

## Countdown to 2000



By Alan Hodge

### Cleveland had early telephones

With so many people fretting over their computers and the year 2000, it's interesting to recall that at one time there were no computers. In fact, there weren't any telephone lines to hook a computer to. That's because there were no telephones.

As each new wave of technology washes over the land it is easy to lose sight of the sense of amazement that our grandparents and great grandparents felt when something we consider as simple and basic as the telephone first came on the scene. Cleveland County can be proud of the fact that it was one of the first counties in the nation to have telephone service and at one time was called "North Carolina's best telephone county."

The first telephones came to Cleveland County around 1890. This was just 12 years after the first telephone exchange in the world was started on New Year's Day 1878 in New Haven, Connecticut. Organized by a group of farmers in the Delight community near Polkville, Cleveland County's phone system quickly saw other exchanges added in Lawndale, Toluca, Fallston and Polkville.

As the 20th century rolled around, cooperative phone exchanges were established in Boiling Springs and Lattimore. A small fee was charged for hooking up to the system which was used to pay the switchboard operators. Early phones were wall mounted and used a crank and zinc batteries for power.

The first switchboard in Boiling Springs was installed in the home of R.H. Green, Sr. on North main Street. Green's daughter Hannah was the operator. Phones back then were on party lines with as many as a half dozen families on one line. Each phone had a distinctive ring so folks would know not to pick up and listen in on a call meant for someone else. Anyone who has ever experienced the party line means of communication knows that eavesdropping was the forerunner of today's television gossip shows.

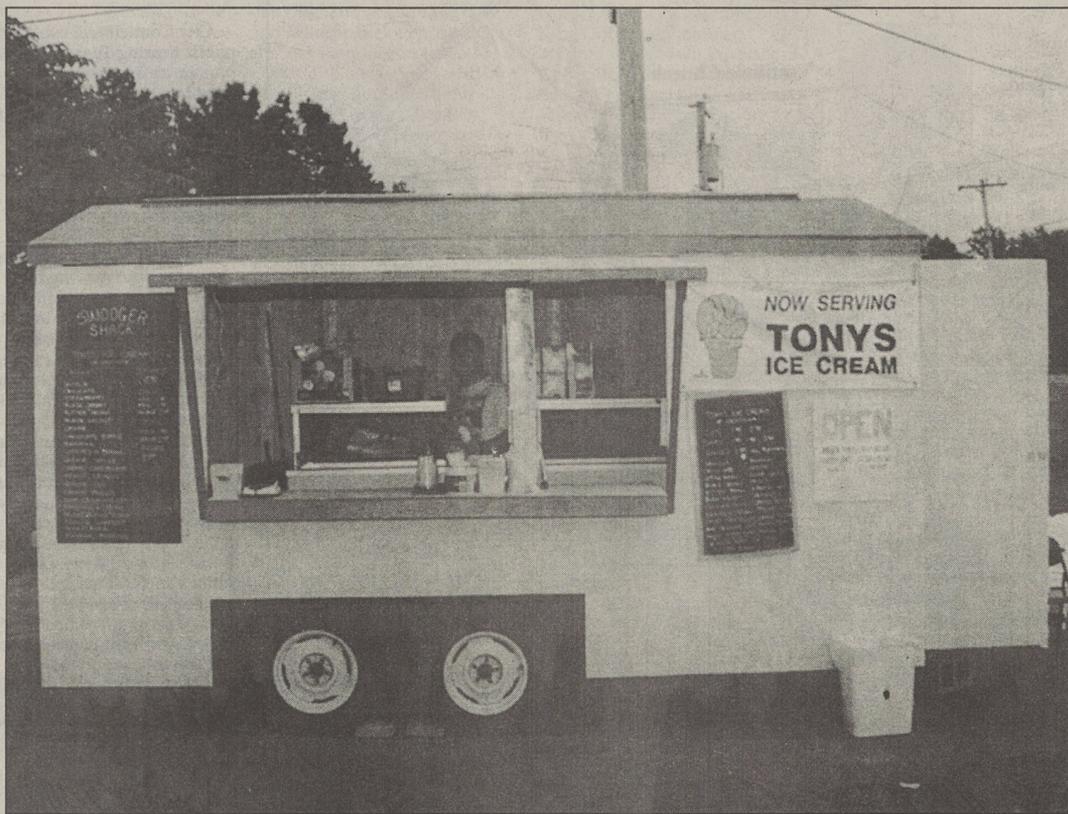
Anyway, Hannah ran the phone lines for quite a number of years before turning over the duties to her niece Mrs. Addie Mae Green, widow of Plato Green. Addie moved the switchboard to her home and worked it for 13 more years until it was shut down in 1932. In the early 1950s Southern Bell Telephone Company came to Lattimore with a new exchange dial service. With the new exchange, telephones in Cleveland County topped the 10,000 mark.

