

YOUR OPINION

Playing in band takes commitment, dedication

To the editor:

Although I moved away from Kings Mountain shortly after graduating from college, I still have many deep convictions for my hometown. I subscribe to the local newspaper, The Kings Mountain Herald, and look forward to reading about the happenings around town and in the community.

The recent letter to the editor regarding the negative comments made about the Kings Mountain High School Band has absolutely infuriated me. As a 1978 graduate of Kings Mountain Senior High School, a member of the marching band (flag team 1976, drum major 1977 and 1978), and the Blazer Band, I know first-hand how much hard work goes into preparing for football games and most especially the concerts performed by the Blazer Band. Band members are required to practice at least two weeks before school starts in the fall, some are required to attend camp in the summer, and each band member (and their families) gives up Friday nights for weeks...all because these students are dedicated and want to be the best that they can be.

Mr. Donald Deal, Band Director, Mr. Hendricks and Mr. Chris Cole each played a significant part during my high school days in the band and each demanded respect from students. Guess what...they got it! I thank God that I had such committed teachers that taught me respect and responsibility in addition to how to play a musical instrument and perform marching drills before a crowd. The band members are some of the most dedicated and intelligent students in the entire school and rarely get any recognition...much less the recognition they deserve. Come on Mr. (Mike) Harris, to call them "classless" is an insult to your own intelligence. In fact, it's plain ignorance!

I praise Mr. Chris Cole for his commitment to the band program and for the many personal sacrifices he and his family have made in the interest of the band for the past 25 years. I applaud each band member for the hard work and sacrifices they make (believe me, it will pay off!). I encourage the parents of band members to be determined to see them through and lastly, I plead for the community to continue to support these fine musicians...they will probably be your future leaders!

To end in a cheer we yelled in 1978...Kings Mountain High School Band...Yeah!

Gina Patterson Robinson
Holden Beach, NC

Fan can't see football program getting better

To the editor:

I would love to know what happened to our football program?

They said at the first of the year that nothing was broken. We were left in very good shape. But now we are on the same level as Bessemer City.

I can not see our program changing with the coaching staff that we now have. I'm sure that our coaches are very nice people, but nice people don't win ball games.

I'm afraid if something doesn't take place, we're going to start losing support of the fans. We even might start losing our players to other schools.

I was on the sideline at practice before the North Gaston game and one of our coaches, instead of trying to build up the morale of the team, was talking to one of the fans telling him that he knew the fans in Kings Mountain wanted him gone but we don't pay his salary, so he wasn't going anywhere.

William Martin
Kings Mountain

Sports more than winning and losing

To the editor:

Enough is enough! As a graduate of Kings Mountain High School and a mother of two young boys, I am very ashamed of the way the citizens of this town are acting. My oldest son plays sports and he has a better attitude with losing than the folks writing the editorials. He understands at five years old that winning is not everything but being a good sport is.

Now, this is something that a lot of adults in this town and surrounding towns have forgotten. If the football players can hold their heads high, then who are we as fans not to do the same? We should not point fingers at the coaching staff nor anyone else who has given up their time with their own families to coach. These men should be patted on the back, as well as their families.

In years to come do we as a community want to be known for a winning team or one of the top high schools in NC? Now, if you ask yourself this question without being "hot headed" then the answer is obvious. Please, citizens, quit this finger pointing and become more like my five year old.

Melissa Bailey
Kings Mountain

To support team you have to be there

To the editor:

By the response I have received over the last week, my previous letter to the editor has really made some people sit up and take notice. I would like to thank all of you who have called or given me words of encouragement and support. Since I have only heard two negative reactions to my letter, I thought that I would address both parties.

First of all, Mrs. Potter, I apologize to you and your daughter if you misinterpreted my letter. My letter was not intended to target the band members themselves, only the person who makes decisions on the band's behalf. The band does an outstanding job. If I thought they were not talented or they were an embarrassment to KM, would I be complaining about their absence? No. My remark "classless act" was intended to refer to the act of not bringing the band as being "classless." It had nothing to do with the band being classless. Mrs. Potter, I watch the band at half-time every time they perform. If I choose to get a hot dog, I usually wait until they go on sale two for a dollar, which is during the fourth quarter. I never have been accused of being Country Club or Classy. Those

of you who know me, will get a laugh out of that. I have attended many band concerts and I am fully aware of all the Blazer Band's accomplishments. I attended concerts for years, and I still turned out to be the classless person that you say I am.

