in making sure that the financial world would still be spinning on January 1, 2000. Air traffic control systems were also given a "thumbs up" for their readiness. Not as thrilling was the fact that the report pointed out that as high as 90 percent of doctors' offices and half of small to medium sized businesses were not ready for the new millennium.

Communications systems were also given a hard look by the Senate Y2K report. It is estimated that 95 percent of all telephone systems were compliant. It was reported however, that no reliable testing could be done on things like cell phone towers, data networks, or satellite communications.

In a serious tone, the report stated that Federal payment systems for Medicare and other health-insurance programs were behind schedule in their Y2K preparedness. Overall, the health-care industry got low marks for readiness.

On the government scene, it was reported that the various agencies varied widely in their Year 2000 work. Alarming, the Defense Department was listed as among the worst in Year 2000 readiness. On the local government scene, the Senate report was most concerned about communities being able to handle all of their 911 calls.

The situation with America's trading partners was given a close look by the Year 2000 report. Figures gathered showed that Venezuela and Saudi Arabia - which produce 30 percent of all U.S. oil imports - were up to 18 months behind in their Y2K repair efforts. It was also reported that U.S. computers could be infected with viruses from foreign computer systems that were not Y2K ready.

Legal ramifications of Y2K upheaval was termed "potentially monstrous" by the report. A tidal wave of litigation could hit the already overloaded court systems in the wake of possible business losses related to Y2K. Projections of liability go as high as \$1 trillion.

Last but not least, one segment of the Senate investigation focuses on the fact that there is no national strategic plan to assure critical infrastructure reliability. Neither is there a national contingency plan in case of infrastructure failure.

The bottom line on the Senate report could be summed up in just five words - "hold on to your hat!"

OPINION

Herald/Times

Editor: Gary Stewart 739-7496
April 29, 1999 Section A, Page 4

PICTORIAL EDITORIAL

Proud Moment

David Allen, left, chairman of the Kings Mountain Parks and Recreation Commission, and Tripp Hord, right, Parks and Recreation Director, unveil the plaque that will be permanently displayed at the new City Swimming Pool. The city last year embarked on a major rebuilding project of all city parks and the swimming pool. All improvements at the Deal Street complex have been completed and the park was dedicated Monday night. Improvements are still under way at Davidson Park.



Statements about violence will be taken seriously in KM Schools

Given the circumstances of last week's tragedy in Littleton, Colorado, and the resulting unrest we have experienced due to the attention it received, I felt it appropriate to communicate with you concerning our stance in regards to any action or comments which might imply a threat to the safety of our staff and students. During the last ten days, we have experienced a number of incidents and rumors of incidents involving students in our school system making statements which might be construed as threatening harm to others.

We must take such statements very seriously. While it is impossible to lump every statement in a group all of which would receive a certain punishment, I want you to know that students making threatening statements certainly leave themselves open for serious consequences up to and including suspension from school. I have instructed our personnel to react quickly to any reports of statements or actions which imply harm to someone else. Given the results of any investigation we make into such an action, we reserve the right to involve the local law enforcement authorities in being certain we have

covered all bases in regards to our review.

Please discuss this matter with any children in your home who are students in this system. Emphasize to them that they must not make any statement which could even be construed as a threat - even in jest. We will not take a chance in dealing with these matters. I know this community well enough to know how important it believes the assurance of safety in our schools should be. I agree.

In closing let me assure you that we have numerous procedures in place to provide a safe environment on our campuses. In 1994 this community had a task force which reviewed school safety issues for us and made a number of strong recommendations to the Board of Education regarding both prevention and education strategies for ensuring safety. Each one of those has been implemented. Our staffs are clearly on alert for any warning signs which should be pursued.

I appreciate the concerns which many of you have expressed to me about school safety in the last several days. I want you to know that our employees and board of education share those concerns and are committed to taking any necessary steps to protect our school campuses. Those threatening the safety we desire will face serious consequences.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this very important matter.



Bob
McRae

Superintendent
KM Schools

Dose of Hickory tea can be good

Having recently had a run-in with a group of totally disrespectful and unsupervised juveniles, I was reminded of the ancient Egyptian saying, "a boy's ears are on his back."

No, this is not in reference to an anatomical curiosity, but rather to corporal punishment. There is a train of thought these days among many parents that if you give your child a swift pop on the heinie or a swipe with a switch, then they will grow up to be criminals. I don't know who started this idea, but in my opinion it is one of the most erroneous things to hit the planet.

On a TV talk show the other night, there were several parents and their out-of-control teens on the stage. The kids had called the law on their parents for disciplining them. These poor little 14 and 16 year old lambs had more tattoos than Popeye the Sailor man, and enough metal objects stuck in their bodies to attract lightning.

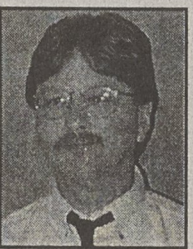
As you can imagine, the parents were at their wits end. Of course, their attempts to control their offspring was a case of

too little, too late. Now, I don't have any kids, but I was once one myself, and in retrospect gave my mom fits. I got spanked and switched from time to time and now that I look back, probably not nearly enough.

Small doses of "hickory tea" early in life will keep a myriad of troubles away later on. I don't mean beatings, smackings, or punch-ups, but quick little dolings of discipline when verbal warnings fall on deaf ears. I do believe that such action will not only teach respect for the parent, but respect for authority in general. It has something to do with the principle of connecting misbehavior with consequences - something the prison population had to learn the hard way.