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# OPINION

Herald/Times

Editor: Gary Stewart 739-7496  
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Tom Best's new business, the Swooger Shack, located in the parking lot of Parker's Amoco on West King Street (Business 74), is doing a booming business, especially when the weather is hot. His Tony's Ice Cream, which is known all over the Carolinas for its great taste, just hits the spot on a hot summer afternoon.

### It's good that what might have been, isn't

Everyone knows that July 4th represents Independence Day in the United States. Not everyone is aware of how close July 4th, 1863, came to being the day that our country became two separate nations. Had the Confederate army been victorious in their attempt to split the Union lines on Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, and so destroy the Army of the Potomac, the South would probably have won independence from the United States.

I recently took a trip to Northern Virginia to participate in a reenactment of the Battle of the Wilderness and the Spotsylvania Mule Shoe near Brandy Station. Part of the journey involved a pilgrimage to Appomattox where the dream of a Confederate States came to an end. To stand on the very ground where your ancestor walked to lay down his musket in surrender was very moving. So too was the experience of standing in the house and room where Lee and Grant signed the papers that made us one nation again.

The fact that we are one country instead of two despite what our forebears both Union and Confederate went through kind of gives me the idea that it all part of some Divine plan to work out the way it did. Though the country was broken, it was made stronger in the end for the break. Though the South was defeated, the legacy of the bravery and fighting spirit of the Rebel army was made immortal.

There is a resurgence among many people to learn about the history of the nation. Last year I took part in the 135th anniversary reenactment of the Battle of Gettysburg, at Gettysburg, and over 100,000 people came to watch. The event at Brandy Station was smaller, but still over 25,000 made the trip to see what life was like for their Billy Yank and Johnny Reb ancestors. Scarcely a spectator talks to us troops that isn't interested in finding out what their family members might have done in the War Between the States.

This July 4th, let's all give thanks that we live in a united country where people are free and war among ourselves is a thing of the past. You don't have to look any further than the tragedy that has unfolded in the Balkans to see how things might have evolved in America if history had turned out a little bit differently.



Alan Hodge

Staff Writer

### Swooger Shack has the 'Best' ice cream in town

If you're driving too fast, or are not used to looking in his direction, you may miss Tom Best's "Swooger Shack" in the parking lot of Parker's Amoco on West King Street.

But, you shouldn't miss it.

For the past couple weeks - and he hopes, many more to come - Best and his employees at the Swooger Shack have been serving up some of the best ice cream you'll ever put in your mouth.

If you've been around these parts very long, you're familiar with Tony's Ice Cream. The Coletta family in Gastonia is well-known for their quality ice cream products. Best was able to work a deal with Tony's to market the product in this area.

If the first few weeks are any indication of the success Best is going to have here, then he'll be around for a long time. The hot summer days have brought a steady stream of kids and grown-ups looking for that special ice cream treat - from cones to shakes. Business is so encouraging Best has plans to find a permanent building and eventually add sandwiches to his product line.

But, first things first.

The idea of the Swooger Shack was born about a year ago when Best built his shack and began pulling it to festivals all over North and South Carolina. His initial product didn't do all that great, and he came up with the idea to offer ice cream locally when he wasn't busy with his other profession.

