

Free worship is a blessing

As I opened the doors to Temple Emmanuel late Saturday afternoon, I realized the service was already under way. I slipped upstairs to the balcony to avoid the embarrassment of entering late.

From my perch, I could clearly see the front portion of the sanctuary. I had a



Andie Brymer
Staff Writer

bird's eye view of Dr. Charles Brown as he led the service. Brown stood behind a keyboard. Behind him were two mod-

ern-style menorahs and the wooden cabinet where the Torah is kept. A shofar, or ram's horn, rested in a chair to Brown's right.

I was privileged to join Gastonia's only synagogue as members participated in the last of three services marking Yom Kippur. Using the Jewish calendar, the day which began at sundown Friday, marks the beginning of the year 5765. During the 10 days leading up to Yom Kippur, the congregation dedicated itself to reflection on the past year. This is known as Rosh Ha Shanah or the Days of Awe.

Unlike the secular new year, Yom Kippur is a day of fasting, no food or water. Dr. Mark Epstein, Temple Emmanuel's outreach director, explained that the fast helps focus attention on sins against God and others. Jews will decide how to make restitution to the people they have hurt. The fast and prayers are penitence for sinning against the Creator.

The deep, stirring sound of the shofar was heard this year on Sept. 15 and again at the conclusion of Saturday's service. An ancient call to action, the sound tells listeners it is time to make changes.

Leading the service, Brown wore a white robe, the same type of garment Jews are buried in. The symbolism of death and rebirth was clear.

As the service ended, congregants made their way to the basement to break their fast. Poached salmon, salads, vegetables, breads and cakes took up five tables. I felt peaceful as I stood in line. The crowded room was warm; the people happily chatting, delicious smells wafting through the air.

This wasn't my first visit to Temple Emmanuel. Decades ago, my confirmation class from Messiah United Methodist attended a service. Since then, I've eaten the Seder or Passover dinner with Hickory's Jewish community and broken the Ramadan fast with Moslems in Morganton.

To worship freely is truly one of America's greatest blessings. To welcome strangers into sacred ceremonies is a gift to us all.

OPINION

The Kings Mountain Herald

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4A

MOUNTAINEER MOMENTS



Matt Ledbetter paints Wilder Clark's face at Kings Mountain High School in preparation for the homecoming football game.

ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD

IN OUR OPINION

Rodney and Rather; kings of blather

And now, a word about that great philosopher Rodney King. King was the black man who was mercilessly beaten by a group of Los Angeles policemen, back in the early 90s. After his assailants were cleared, riots broke out in the city and 55 people were killed. Many more were injured.

That's when King's philosophical ability kicked in. "Why can't we just all get along?" he said.

Newspapers all over the country heralded that comment as if it was mouthed by God himself.

King sued the City of Los Angeles and was given \$3.8 million in a settlement. Over the past few years, he has squandered the money, and has been caught several times driving under the influence, and various other violations of the law. The fact is, King has always had a long police record, from the time he was 14 years old until now.

The news media still reports on everything he says.

Last week, King said he doesn't want to be remembered as the person who started the Los Angeles riots in 1992.

"I'd like to be the person who threw water on the whole thing. Part of the solution, you know?" he said.

He went on to talk about his

"legacy." That would be funny if it wasn't so pathetic. Hard drinking lawbreakers don't leave legacies, statesmen leave legacies. Philanthropists leave legacies.

The King story is a good example of national news media priorities.

The recent mess at CBS is further evidence that the media isn't really interested in what the public thinks of as news if it doesn't agree with their own perceptions.

Dan Rather took documents from a known political hack and ran with them. Within one hour of putting the tainted documents on the air, they were found to be fraudulent by experts all over the country.

Rather kept running with the so-called story.

The George W. Bush National Guard story has been around for years. There's really nothing to it, but Rather and CBS think the forged documents make a weak story stronger.

Bush didn't have to take a flight physical if he was giving up flying, which he was.

Rather told the Chicago Tribune he still thinks the documents are legitimate, even after everyone in the entire world knows they are fakes.

The evidence that John Kerry acquired two of his purple hearts, and a bronze star under suspicious circumstances is extremely strong. There are 250 swift boat veterans who attest to that. Nine swift boat veterans say the rest are liars and

that Kerry deserved the medals.

CBS and the rest of the big media have pretty much ignored that story. Why?

Why don't they track down Kerry's after-action reports as diligently as they have these fraudulent documents about Bush's National Guard service?

I'll tell you why. It's because they are likely to find that Senator Kerry isn't the war hero he makes himself out to be.

If there was ever any doubt about bias in the national news media, the question is now settled forever.

Former CBS newsman Bernard Goldberg told us years ago that Dan Rather, and CBS, were biased.

