

Our rights are being taken away

To the editor:

Two hundred twenty-five years ago, brave men fought tyranny and won the freedoms which Americans enjoyed for another 200 years. Unfortunately, for the last 25 years or so, the descendants of these brave men have gradually been lulled into a false sense of security and a naive assumption that the government under which we now live is the same honorable institution that it was when it was first conceived.

Actually, many of the certain inalienable rights our forefathers fought to secure have gradually been taken away from us, "The people." For instance, the second amendment, the right to bear arms, has been changed. The official position of the Clinton-Gore Department of Justice in a letter dated August 22, 2000 states that "the second amendment does not extend an individual right to keep and bear arms."

For people who live under a now pretty much Godless government, this should be very sobering. When a government becomes generally immoral and without common sense, and then tries to legislate its own form of morality and common sense geared to please special interest groups, the average citizen should begin to take notice that their "certain inalienable rights" are being violated.

Consider the main rights confirmed in our Bill of Rights: freedom of worship; freedom of speech; freedom of the press; freedom of peaceful assembly; the right to bear arms; freedom from unreasonable search and seizure; right to a speedy trial by jury; protection from self incrimination.

Well, we still have freedom of religion as long as we do it in private. We still have protection from self-incrimination. We have freedom of speech and freedom of the press, as long as what we say or write is politically correct.

Whatever happened to honesty and decency? Not a very good showing of what we still have, is it? Do we really need this to continue?

Elizabeth W. Champion
Kings Mountain

Criticize, but get the facts straight

To the editor:

I have debated on whether I should write another letter concerning the KMHS football team. I decided that I should defend myself against some of the accusations made about me.

First, I would like to say that I have known Donnie Mace most of my life and I also don't believe that he alone wrote the letter criticizing me. I can't say that he had no input into the letter.

I have done quite a lot of hollering at the football games, but I don't remember any of it being directed at the kids. When they execute a good play I'm one of the first on my feet clapping and encouraging them on.

I have hollered at quite a few of the coaches in my almost 40 years of attendance.

Donnie also states that he has sat next to me and heard me criticize the players. Sorry, Donnie, but I don't ever remember having you sit next to me.

Donnie, you also stated that my cohorts (as you refer to them) and I act as though we could do a better job of coaching than the present coaches. Actually, Donnie, I think we could.

You say I don't do anything to help the program. I have participated in the Booster Club activities in the past such as selling clothing, merchandise, hats, T-shirts, and what-

See Letter, 6A

PICTORIAL EDITORIAL



GARY STEWART / THE HERALD
Kings Mountain received one of its earliest snowfalls in history Sunday, and with all the Christmas decorations going up around town it turned the city into a Christmas scene. This photo was taken at the gazebo at Patriots Park at the corner of West Gold Street and Railroad Avenue.

KM coach deserves more than one season to prove himself

Public reaction of recent weeks has influenced me to write today's column even though I do not like to play out employee scenarios in the media. However, there has been so much attention in the form of public discussion and letters to this paper about our football program at Kings Mountain High School that I think it deserves the best interest of everyone involved for me to publicly outline my position on this matter today.

First of all, let me say that I am confident that everyone interested in the football coaching situation at our high school has the same ultimate goals. We all want our football team to be competitive each year. We all want our team to be in the playoffs each year. In fact we'd all prefer that we be competitive for the state championship each year difficult though that may be. We all want our players to come away from the experience with a positive reaction. While we may disagree on some of the specifics about how all of this is accomplished, I honestly believe we're all on the same page about the overall goals for our program.

As I have read some of the letters to the editor of this paper which have run in recent weeks it is clear that many of the writers, and probably some who haven't written, have had information about how decisions were made in regards to our football coaching staff. There is not space for this column sufficient to clear up all of those inaccuracies, however I would ask that people don't place too much stock in rumor. No decisions about our coaching staff were made for what people like to call political reasons. The only goal for the people involved in the decisions was to try to put the most effective staff possible in place given the positions and the time frame available.

That being said, I want to make one thing clear. Dave Farquharson is our head football coach today and will be next year. I know of nothing that will change that assignment prior to next season. While that fact may not please some in the community, it is simply the right thing to do.

I could go in much detail about the challenges which our coach and his staff had to overcome

this year. Some would say those are good reasons to support the coach, and others would say they were just part of football - things which could happen to anyone. Debating them here probably serves no good purpose. Those who disagree about the importance of them will just have to disagree, hopefully with respect for each other.

We would not have named Coach Farquharson head coach had we not thought him capable of the job. His long history of work with us, his acknowledged status as an outstanding offensive line coach, and the respect in which he is held by his colleagues and players all pointed towards his promise for success. One disappointing season does not overrule those attributes. He deserves a longer opportunity to prove himself than one season affords.

Dave does not need to be told what we expect to be successful in terms of wins and losses. I told him that when he was hired, and he understands that. There are other things we expect from our football program, things like high expectations for player behavior and school success, following the rules under which the program is governed, and strong efforts to help our players grow as citizens. Anyone who knows him knows he understands those expectations as well and delivers on each one.

Now that the season has closed our high school principal and head coach will assess strategies for returning our team to a winning situation and make whatever adjustments, if any, may be necessary. They need no pressure to do that for a successful program is their goal just as it is for those of us who simply love to watch the game.