He approached Lewis Coletta of Tony's and was able to work a deal with him, and promised he would make Tony's product famous at festivals all over the Carolinas. He said everywhere he went he quickly found out that everyone already knew about Tony's Ice Cream.

Since setting up the Swooger Shack at Parker's Amoco, Best has found there's no longer a need to work out-of-town festivals. There's plenty of business right here.

"Last weekend, it dropped off a little bit because of the wet, cool weather," he noted. "But it's done a lot better than we thought it would. We started this off as something to fill a slow time in my other business."

The Swooger Shack is open Monday and Tuesday from 5-9:30 p.m., Wednesday through Saturday from 11:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m., and Sunday from 2-9:30 p.m.

When you're traveling out West King, don't be in too big of a hurry. Stop by the Swooger Shack and try some of the (Tom) Best ice cream in Kings Mountain.



Gary Stewart

Editor

### YOUR VIEW

## Schools wasting money

To the editor:

What a stupid waste of funds on the rehiring of retired assistant superintendent Jane King. It was my understanding that local funds were to be used in solving our over crowding problem in all of Kings Mountain District Schools. Why should we pay our administration out of local funds when the State pays that position for us? Now the State gets to keep that salary because we are going to take it from our local funds, which is needed very much in our classrooms. We are cutting our own throats by allowing this to happen. I for one certainly understand Melony Bolin's frustration with the rest of Kings Mountain School Board members. Would it not make sense for Jane King to come out of retirement, allow the State to pay her and keep the \$93,500 in our local budget?

I was under the assumption that we (at Bethware Elementary) did not get a better heating system in the bathrooms in the old building because we needed to conserve all the funds we could to build a much needed school, all of which are capital outlay expenses. Not only did we have enough funds for bonuses (from unbudgeted revenues, which are neither current nor capital revenues) for our administration this year, now we somehow have enough funds to pay a high salary for one of our administrators. I know that someone will say that we can't transfer funds from current expense to capital expense, because they always do, but it is awful funny we can when we want to.

For example, money was taken from current expense to help pay for air conditioning in the gym at Grover Elementary. Their PTO held a fund-raiser to buy an air conditioner but came up short so the district office kicked in. When I asked which account that money came from, it was not denied that some came from current expense. This is a capital expense so I asked could Bethware take the \$13,000 allotment, which is current expense, to pay for an air conditioner in our gym. No, I was told because you can't use current expense for a capital outlay project and we need to conserve to help pay for a new school. Now keep in mind that this allotment is from a 1 cent tax increase put in place to keep our schools from having fund-raisers, but we the community have no say in how that money is spent not to mention that it was done for another school.

Not only did we vote on a \$6,000,000 bond but we have been asked to pay another tax increase to help pay for our

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## SIDEWALK SURVEY

By ALAN HODGE  
Herald/Times

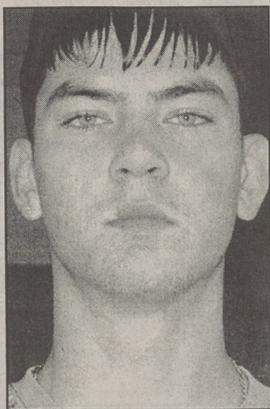
### What are your plans for the 4th of July holiday?

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.



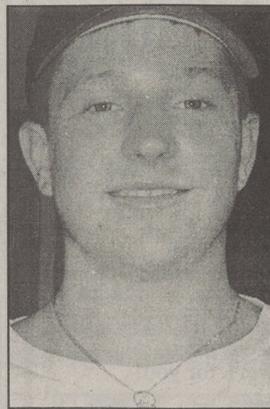
I plan to shoot a lot of fireworks.

Yaimel Ys  
clerk



I'll be heading for Myrtle Beach

Cody Smith  
auto detailer



I'm going to Myrtle Beach and have some fun..

Brent Parker  
detail shop manager



I'm going to go on a trip to the beach.

Kyndall Wells



I don't have any big plans. I'm just going to relax.

Annie Kemp  
driver