As far as what sports I support at KMHS, Mrs. Potter, I don't even have children at the high school but I manage to attend football, volleyball, wrestling, basketball and baseball games. I'll go ahead and tell you now that I probably won't be at a soccer match. As good as our girls team has been, I've never been a soccer fan. Is there anything wrong with that? If you think that's hypocritical, that's fine with me. Let me ask you a question. How many athletic events have you attended that did not involve your daughters?

Mr. Cole, all due respect is intended, I would like to commend you on the way you responded to my letter in a professional manner. Your letter was very informative for others. For me, I am well aware of all the work that goes into all of the band's performances. Your letter did me a huge favor towards trying to explain my point of view on this situation. You listed all of the time, effort, and dedication that it takes for you to get the band ready for all of your performances. Just to list a few examples: practice for matching, halftime show, Christmas parade, South Central District, honors band, Christmas concert, spring concert, graduation, etc. The only question that I, as well as many others, including band parents have is, what has changed in 20 years? Twenty years ago, the band had all of the same requirements and they still managed to travel to all of the away games. We know it is not time, because instead of an hour a day like you had 20 years ago, you now get 90 minutes a day. Some of the parents may not back me on this, but many are disappointed. Many of the kids are disappointed. I can remember a time when KM had a marching band with black and gold uniforms. Now KM is one of the best looking and performing bands anywhere around, but only home crowds get to see them. Why not showcase your talents to other communities?

Maybe we, as fans, are asking too much. All we are asking for is everybody's best effort. That goes for the coaches, players, cheerleaders, band, and fans. If it's not good enough for a victory on the field, at least we gave it our best effort. KMHS has the talent, the ability, the resources, and the support to put on good shows every Friday night, to which the whole community can be proud. When one member of the "team" is missing, it can bring everybody else down. Bottom line, Mr. Cole and Mrs. Potter, as much as either of you wants to disagree with me, the

band is a part of the Friday night team and we want them and need them. And for either of you to say that they are not part of the athletic program makes it sound like they don't really have to be there. If that's the case, then so be it. I'm just letting you know you're letting a lot of people down. It's hard enough trying to convince the community to support our program. When they see that part of the school doesn't even support itself, why should the community care?

Here's my last argument about this issue and then I'll let up. The community of KM has been fantastic to our school. KMHS has had outstanding achievements in several programs. But it all starts with football. You can agree or disagree with me all you want to on this one, but I would be willing to say that over 90% of the athletic budget goes through the gates of John Gamble Stadium every Friday night. You might say, well I go to all the home games. That's terrific, keep coming because we need you. Go on the road with us too. But doesn't that money go to the other school? Yes, but our crowds will accomplish two things.

Encourage our players and intimidate theirs. It should encourage that same team to bring a big crowd to John Gamble the next year. All of the KMHS sports are important, but if we as a community don't support the football team to the fullest extent, we will eventually let down the whole athletic program. The majority of all sports at KMHS, as well as any other high school, lose money or break even at best. All of the programs benefit from the money generated from football, even soccer, which by the way, Mrs. Potter, is one of the most expensive programs to field a team.

You can see by the letters in recent weeks how upset some fans are with our football coaching staff. You can also get a sense of the perception that other communities have about KM. You can disregard all of them if you want to, but several good points have been made. The expectations on KM are higher than a lot of people want to believe. Not every year is going to be the "Dream Football Season" that everyone wants it to be. Some years our team is going to achieve, some years they will over achieve, and some years they will underachieve. We, as fans, have to accept it. All we can do is support them in their victories and defeats. But in either case, we have to be there.

Mike Harris
Kings Mountain

Address letters to The Herald, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086; fax them to (704) 739-0611 or bring them by our office at 824-1 East King Street.

Florida election situation can have a silver lining

No one can say that the election situation in Florida has been boring. With as many twists and turns as a daytime soap opera, the Presidential election recount in the Sunshine State will no doubt make the history books.

