

Silver lining in merger clouds

As I write this column I have no way of knowing what will transpire at the public hearing April 18 to debate the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners' draft merger plan. I think you already well know the position which our board of education has taken in opposition to the merger, a position I certainly support. This column is not intended to debate the issues of the merger discussion again. Rather, it is intended to point out some "silver linings" in the stormy clouds of this debate.



Bob McRae
Superintendent
KM Schools

I know the board would join me in expressing appreciation for the strong support our community has given the Kings Mountain District Schools since late November when the commissioners announced their intent to assess school system consolidation in our county. Over the past five months we have received many positive comments about our system. We have also seen many of you stand up publicly to support our continued existence - individuals and organizations such as our city council and the local business and professional group. Thank you so much.

As I listened to the long line of commentaries at the commissioners' meeting on April 4, I could not help but smile. I wasn't smiling at the topic - I was smiling at the presenters. Many of them are young adults who understand the value of a small school system with a personal touch. I noticed several approach the commissioners who came through our system as students, a high percentage of whom attended Kings Mountain High School when I was principal. As gratifying as it is to see them speak personally for the system, it is even more gratifying to see that they have grown to be responsible contributing members of the community.

I was also very proud of the three current students from Kings Mountain High School who spoke that night. It is easy for teenagers to lose perspective within an issue about which they feel strongly. These two young men and one young lady spoke with maturity and showed obvious thought had gone in the words they offered. I have no reason to believe that any significant number of students assigned to KMHS would be reassigned to another high school in a merged system. However, it is reassuring to know that students at our high school feel deeply enough for it that they would not want to leave. We can build the kind of school we want there on the backs of this kind of student leadership.

I have also been proud of the dignity shown by our employees during this stressful time. It is they who have the most reason to be unsettled. Their jobs - not so much if they have them, but what they will be - are at stake. They have supported the system well, and I hope they have come to a better understanding of the great opportunity we have as KMDS personnel. I am sure some of them think merger would improve things. While I don't personally see that, they have every right to feel that way if their study of the situation leads them to that point. The lion's share of what I've heard, however, is very supportive of our system as it is.

Finally, I must commend the work of our board of education in this matter. Unless you live or work with one of them, it would be difficult to imagine how much time they are giving to this issue. They are making weighty decisions on your behalf and trying their very best to make them within their understanding of the community's wishes.

I don't know what the outcome will be. I do know that, regardless of it, there have been some bright spots in the last few months. I hope more await us!

OPINION

Herald/Times

LOOKING BACK



The Silver Dollar on Grover Road was one of the most popular truck stops in the nation in the 1950s. With the construction of Interstate 85 truck traffic on Highway 29/216 decreased drastically and the restaurant later closed.

Original 1952 Kings Mountain News jogs memory of KM people, places

While cleaning out a cousin's house recently, Kings Mountain's Jerry Bedsole came across the first edition of the Kings Mountain News, a weekly paper which began publication on May 28, 1952 and was the first paper in this area to use what was then a brand new offset printing process.

The paper featured a lot of crisp pictures by Carlisle Studio, and stories and historical notes about businesses in the area. Some of them still exist, and some have fallen by the wayside.

Longtime KM resident will remember some of these people and places:

Jack White (now deceased) was named Judge of City Recorder's Court, replacing the retiring E.A. Harrill.

A new drama on the Battle of Kings Mountain was entitled



Gary Stewart
Editor

"The Sword of Gideon."

Barnett & Tignor Garage on North Piedmont Avenue was operated by Guy Barnett and Gene Tignor.

Piedmont Drug Store on North Piedmont was operated by Mrs. C.P. Barry.

C.E. Warlick Insurance began in 1946 in the home of C.E. Warlick.

East King Esso Service was owned by Vernon Crosby and W.E. McCarter.

Dixie Theatre was owned by C.E. and D.E. Cash.

Bridges Airport, located on what is now Bridges Drive and operated by Glee E. Bridges, offered charter service to anywhere in the U.S.

Piedmont Washerette, operated by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ballard, could do a week's wash in an hour.

City Cab Co. was owned by Frank Roper and G.V. Petty.

Drivers were Dutch Goins, G.V. Petty, Clifford Morgan, and Smiley Myers.

Oates Shell, operated by Blackie Oates at the corner of East King and Highway 161,

had a brand new greasing system.

The local Eagle Dime Store downtown was the first in a line of 40 stores operating throughout the south.

The Silver Dollar Grill, located on Grover Road, was one of the most popular truck stops in the nation. (It went by the wayside a few years later when Interstate 85 was built and trucks no longer traveled Highway 216).

Fite Shoe Store on Mountain Street could make an old pair of shoes look brand new.

Kings Mountain Building and Loan (now First National Bank), was organized in 1907 by Wiley McGinnis, a cashier at First National Bank who carried a loan business on the side.

McGill Service Station on East King St., operated by N.F. McGill, was in its 26th year.

Imperial Life Insurance Company, managed by Ben F. Beam, served 5,071 policy holders.

Neisler Mills made curtains for Radio City Music Hall. Clyde Whetstine and James

Gibson purchased Center Service Station, which at that time was located at the corner of Battleground Road and Mountain St.

McGinnis Department Store was established by Paul McGinnis, son of W.H. McGinnis, owner of McGinnis Furniture Store.

Bennett Brick and Tile was the only brick-making firm in Cleveland County.

Craftspun Mill was the only mill in the area that operated a cafeteria for its employees.