Goldberg, I think, has been proven right.

Opinion Page Policy

The Herald welcomes your letters to the editor for publication in each Thursday's paper. All letters must be signed, and for verification purposes include the address and phone number. Letters should be limited to 500 words.

Mail your letter to Editor, The Herald, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086; fax to (704) 739-0611; or e-mail to KMH.Letters@kingsmountainherald.com. Letters sent by fax and e-mail must also include name, mailing address and phone number for verification purposes.

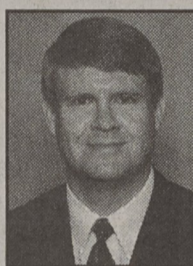
Letters may be edited.

MEDITATION

God uses ordinary people

Having been a pastor for nearly 20 years, and having given the largest

part of my life to the study of the Bible, some of my favorite heroes are biblical personalities.



Jeff Hensley
Meditation

Among them I would include Paul of Tarsus.

Now it might seem that Paul would be a hero because of his influence in the early years of Christianity or because he is the recognized author of so much of the New Testament, but that's not why I would grant him hero status.

The reason I would elevate Paul to this level is because he is so much like the rest of us. Even though his letters are now considered Scripture, you can still find that human quality in them if you look. Consider his pondering in the very first chapter of 1 Corinthians. Writing to the church at Corinth about divisions among them, he said, "I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius," but then a few lines later he added parenthetically, "I did baptize also the house of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else."

This sounds to me an awful lot like the way most of us would write. If you're writing a personal correspondence to someone you love, don't you sometimes write something and then back off of it a little bit as you think about it further? I know I sometimes do, and that's obviously what Paul did in 1 Corinthians.

To me this is a reminder that God has always been in the business of using ordinary people to do his extraordinary work. And like all the rest of us, Paul was also a person who sometimes struggled. Consider his "thorn in the flesh." "Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me," Paul wrote, "but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.'"

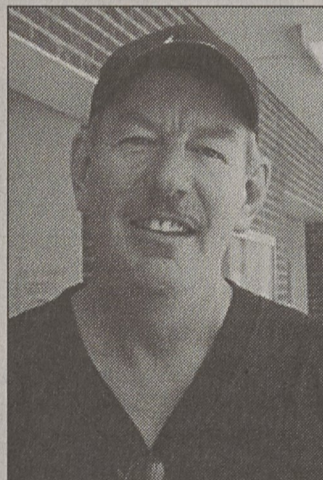
I tend to think this is the most important reason why Paul deserves hero

See Meditation, 5A

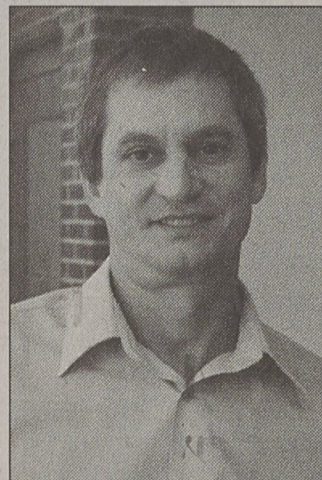
SIDEWALK SURVEY

By ANDIE BRYMER
HERALD

How has
the rainy
weather
affected
you?



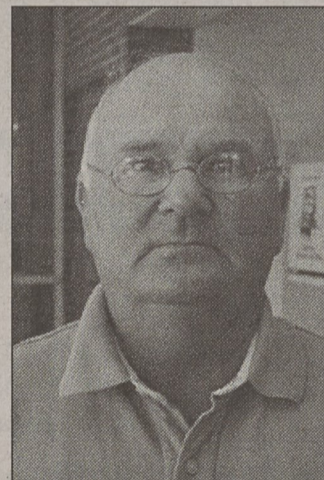
I've been helping a guy remodel. It's put a damper on that. And it gives you the blues.
Mike Baity
Kings Mountain



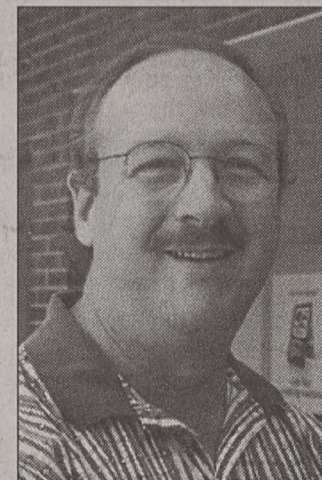
It's great for sleeping.
Dave Brewer
Cherryville



It's kept me inside, home.
Shirley Coker
Clover



It's kept me in the house. It's hard to get out and do anything.
Tommy Hawkins
Kings Mountain



It really hasn't. We've done everything we need to, went to Florida and did what we needed. I work for Duke Power.
Al Krieger
Kings Mountain