

YOUR OPINION

2-year term is our only alternative to recall vote

To the editor:

When the so-called "smart people" abandon the political system, they are replaced by people who succumb to self-serving and partisan interests; inappropriate and ill-informed decision making; actions that are harmful in the long term and the ultimate result - corruption of the system for the benefit of a select few.

In the long term, however everyone gets to pay for the mistake of the self-serving and incompetent.

I believe the present political administration does not understand that we know the difference between an effective leadership and one that must be replaced.

Our problem as citizens is that we have been indifferent to this continual downward slide.

Do you really trust this political administration to work in your best interest?

There is no recall for political wrongdoing in NC, therefore our only protection is the two year term.

Before this vote is taken by City Council, I want my political representatives Rick Murphrey, Houston Corn, Dean Spears and Mr. (Rodney) Gordon to answer publicly in a rational manner the following questions. Note: Mr. Gordon is in his first term so I would not expect him to know all the answers.

1 - How many times since the founding of KM in 1874 have all council members and the mayor been voted out at the same election?

2 - If Mr. Murphrey is concerned about stability, does he think that 10 years as mayor is instability?

3 - We have had a revolving door of city managers and "interim city managers" since 1988. This adds up to about one city or "interim manager" every two years. Each of these city managers have one thing in common: they said they were (pick a term) forced out, coerced, resigned for personal reasons, intimidated, asked to do illegal acts, etc. Who do you think is responsible for making KM the laughing stock of Cleveland County and the state of NC?

4 - Since the change in charter to two year terms was done by petition, why do you not trust the people to express their opinion this time?

5 - Why did you decide to hold the public hearings at times other than at regular meeting dates?

6 - Why did you decide to avoid the proper management procedure of a city manager? Had you endorsed the proper procedure, the city would have received 80 to 90 applications from qualified, experienced persons.

7 - How do you know for certain that every utility rate payer is in their correct payment schedule?

8 - Explain why you are continuing to waste time and money on a so-called "second lake" which will never happen.

9 - What is your plan for completion of the water line into town? The original cost was about \$10 million. The latest cost is about \$12 million.

10 - Since the water plant is running at about half capacity and the plant can be upgraded from its present capacity of 8 MG/D (million gallons per day) to 24 MG/D, why are you making no plans to upgrade the plant? The plant started to operate in 1974 and is our lifeline. The cost to upgrade would probably cost \$10 million. If this is correct, please give us the facts.

11 - Since the lake is silting in at the rate of 10,000 cubic yards (engineering estimate) annually (since 1974), explain your plan for correcting this problem. I am not concerned that residents at the upper end of Moss Lake may have beach-front property in the future.

12 - How did you justify raising utility rates but not bothering to cut the budget in any significant way? Do you plan to do the same again this year?

13 - Please explain to the public why you actually deserve a four year term.

We have a very serious problem in this political administration. We know for certain that the city manager system that our charter provides has been virtually destroyed. It exists in name only. Do you believe that this happened by a natural process or accident?

Do you believe that all those city and interim managers were unequalled?

It will take time to correct the situation of inappropriate behavior on the part of our present political administration.

My solution is this: No matter what this mayor and council decides on the four year term, it is time to decide how you want your city business to be conducted. Is it finally time to use your vote to remove every member of this present political administration? Do you really believe that this is any way to run a \$30 million business? What do you think?

Gene White
Former city council member
Ward 4 and At Large

Family thanks White Oak for excellent care of father

To the editor:

The family of Elvin Brown would like to take this opportunity to thank White Oak Manor of Kings Mountain for the excellent care our Dad received

during the past three and a half years as a resident.

We went in anytime during the day or evening and always found that he was being treated with respect, but most of all dignity. Everyone from Dr. Perkins, Dr. Andusoe?, Crystal the administrator, the special nurses in Unit Three Bobbie, Angie, Suzanne, Teresa, Chemekia, Jeanette, (Luzille, Doug with Ally's Cove), Robin, Deana, Cristy, Donna, Angie, Tony, all the CNAs who were one on one with him and took excellent care of him. The activities director Kathy, social worker Kerry all the way to the lady Janice who took care of his clothes to the kitchen staff that made sure he had the proper food.

They always had something going on for all of the residents to keep them active, from playing ball, singing (which he loved) and dancing activities which was his passion.

But most of all he looked forward to going to church and when he was unable to attend his home church, First Wesleyan Church Unit 3 always made sure he was there to hear a wonderful teacher Paul Fulton from First Baptist Church (he was) always faithful to be there every Sunday. He also attended church in Ally's Cove with a pastor and his wife until he was put in a regular room.

Thank you White Oak Manor for your love and compassion to all the residents. You are special.

May God always have His hand on you and continue to give you the strength and love you give to each and every one at White Oak Manor.