Elmer Lumber Company employed 55 persons, including Vice-President B.S. "Sonny" Peeler Jr. G.L. McDaniel had been with the company since it was founded 32 years earlier.

Kings Mountain Hospital was still almost brand new, having opened March 31, 1951 at a cost of \$241,000. Lottie Goforth, who died in 1942, provided the impetus for the facility by leaving her entire estate of \$30,000 for the purpose of building or equipping a hospital in Kings Mountain.

YOUR VIEW

Let's vote 'dictators' out of office

To the editor:

Citizens of Kings Mountain and Cleveland County:

I thought that dictatorship was over in this world when Adolf Hitler died, but I was wrong. It exists right here in Cleveland County, and it goes under the name of "Cleveland County Commissioners."

Gary Stewart's editorial in last week's Herald was 100% right. Folks, if we don't vote these people out of office on May 2, we will be getting what we deserve. The only way that we can get out from under their control is for them not to be there.

Kings Mountain's normal percentage at the polls is in the 20's. That won't cut it. We need all of you at the polls on May 2 and then if they win their primaries, get them in November. I urge you to vote on May 2.

One other thing. Write the governor about this mess. I just finished writing my letter today. Others have already told me that they have written him. A lot of letters would look mighty good in Raleigh.

Folks, I don't like living in a dictatorship. How about you?

Kyle Smith
Kings Mountain

Letter Policy

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.

It's spring and we can hide indoors, cry eyeballs out or break out hanky

Though everyone looks forward to spring and its lovely blooms, one thing a lot of folks, including myself, dread is the pollen that comes with all those blossoms.

There are lots of things that can go up your nostrils. Some of the good ones are the aroma

of barbecue, the scent of the ocean on a lovely summer day, the smell of clouds of black powder smoke at a battle reenactment, and last but not least, the wafting smell of bacon frizzlin' in a frying pan first thing in the morning.

Then are there are bad things that enter the snout. Among these are phalanges, the smell of burned toast, the stench of roadkill, and pollen. Of all these things bad for the proboscis, pollen is the one thing that's hardest of all to escape and no doubt causes the most misery. The next time you have ac-

cess to an electron microscope, or a picture taken of a pollen grain by such an appliance, notice what an evil looking thing pollen is. Remember those Middle Ages weapons made out of a stick with a chain attached and on the end there's an iron ball with spikes poking out? Well, pollen looks like that iron ball. Does the thought of having countless microscopic Middle Ages weapons of destruction passing through your beak sound like fun?

There are lots of ways to deal with spring pollen and aller-

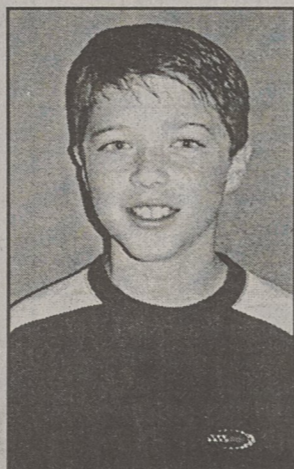
gies. You can hide indoors for about a month or so, or take medicine to dry your flooding eyes and nose. The only trouble with the medicines is that after you take enough to stop the pouring, your throat feels like someone poured a pound of sand straight from the Sahara Desert down your esophagus. Either way is like the Dutch boy with his finger in a dyke.

In a few weeks, most of the pollen will be gone and folks will be able to breathe again. Until that time arrives, fellow allergy sufferers, keep a hanky handy and dry those teary eyes.

SIDEWALK SURVEY

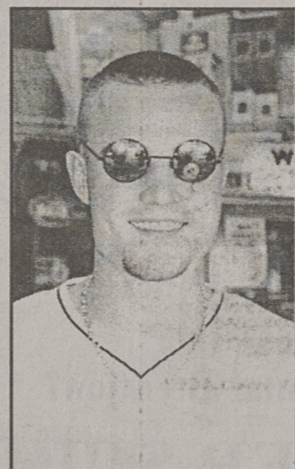
By ALAN HODGE
Herald/Times

What is your favorite film of all time?



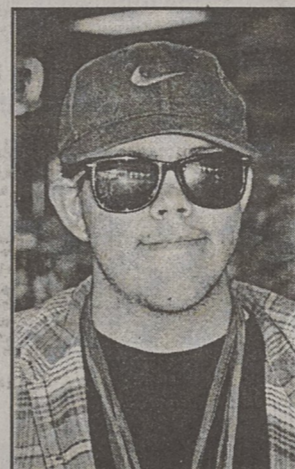
My favorite is "Big Daddy" with Adam Sandler.

William Lawrence
Kings Mountain



I like gangster movies like "Scarface" with Al Pacino.

Shannon Spencer
Kings Mountain



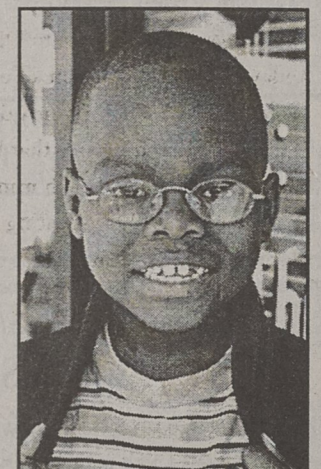
The movie "Titanic" about the ship is my favorite movie..

Justin Braswell
Kings Mountain



Whoopi Goldberg in the movie "The Color Purple" is the one I like best.

Cedric Smith
Grover



The new movie "Bats" is my favorite.

Bryan Gunnings
Kings Mountain