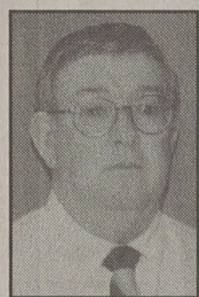


Withers will be missed

With the passing of Fred Withers last week, the Kings Mountain community lost



Gary Stewart
Editor

one of its best baseball minds. Of all the baseball coaches I've known or been associated with over the years, Withers,

along with his protege Barry Gibson, were probably the most knowledgeable of the game.

When I was a kid I loved to go to old City Stadium and watch Withers' American Legion teams play. His 1959 team, which played for the Area IV championship, was probably the best legion team to ever come out of Kings Mountain.

Withers' success on the field couldn't be measured by wins and losses, though. He had some teams that weren't nearly as good as that '59 outfit, but regardless of how skilled they were athletically young men who played under Withers always knew what they were supposed to do.

Withers was all business on the baseball field. He demanded that his players give a hundred percent all the time, and that they be strong in the fundamentals of the game. They spent hour after hour practicing game situations.

Withers came to Kings Mountain in 1955 as assistant football coach and head baseball coach. The late Shu Carlton, who was the very successful head football coach who won the school's first Western Conference championship in 1955 and first and only Western N.C. Association title in 1956, once told me that the best thing he ever did for Kings Mountain was to bring in John Gamble and Fred Withers.

Withers started his coaching career in 1951 in Sumter, SC where he coached New York Yankee great Bobby Richardson. His teams there posted a two-year record of 54-3. Before landing in KM in '55, Withers spent two years as principal of Bessemer City High School.

Withers took a very lean program here and turned it into a winner. He was on the top of the game in 1963 when his team won the school's first conference championship since 1941, but he was having trouble with varicose veins. He intended to take some time

See Gary, 5A

LOOKING BACK



New York Yankee great Bobby Richardson, left, inducted Fred Withers into the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame in 1996.

Protesters stand up for what they think is right

Kings Mountain is seeing protests complete with yellow signs demanding all its children get to attend Cleveland County Schools at no charge. The sight of parents, grandparents and community members gathering outside city hall, Cleveland County's Harry Building and the Gaston County Schools headquarters is making some people uncomfortable.

Why? What is wrong with dissent. Especially in Kings Mountain, a town which has named itself after a nearby Revolutionary War battlefield. The United States owes its very existence to protests against the British crown.

Regardless of how you feel about their cause, the current protesters have to be admired. They have stood up for what they feel is right. They've done it in an orderly fashion, breaking no laws and exercising their constitutional rights to free speech and assembly.

Monday morning I visited East School and was turned away. Principal Jerry Hoyle told me he was instructed not to allow the media on campus today. The central office says that meant only if there was picketing.

The school's spokeswoman says the superintendent was afraid of a media circus disrupting the first day of school. Indeed, the presence of protesters and the subsequent television cameras, photographers and reporters could be distracting to students. However, the event could also be used to teach civics. Students could watch democracy unfold in front of their eyes.

Some are faulting parents and grandparents for waiting until late summer to protest the school boundary decision. For many of the people showing up with bright yellow picket signs, this is their first experience at trying to change a law. Most have been busy raising children, working and generally living their lives.

While public policy decisions affect everyone's life every day, most of us don't realize it. When parents received letters saying they would have to pay \$1,414 in tuition bills, it was a startling example.

The letter put all the rumors, theories and talk into black and white. Many of their kids really weren't getting to go to the schools they had been attending. I think this group did a good job organizing itself so fast. I hope this experience will inspire them to continue to be part of the process. They have a lot to say.



Andie Brymer
Staff Writer

John Kerry bends with the breeze

John Frank Kerry did take the bolts out of his neck when he "reported for duty" at the Democrat convention the other night. It was useless, though, he still looks like the Frankenstein monster.

Anyway, there he was standing in front of all those cameras talking about how he was going to bring peace and prosperity to this country.

For a while, I couldn't understand why Kerry and his bunch keep talking about his service in Viet Nam, but I think I finally figured it out.

—Voters 35 and under don't remember that war. They didn't experience the divisiveness.

Kerry has been harping on his Viet Nam service ever since he entered the race for the presidency. He made a big show of floating down the Charles River in a boat, along with some of his crew members from Viet Nam the day before his convention appearance.