Thank you in love,

The Elvin Brown Family

Jan Deaton

Liz Hill

Elvin E. Brown

Mike Brown

His 10 grandchildren and 16 great grand children

Kings Mountain has an excellent hospital

To the editor:

The family of Elvin Brown would like to take this opportunity to thank Kings Mountain Hospital for the excellent care he received when he was taken from White Oak Manor to the ER then admitted to room 256.

A lot of Kings Mountain residents have made the comment "I wouldn't take my dog to KMH," (including me) but I can assure you KMH is an upscale hospital today. Most advanced operating room in the region. Numerous improvements to the hospital and added services for the community.

Our family has no complaints (about) the care our Dad received during his brief stay until his going home to be with the Lord.

Our special thanks to the ER Doctor Bombenger and Paramedic Ben Champion. To the admitting Dr. Okowkwo, Charge Nurse Pat Potter, nurse David Whetstone, CNA Sherry Cartee, Charge Nurse Jenny Black, Nurse Rhonda Fordee and Debbie Foubush. Thanks to all of you for your compassion and gentleness you showed toward our Dad during his last moments on earth, as well as all that you did for the family as we stayed with him. You all are very, very special people and we believe you are where God wants you to be.

A very special thanks to the VP Sean Des'Champs who came around at 7 pm on Wednesday to make sure we were ok and to take care of anything we needed.

May God continue to bless you and keep giving you the gift you all have.

Thank you in love,

Jan Deaton

Liz Hill

Elvin E. Brown

Mike Brown

His 10 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren

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.

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

OUR VIEW

Gene Goforth - legend, friend

Sometimes in life you're blessed to meet and get to know a true friend.

Eugene Goforth, who died last Saturday just a few days shy of his 88th birthday, was such a man.

I met Gene back in the early 1960's when I was a young sports writer at the Kings Mountain Herald. Gene was a city commissioner.

A few years later I was writing sports for the Gastonia Gazette and was assigned to do a feature story on Gene, who was an outstanding pitcher on the high school baseball team at KMHS in the 1930s, and later in the military and professional ranks.

We sat down in his living room on Landing Street and talked baseball for hours. I taped that session - but the Good Lord only knows what ever happened to the tape.

From that day on, I knew Gene was much more than just a good baseball player. He was a remarkable man, who loved God, his family, the city of Kings Mountain, and all of his many friends. I don't think Gene ever met a stranger; if he did, he quickly turned him into a friend.

Over the years Gene, David Hughes, Billy Hughes and I had some wonderful experiences fishing the small lakes around here and the big one they call the Atlantic Ocean along the North Carolina coast.

Whether you caught fish or not - the other three always did, sometimes I didn't - you always had a great time because Gene would keep you rolling in laughter. Sometimes when you landed a decent fish, Gene would say "good boy."

Whether it was playing a practical joke, telling a good joke (most of which cannot be repeated in print), or recalling some of the humorous moments he experienced in pro baseball, trips were always a hoot.

I'm not going to say for a fact, but Gene may have been the last surviving member of Kings Mountain High's first championship baseball team of 1935. Gene was one of four outstanding players on that team to sign pro contracts. Gene made it as high as AAA ball with the Chicago Cubs, where he played against Dodger legend Gil Hodges and Chuck Connors of "Rifleman" fame. Gene was a freshman on that '35 team. Although he wasn't considered the ace, he went on to become the ace the next three years, closing out his prep career in 1938 by being named the KMHS athlete of the year. In addition to his baseball exploits (his 21-strikeout performance against Newton in 1938 is still a school record and he pitched a no-hitter in pro ball), he was also an outstanding basketball and football player.

I'll never forget Gene talking about playing basketball on the stage of Central School. The baskets were attached to the walls. With Gene being the team's biggest player at 6-6, of course he played center and when the inside players began "banging the boards" for rebounds they were really banging the boards of the stage walls.

I'll also never forget the time in 1992 when I was compiling a history of KMHS football. Newspapers from the early days didn't cover sports like they do now and it was almost impossible to find complete records of teams in the 1920s and 1930s. I couldn't find anything from the 1936 and 1937 teams except a pre-season schedule and I asked almost everyone that played on those teams what their won-lost records were and they all said

An apology from the bottom of my heart

I've heard just about all the apologies I can stand from Don Imus. He is beginning to carve a new career out of apologizing to the world at large.

He made a mistake; it happens, move on.

Oh, I forgot, he can't move on. He made the mistake of insulting minorities. You can't insult minorities in this country.