A lot of people have the opinion that the delay in Florida could be harmful to the nation at worst and an aggravation at best. Sure, after the November 7th polls closed and the nation realized that neither Gore nor Bush would win by a landslide, things became sticky, but it's not like the government collapsed.

I say that instead of looking at the Gore and Bush situation as a bad thing, we should consider just how lucky we really are to have a system where the transfer of power can be done in an orderly fashion no matter what curves it takes to get there. This principle is also called "things could be a lot worse."

It only takes a brief perusal of history to check out the way power has been handed over or wielded in other places and times to see that a little thing like a recount is really just a minor annoyance.

Instead of a recount, we could have a king or dictator that ruled the nation with an iron fist. If you didn't like what was going on in the political arena, then you had better keep your mouth shut or face the unpleasant consequence of a firing squad. Do names like Idi Amin, Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin or Genghis Khan bring up any images?

As for voting, it was good to see so many people exercise that right this election. For those who didn't bother, just remember that in many lands today, the right to pick who will lead the country is little more than a dream. The old excuse about not voting because one ballot will never make a difference should also now be put to rest once and for all.

Any type of election, and especially one where tens of millions of votes are cast in thousands of precincts all over a huge land like the United States, will never be absolutely perfect. Simply because of the human factor, votes will be miscounted, lost, or even fooled with. This is true not only in Florida, but in any state in the nation.

The bottom line as far as I'm concerned is that the Florida election thing will be seen in retrospect as a positive thing for the country rather than something damaging. A healthy democracy thrives on such, a despotism won't even allow it. Besides being afraid what other countries think of us because of it, let us say to them "warts and all, we would not have it any other way."

The way we were November 28, 1957

As the front page of the November 28, 1957 Herald indicated, folks in Kings Mountain were looking forward to the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Leading off the events that were slated to come to town was the Christmas parade which was scheduled for December 4. Special guest at the parade was Miss North Carolina, Elaine Herndon of Durham.

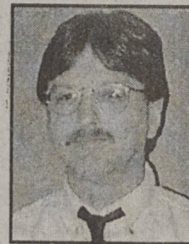
Other holiday news on the front page of the November 28, 1957 Herald included stories covering Kings Mountain's own Miss Jane Byars being in the Carrousel Parade in Charlotte, special Thanksgiving services at local churches, and holiday work schedules for area businesses.

In Herald sports for the last week of November 1957, a photo and outline showed anglers Gene Timms, Skimp Stowe, Joe McClure, and Douglas Fritts with their catch after a deep sea fishing trip at Southport. The four men had landed 900 pounds of fish which included six 30 pound amberjacks and 60 king mackerel.

Kings Mountain High School football fans had plenty to be proud of in the November 28 Herald since it was announced that Ken Baity was selected to the Shrine Bowl team as a half-back. Baity had scored 54 points for the Mountaineers in the regular season and had rushed 1,289 yards. He was the only player from the Southwestern Conference selected for the honor.

In social news, the November 28, 1957 Herald featured a story focusing on the Kings Mountain Hospital Auxiliary "Pink Ladies." The article drew attention to the fact that 27 area ladies had received service awards at a banquet hosted by Dr. George Plonk. Total hours contributed by the women for 1957 as of November 1 added up to 10,090. Chevron recipients with over 300 hours each included Frances Edens, Margaret Harmon, and Genell Pittman.

Movie ads in the November 28, 1957 Herald were full of action and excitement. Playing at the Bessemer City/Kings Mountain Drive-In was "Attack of the Crab Monsters". The Joy Theater had "Jamboree" with Fats Domino and Jerry Lee Lewis. The Diane Drive-In was playing "Stopover Tokyo" with Joan Collins.



Alan Hodge



AT KINGS MOUNTAIN
By Alan Hodge

SIDEWALK SURVEY

By ALAN HODGE
Kings Mountain Herald

Now that the Presidential election results in Florida have been certified, should Al Gore concede or keep fighting?



Gore should concede the election.

David Oliver
Kings Mountain



The people's prayers have been answered. Gore should pack up and go to Tennessee.

Bruce Davis
Kings Mountain



If the election was certified, Gore should give up.

Lee Putnam
Kings Mountain



Gore should keep going after the win.

Marvin Sewell
Gaston



Gore should keep on fighting.

Emmy Childers
Kings Mountain