Just so you will know, he served four months in Viet Nam. He got three purple hearts in four months. He missed two days of duty from those three wounds, one of which was a scratch on the arm.

I will give him credit, he did volunteer to go to Viet Nam. When he returned, he went on TV and told the world about how American soldiers over there were committing atrocities and how they were killing defenseless children.

Lest we forget, Kerry attended meetings with Jane Fonda. There's photographic evidence of those meetings. He made a big show of throwing away his medals, which magically reappeared on his office wall.

I don't believe I could change anybody's mind about who they are going to vote for, and I wouldn't even try, but I think everyone should consider this.

Kerry came back from the war and immediately became an anti-war activist. Now he is trumpeting his service in that conflict. Does anybody see the inconsistency?

It might be fun having him as president. I had a ball poking fun at Bill Clinton for eight years. I always thought Dan Quayle was too easy.

I usually give politicians a special name. Clinton was President Fuzzy, Bob Dole was Bob Dull, Al Gore was Al Bore and George Herbert Walker Bush became George (RML) Bush. The RML, of course was "Read My Lips."

I've never really thought of a good one for George W. Bush. Others took the best, such as "Dubya" and "Shrub." If Kerry gets elected, I guess I'll stick with John Frank

See Heffner, 5A



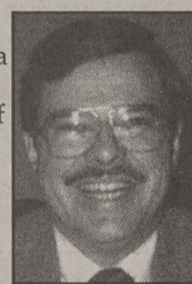
Jim Heffner
Columnist

YOUR VIEW

Our nation should be on Lord's side

By CHIP SLOAN

It is Tuesday afternoon. I just returned to my office from my polling place. A poll worker informed me that they were estimating less than a 10% turnout of registered voters. I left concerned about America and Christendom.



Question: Are you a good American, if you are registered to vote but don't exercise the vote?

My answer: If you are registered to vote, then you must be an American. But you are not a good American, a good citizen, if you choose not to vote.

Now for the spiritual implication: Not every Christian is a good Christian. Many citizens of heaven enjoy the benefits of Christ's mission. They enjoy the status of kingdom citizens without shouldering the responsibilities.

Question: Should I vote my party affiliation or my Lord affiliation?

Answer: My Lord affiliation. During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln overheard someone in the White House express hope that God was on "our" side; that is, the side of the North. President Lincoln wisely replied, "Sir, I am not at all concerned about that, for I know that the Lord is always on the side of the right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side."

As for me, it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side. I vote pro-life because I know God is pro-life. I vote for the candidate who defines marriage as a relationship between one man and one woman because I know that is God's definition of marriage.

Question: If only ten percent of registered voters vote, then does that ten percent rule the country?

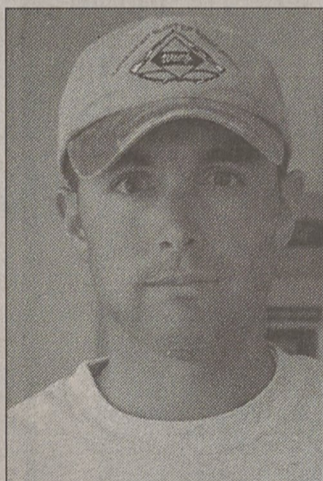
Answer: Yes! And if the ten percent vote Christian, we can return America to bedrock Christian values. If the ten percent do not

See Chip, 6A

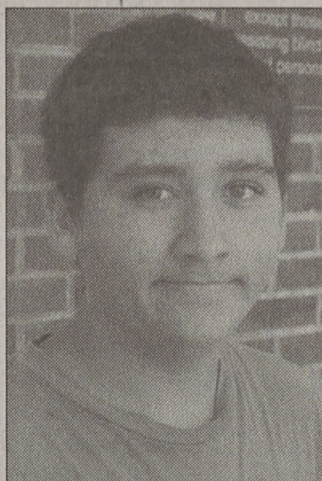
SIDEWALK SURVEY

By ANDIE BRYMER
HERALD

Do you think the government will reinstate the military draft any time soon?



I don't think so. There are too many guys who have been in the service and are anxious to get back.
Chad Arnold
Kings Mountain



No. I don't think it's necessary.
Steven Montgomery
Kings Mountain



Probably. The way the war is going, they'll probably reinstate it which is a shame.
Karen Hargett
Kings Mountain



Probably. I believe they probably will.
Debra Hawkins
Kings Mountain



We don't need to.
Marvita Spann
Kings Mountain