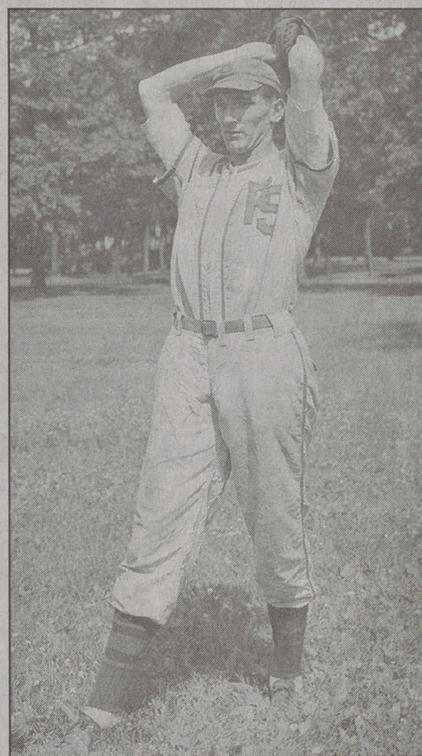
Imus' comment about the Rutgers women's basketball team was thoughtless and hurtful to innocent young women, and he has every right to be ashamed. If I were Mr. Imus, however, I would never grovel at the feet of Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson. These two are nothing but race hustlers. They thrive on mistakes made by people such as Imus.

The next thing you know, they will be threatening any corporation involved with Imus and probably end up sitting on the board of directors at NBC. That's how they make their livings.

Jackson is good at going to a company and threatening to start a boycott against them unless said company comes up with a juicy check for his "Rainbow Coalition" or "Operation Push."

Sharpton will do the same thing. I don't understand how so many TV networks give this thug face time. He's nothing but a grifter.

Remember when he took up the cause of Tawana Brawley. Miss Brawley had stayed out partying all night, got scared of the repercussions at home and lied to her parents, telling them she had been raped by white men. Turns out she was lying, but that didn't stop Sharpton from pointing fingers at enough people to get himself sued, a suit he lost. Let's forget, Bill Cosby jumped on the Brawley bandwagon too.



Eugene Goforth when he pitched for Fort Sheridan during his Army days.

they couldn't remember.

Then one day on the lake, I asked Gene. He said, "I can tell you. We didn't win a d--- game. In fact, one of those years we didn't score a point."

Gene's professional baseball career was interrupted twice by military obligations - one stint of duty just prior to World War II and the other during the war - and even though an accident during his service years cut short his pro career, he cherished those years in the Army.

He was taking a transmission out of a military truck one day when a jeep pulled into the garage and hit the jack handle, causing the truck to fall on Gene's pitching shoulder. He never had his pre-war velocity after that.

His funny stories of his professional years are legend, just as Gene was a legend. Had he chosen to leave his beloved Kings Mountain he could have made a good living as a comedian. Believe me, today's comedians like Jeff Foxworthy and Larry the Cable Guy are dull compared to Gene Goforth.

Gene's favorite line when we'd get into the truck to go fishing, and when we launched the boat into the water, was "And they're off, said the tomcat" followed by a line about what happened to the tomcat when he got caught in a barb wire fence. Anyone who ever fished with Gene knows the finish. Anyone else can ask me.

I don't think there will ever be another day that I don't think of Gene Goforth. He made that kind of impact on people.

He was a "good boy" who is off to a better place where I hope there are plenty of lakes and ball fields. If there are, though, I think it will be a long time before Gene will be on them. His first priority after meeting God will be to go all over Heaven and make friends of everyone.

Sharpton has never apologized to anyone, nor has Jackson apologized for referring to New York as "Hymie Town."

Imus, first of all, is a flaming liberal. He also has an acid tongue. I've never considered him a racist. I always thought of him as an equal opportunity insulter. His recent comment, which will probably end his career, was not the worst thing I've ever heard him say.

MSNBC has already fired him, and CBS may be next. Both these networks are aware of the first amendment, but being so far left, they bend the Constitution to suit themselves. NBC has drifted so far to the left the past couple of years they've almost disappeared from view.

This incident is just another case of liberals wanting everybody except themselves to apologize for something. It doesn't matter what, they just want to hear an apology.

David Gregory, NBC White House correspondent would die happy if he could just wheedle an apology out of George Bush. It doesn't matter what the apology is for. Bush could apologize for wearing mis-matched socks or something. David just wants to hear those magic words: "I'm sorry." Maybe he ought to buy the record by Brenda Lee so he will have something to do while the cows are coming home.

The State of North Carolina has officially apologized for North Carolina slave owners in the past. Many states are doing the same thing.

All these things lead me to believe that there is an apology culture loose in this country which feeds on: "I'm sorry," "pardon me," "excuse me, please," and the like. Those who have a constant need to hear apologies are a sick bunch of psychos.

I think Imus owes us an apology for spending so much time apologizing to Al Sharpton.

I'm truly sorry about this column. I wish I had some shoes to kiss.