In its own way, disciplining kids is an act of love. I know now that when my grandmother had caught my sister and I doing something wrong - like tearing up my mom's flowerbeds - her quick trip to a switch bush was an attempt to bring us up as responsible citizens and respecters of other people and their things.

It's hard for a kid who has just gotten a pop to see how it can be anything but briefly painful. The tragedy is that those chaps who don't get the pops they need will likely bring even more pain to their parents and themselves a lot longer down the road.



Alan
Hodge

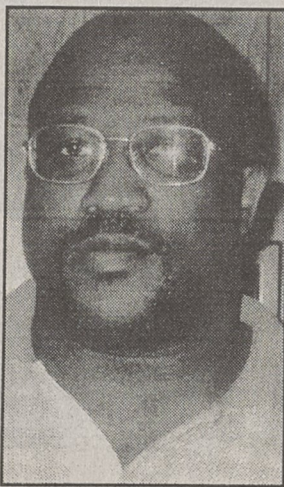
Staff Writer

SIDEWALK SURVEY

By ALAN HODGE
Herald/Times

What can be done to prevent school violence?

Got a question you'd like to submit to Sidewalk Survey? If so, call Alan Hodge at 739-7496. If we use your question, we'll give you the credit.



Students need to understand they can take a more responsible role in stopping violence.

Alfred Ash
teacher and coach KMHS



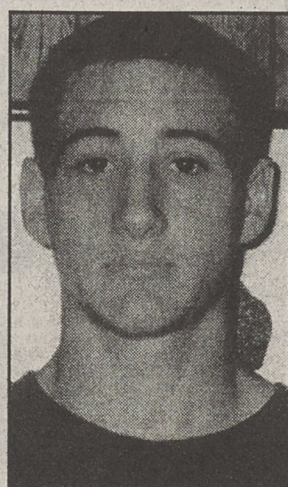
Student ownership of schools is vital. Students are our best resource for informing faculty problems.

Diana Bridges
teacher KMHS



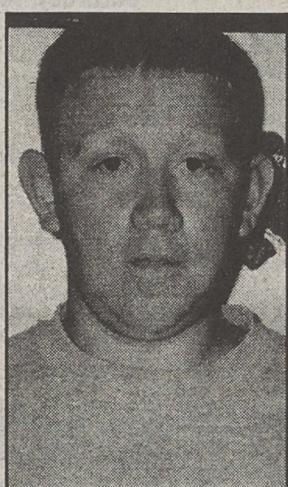
Student patrols could help stop violence "dead at the root".

Ron Feemster
senior KMHS



More metal detectors tests would help keep people from bringing things to school.

Matt Biddix
junior KMHS



It all goes back to family values. More metal detectors would help too.

Eddie Biddix
junior KMHS

YOUR VIEW

Remembering King Mountain and his roots

To the editor:

Roots and the Mayor. This for me is like a once upon a time story. Just over 56 years ago I was born in Kings Mountain. Remembering when I was four years old, my family lived in the area known then as Chapel Woods, now called the Linwood section. Although only one house existed well back off Linwood Road, the roads were being marked and cleared for the development of the area. I would love to roam those woods again!

I attended the first five years of school at East Elementary when a snow ball wa the big thing for us. The sixth and seventh grades I attended in Blacksburg, SC and attended the eighth grade at North Elementary (Mr. George was principal). It was the year that school opened.

Then it was on to KMHS. Coach Gamble was the most feared man on campus but well respected and liked by all. Mrs. Black (the biology teacher) was the most dreaded and toughest teacher, with Mrs. Sutton, the math teacher, pushing for second. Coach Bates wasn't all that easy either. Football practice and collecting those 50 insects in the beginning of the tenth grade made things a little tough. I did not finish school in Kings Mountain, but did go long enough to get my Masters Degree from New Hampshire College.

A couple of months ago while browsing the web I read an article appearing in the Gastonia Gazette. The article was an interview with Mayor Scott Neisler. It was about the new city flag. I was deeply touched by his comments on his returning to Kings Mountain after being absent for some time. It truly brought memories of the time when I was a small boy.

Today I received an article by The Kings Mountain Herald showing the city flag. My sister-in-law and fellow Mountaineer, the former Metta Wright, sent it to me. I soaked up every word below the picture as if I were reading a great long lost history document. There were parts of articles, I read every word.

One partial article I was able to read mentioned the old Pauline and Margrace Mills. These two establishments provided employment for many citizens of Kings Mountain. This article took me back to the days when little league baseball games were played in a field near the Margrace plant. I played the position of left field for the Burlington team. There were only four teams (Parkgrace, Burlington, Jaycees and Kiwanis. One of our coaches was Mr. Don Tignor.

Presently I live in Puerto Rico, but my heart is n Carolina. Living here for about 35 years, I now have a strong desire to return to my roots. Even with all the changes, I am sure one could see things that would bring back a treasure of memories.

By the way, if Cleveland County Schools consolidate what will happen to the Black and Gold? These colors, as I remember, were the school colors. Is Shelby still the rival? Love those Mountaineers. Kings Mountain is a great place to come back to.

Please pass a copy to the Mayor.

Sincerely,
Paul E. Pittman
Fajardo, Puerto Rico

Letter Policy

The Herald welcomes your letters. We ask that you follow these guidelines:

Letters must be brief and to the point. Letters in excess of 400 words will not be published. Letters should be typed and double-spaced if possible; if not, write legibly.

Letters may be edited for length, spelling, good taste, libel, or any other reason; and letters may be rejected for any reason.

Mail letters to The Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086 or fax them to 739-0611.