

LOCAL

ANDIE

From 4A

chemical imbalance brought on by an eating disorder. I wonder what the apparently self-conscious woman would have thought of the photos and video clips the nation is now viewing.

Eating disorders, many experts believe, are sometimes the way an individual who feels powerless exerts a small measure of control. Both Terri's mom and husband appear to want control. I'm giving both of them the benefit of the doubt that they love Terri, but I wonder if a portion of this battle boils down to two stubborn people not wanting to give in.

My heart goes out to all of them and the officials who are having to make tough calls.

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GARY

From 4A

but in some cases medicine has advanced too far.

-In the case of a baby, you have to give him or her every chance at life; but I do not think at this point in my life that I would put my wife or anyone else who has lived a quality life through such a living hell if doctors have assured me that the only thing that is keeping them alive is life support and that there is no way their condition can be reversed. In that case I would probably say it is better to let nature take its course.

-We should all let our spouses, children and other close relatives know while we are in a good state of mind of our end-of-life wishes. It can be easily and legally done through a Living Will, which both my wife and I chose to do after the death of our granddaughter. Often times, as I am sure in Mrs. Schiavo's case, young people don't think of making wills or living wills because they don't feel that death will be in their immediate future. In such cases, word of mouth intentions to their next of kin should suffice.

From all accounts I've heard, Terri Schiavo's husband, even though he now has a common law wife and two children by her, is still Terri Schiavo's guardian. It is unfortunate that he and her parents cannot get along and agree on what is best for Terri.

It is impossible for any human being to really know what is right or wrong in this situation, and regardless of what I or the talk show hosts or theologians or politicians or anyone else say, none of us really know what we would do in this situation until we face it.

Let us all pray for Terri and her family and that the will of God be done. He will make sure that something good will come out of this, and if our end-of-life ideas are not in keeping with His will He's already taken care of that too.

HEFFNER

From 4A

We take our pets to the veterinarian, and he administers a lethal dose of a drug which allows our animals to die peacefully, but we cannot extend the same humanity to our loved ones? There is something wrong here.

The reason, of course, is that in our litigious world, nobody wants to plunge the needle which ends a life. Chances are he or she would find themselves in court and some scatterbrained judge would lower the boom on another insurance company. Death is money in this country.

I understand that Terri's parents are reluctant to let her go, and I know the law must take its course. What I have trouble with is this. The husband was convinced his wife had been dead for years, why didn't he just relinquish custody to the parents, fold his tent and get out of town?

He has another family now, so why continue to deal with the agony of a woman he once loved who is obviously now in a persistent vegetative state?

It doesn't make sense to me, but then, not much does.

Opinion 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. Letters to the editor and columnists who appear on the editorial page do not necessarily represent the views of the Kings Mountain Herald.

PHIFER

From 1A

Phifer. Growing up in Blacksburg, Phifer had met him a few years earlier. It was not until Hawaii that she and Air Force Master Sgt. Marriott Phifer courted. After the war, the couple married and returned to Kings Mountain where they still live.

Though many call Hawaii paradise, Phifer's assignment was not all fun and games. Just days after she arrived, three soldiers were killed when they were hit by a truck. The trio were riding bicycles on a winding road which was suppose to be off limits.

Phifer would see more tragedy when she was stationed in Guam. After the

war ended, U.S. prisoners of war were processed there. She spent two nights and days along with other Red Cross workers completing paper work.

Phifer calls the scene "haunting." The traumatized men had had no contact with their families since the war began. "It was as bad as seeing death," she said. "That was something you never forget."

Before the war ended Phifer and her co-workers had helped set up in Guam what was initially a recreation camp. Phifer says it was "rough looking" to begin with. In that environment, Phifer developed blood poisoning and had to spent a night in the military field hospital.

Despite the difficulties, Phifer is glad she was part of the Red Cross.

"I never felt like I was in the wrong place," she said. "I was doing something to help somebody."

Phifer had long enjoyed meeting new people. While a student at Asheville Teacher's College, she took trips with the International Club to Vanderbilt College and the College of William and Mary. During her college travels, Phifer was able to see Miriam Anderson sing at the Lincoln Memorial. Her instructor drove the group around the town to see all the locations where the music was broadcast.

"He wanted us to see that the whole of Washington heard her sing," Phifer said. While a student at

Blacksburg High School, she was a charter member of the Beta Club. That was 1934, the year the organization was started nationwide. Phifer still has her membership certificate.