Let's keep things in perspective. Playing football can teach young men a great deal about life. It is not life itself. Players - other students as well - also learn much about life from watching adults handle emotional situations. Our program will be best served and our students will learn best from the opportunity to watch everyone who cares about Kings Mountain football put their fullest support behind our coach and his staff and players in a sincere effort to keep reaching all of our expectations for the program. Those expectations will always include victories, but I trust they will also always include proper respect for a coach who works very hard to teach his players greater lessons than just winning and losing provide.



Bob McRae

Superintendent
KM Schools

How much is it worth to get rid of your pooch

What price vanity? That's a question that came to my mind the other day when I saw a show on TV about folks who were determined to turn back the hands of time. Before the program was finished there were several folks who not only turned those hands back, they stomped on the fingers while they were at it.

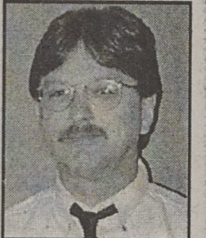
One lady that became beautified was about 75 years old. She got the notion that she could look like she was 29 all over again. For \$25,000 a plastic surgeon cut around the perimeter of her face, grabbed the meat, and like he was pulling on a cowboy boot yanked her mug back to past her ears. After she spent a couple of months wrapped in bandages like Pharaoh Amenhotep's mummy, she found herself with a youthful face but still a 75 year old body.

Not to be outdone, another lady wanted her stomach to have that ironing board flatness it once did. She called it her "pooch." Actually, Great Dane was more like it. Her doctor proceeded to grab the pooch, remove the pooch, and throw the pooch in a bucket - all for 25 grand. The pooch was gone, but her husband was the one who howled when the bill came.

What I'm driving at is what ever happened to growing old with grace, dignity, and honor. Some folks still do it, but TV and our society has more and more pushed the idea that youth is everything. No one wants to be decrepit, but face it, gravity and time will do their humble work in us all - or at least those of us who don't have \$25,000 extra to throw away.

I have known several people who were older but who had an air of refinement and dignity about them that youth simply lacks. Selena Trott was one of them, Elizabeth Steele in Belmont is another, so too is a former boss of mine named Don White. A person whose name has appeared in this column before is to me the epitome of white-haired magnificence - Robert Edward Lee.

I too have a pooch. Thank the Lord it's still not so large as to protrude extremely from its kennel. The last couple of years has seen the first signs of bags under my eyes in the morning. My beard is slowly graying like the muzzle of an old blue tick hound. I don't have \$25,000 to fix these things, but by looking to others who have aged gracefully, hopefully what dough I do have can be spent on things uplifting in other ways.



Alan Hodge

Staff Writer

McDowell outstanding KM educator in 1986

Well-known Kings Mountain educator Danny McDowell was making news 14 years ago when he was on the front page of the November 12, 1986 Herald. McDowell was featured in a photograph receiving an award as 1986 Outstanding Elementary Math Teacher from Dr. Bob McRae. McDowell was a fourth grade teacher at Bethware at the time.

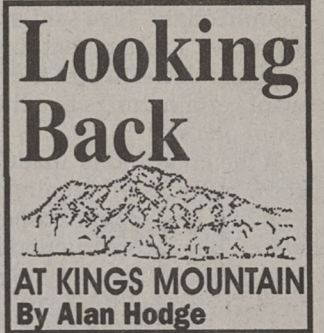
Also on the front of the November 12, 1986 Herald was a photo of the Kings Mountain High School football team. The athletes were congratulated in print by being tri-champs in the Southwestern 3A Conference with Shelby and East Rutherford. At that time, the award was the first conference football championship for the Mounties since 1964.

Filling page 1B with vintage photos of the Kings Mountain High School marching band of 1940-41, Lib Stewart wrote a story about how a uniform from that era was being donated to the fledgling Kings Mountain Historical Museum. The outfits were donated by Wilson Griffin and his wife Sarah.

Cultural news in the November 12, 1986 Herald spotlighted the Kings Mountain Little Theater production of "Raggedy Ann and Andy". The show was featuring actors Emily Campbell, William Ledbetter, and a host of others. Also highlighted on the social page was a trip that Dr. L.W. Muench had recently made to the annual convention of the American Society of Anesthesiologists. The gathering was held in Las Vegas. Muench was employed at Kings Mountain Hospital at the time.

Photo fun found its way to page 10C of the November 12, 1986 edition of the Herald with a picture of the 1923 Kings Mountain Masonic Lodge baseball team. The twist to the shot was the fact that the guys were dressed as gals. One player identified was J.A. Wright. The question revolved around who the other players could have been in their dresses and bonnets. The photo had been made at Hamrick Springs in Shelby.

Rounding out the Herald for the second week of November 1986 was a spot tooting the horn of Dwight "Fearless" Frady. It seems as if Fearless had a season-end score of .800 in his football predictions by picking seven of eight winners. Long before there was ESPN, Frady had ESP when it came to football.



SIDEWALK SURVEY

By ALAN HODGE
Kings Mountain Herald

What are you thankful for this holiday season?



I'm thankful for my two daughters and my career.

Steven Wray



I'm thankful to have my mother and whole family with me.

Melvina Jackson



I'm thankful for family and friends.

Ethel Pedersen



I'm thankful for my family and that everyone is healthy.

Suzie Terres



I'm thankful for family, friends, and good health.

John Pettus

All respondees are staff at KM Middle School.