Before her school day started she milked cows, something she remembers fondly.

"I had to get up early. I didn't mind it," she said. Phifer retired from teaching in 1988 but worked as a substitute for four more years. Between her work at Waco School and in Kings Mountain she took 17 years off to raise the couple's four children, Rita Phifer, Connie Phifer Savell, M.D. Phifer Jr. and Doyt Phifer. Phifer has one granddaughter, Lesley Anne Phifer, a UNC-Chapel Hill senior.

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OFFENDER

From 1A

about unreported moves from anonymous tips.

Moves are frequent among sex offenders. One Cleveland County man was arrested after failing to inform officers of moving. Within a three-month period he moved four times trying to elude capture. One of those moves involved leaving the state. The offender also had made 28 registered moves.

If a sex offender moves in down the street, Steen advises being extra aware.

"Watch them for any kind of unusual activity," he said.

The registry is 98 percent male, Steen said. It is rare for women to offend. Typically they are arrested for incidents involving 16-year-old boys, according to Steen.

Most sex offenders are white, Steen said. Typically black people are less likely to victimize a family member.

"That's what we've found," Steen said.

Higher socio-economic class does not keep one from becoming an offender. Police officers, teachers, doctors and lawyers have all been convicted, Steen said.

Sex offenders often prey on a child who is having problems at home. Steen cited parental alcoholism as one example. The offender will pretend to be a "friend" to the vulnerable child. That same vulnerability that makes the child an easy target also makes it harder for the child to go to his or her parents about the abuse.

"Be the best parent you can," Steen said. "Let your kids be able to come to you."

While Kings Mountain is a small town, that doesn't make it immune from sexual predators and other criminals.

"You just need to know where your children are, what they're doing," Proctor said. "It's not the day and age we grew up in. It's not the 1970s anymore."

The schools do safety programs but parents need to reinforce that at home, according to Proctor.

Offenders don't typically stop their behavior, according to the research Steen has read. Because the impulse is generated by the brain, castration will not stop offenders, he said.

Studies indicate that offenders perpetrate 60 to 70 times before getting caught, Steen said. Victims often wait years before coming forward. Boys are typically more reluctant than girls to tell anyone they have been sexually abused.

A middle-aged woman called Steen after her stepfather died. She did not give any names but told Steen he had sexually abused her from the time she was eight or nine to her mid-teens.

"She just wanted someone to know," Steen said.

The district attorney's office will work with child victims, showing them the court room before the trial.

Steen says most of the time when a child says he or she has been abused, it's true. Kids don't know enough about sex to make up accusations, he said.

In Kings Mountain, registered sex offenders live on Gold Street, Piedmont Avenue, Mirada Lane, Gaston Street, Oakleaf Drive, Mauney Avenue, Maner Road, Bethlehem Road, Pat Drive, Stoney Point Road, Inwood Lane, Waco Road, Margrace Road, Lowery Wood Road, Green Acre Circle, Brandonwood Lane, Bennett Street, Sterling Drive, York Road, First Street, Battleground Avenue, Gold Mine Road, Spruce Street, Fourth Street, Cansler Street, Marys Grove Church Road, Goodall Street, Oveda

Court, Yarbrow Road, Baker Street and Gantt Street. No address was listed for one individual.

In Grover both registered sex offenders live on Temple Drive.

The registry was established in January 1996. The following violations result in inclusion on the registry: first and second degree rape, first and second degree sexual offense, attempted rape or sexual offense, intercourse or sexual offense with certain victims, incest between near relatives, employing or permitting minor to assist in offenses against public morality and decency, first, second and third degree sexual exploitation of a minor, promoting or participating in prostitution of a minor, taking indecent liberties with a child and kidnapping, abduction or felonious restraint by anyone except a parent. Conviction of attempting any of the above crimes also results in placement on the registry.

Information contained on the public registry includes name of offender, gender,

address, physical description, picture, conviction date, offense for which registration was required, the sentence imposed as a result of the conviction and registration status. No information on the victim is made public.

For more information, visit sbi.jus.state.nc.us.

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HITCH
Rated PG-13 - 1:15, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

ICE PRINCESS
Rated G - 12:15, 2:35, 4:55, 7:15, 9:35

MAN OF THE HOUSE
Rated PG-13 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

MISS CONGENIALITY 2
Rated PG-13 - 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:35

ROBOTS
Rated PG 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30

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Rated PG 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:45

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