

EDITORIALS

Put library project at top of your gift list

We've heard the old saw so many times we may not recognize the inherent truth in it: Children are our future. As banal as that sounds, it makes sense in many ways. If the children of today don't grow up with hope and opportunity, challenge and reward, we will all be poorer for it in the years ahead. Facing a Baby Boom generation reaching middle age and stiff global competition for jobs and factories, the United States is at a historic crossroad. Today's young people must become the most productive generation the nation has yet seen, or many of our everyday comforts will become expensive luxuries.

Our national response has not been heartening. Many schools are overcrowded and run down, class sizes are expanding and test scores are only beginning to turn upward after dropping since the 1960's. The public's willingness to support public institutions has waned as credit card balances have soared, and politicians know that suggesting we actually pay for what we need is electoral suicide.

But all is not gloom and doom. There's a lot you can do to insure the future right here in the Back Mountain. Oh, it will cost you a bit, but the return will be far greater than the expense, and the fruit of your contribution will rise right before your eyes. You see, the Back Mountain needs your help in order to meet the needs of the children who are our future.

Most towns have a borough or township building, a fire hall, maybe even a police station, and you pay for them. They all have garages in which to house snowplows and other equipment that is used to maintain the roads. Some have public parks, recreation areas and ball fields. But there is only one library, and it serves the entire Back Mountain, loosely defined as the area encompassed by the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school districts.

Unlike all those other important institutions — or even public schools — the Back Mountain Memorial Library is assured of no funding from local taxes. It's true that most municipalities commit a small amount from their general budget each year, but even those paltry sums don't always materialize if it's been a harsh winter or some other item has caught the town fathers' fancy. That's why you are so important to the library; it takes a great deal of support and cooperation from everyone who lives in the Back Mountain to sustain a modern, functional library.

That support has been forthcoming, year in and year out, for over half a century, as dedicated staff and volunteers have worked both to provide day-to-day service and to raise funds used to meet the needs of an expanding and more demanding populace. The annual auction has been the most visible sign of this activity. Now, an even greater challenge is offered to the people of the Back Mountain, and we hope you are up to it.

It has been evident for years that the library needs a larger, better-equipped children's area. The present space is roughly the same as existed in the original library building when it opened in 1945. As we approach the new century, the library is about to embark on perhaps its most ambitious project, a new wing dedicated to the children who are our future. It is an expensive proposition, but one that is sorely needed if we are to offer young people the facilities and resources they will need to flourish in the new millennium.

We urge everyone in the Back Mountain to support this most important endeavor, to the best of their ability. A great deal of money is needed to complete the project, and most of it must come from contributions, large and small. The success of this project will say a lot about our community's values, among them that we are willing to sacrifice together for the good of all our citizens, especially our youngest ones.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



We have spent a combined two weeks on Topsail Island in North Carolina, renting condominiums from a friend from a former life. We've also stayed on Ocracoke Island, at the base of Cape Hatteras, and at Folly Beach, South Carolina, which I once read is the fastest eroding beach on the East Coast. But Topsail is unique, little more than a sandbar poking out into the Atlantic, with the Intracoastal Waterway behind. It doesn't (or, didn't) have dunes so much as be a dune, with little of the vegetation that holds many other barrier islands in one piece.

Since we're familiar with so many coastal areas, we watch hurricanes attentively as they sweep in. We used to wonder what would happen to Topsail if it was hit by a large storm. We wonder no more. Reports I've seen and read say three-quarters of the buildings on the island were destroyed by Hurricane Fran, and I can believe it. Previous storms of much less magnitude wiped out beaches and the island's road, so it's understandable that a Category 3 hurricane would do much greater damage.

I once thought it would be a thrill to ride out a hurricane someplace like Topsail, a notion Charlotte doesn't share. Maybe I'm getting old, but after Fran, I don't have any desire to see the eye of a storm in such a vulnerable spot. Likewise, I now better understand Charlotte's aversion to beach homes set close to the water. And I surely don't want any part of my tax payments going to build beaches or buildings that are in harm's way. Anyone foolish enough to rebuild after a storm destroys their home ought to do it on their own.



Fine fowl weather on a pond at the Newberry Estate. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Student travel is an enriching experience that should continue

Editor:

As the parent of a student, and a band parent (for seven years), I have witnessed, with pride, the achievement of becoming a young adult.

Unfortunately preparing for life can not always be learned from reading textbooks. School activities are a very essential part of this process. You must exert yourself to strive for excellence. Long hours and many days of practice, competitions (for which you must be mentally and physically ready), and studying on your own; these are just a few things a student must do to be able to partake in activity.

A very big benefit, among many

which I will not elaborate on, is traveling to competitions. There they meet, mingle, and associate with people of many different lifestyles. Communicating with people, other than those of your own locale, helps to prepare for life more than anyone could put a price tag on. When students now leave for college they are prepared to speak, interact, and not be shy or backwards with other people. They have confidence in themselves.

Now when the majority of this is taken away "in the name of education," who benefits? I am sure there would be extra monies available for continuing raise in

salaries, new schools, etc. However, as a parent (in any school district) can attest, the students should be their number one priority. To increase not only their textbook experience, but their personal experience through school activities.

With this in mind, I respectfully insist that the Lake-Lehman School Board and Superintendent come down to earth and get back to basics. Review your actions on restricting activities. By restricting activities, you are in fact strangling that activity into non-existence. Students will not have a chance to completely excel and prepare for life. We as parents

must nurture, guide, and encourage our children as they grow. It is a difficult but rewarding task. We can teach them about drugs, alcohol, and AIDS, but it is difficult to explain someone's actions that you yourself do not understand.

As a highly educated Superintendent and Board of Directors, you chose your field. Think back when you were a student. Use common sense, re-evaluate your actions.

In this day and age the parents need your help, and the students deserve it.

Don Pall
Sweet Valley

As I was saying



Jack Hilsher

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or build a better mousetrap, though he builds his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door."

Possibly, but they say that inventors as a breed are fast disappearing, being replaced with computers and creative teams. And that many great inventions were nothing more than lucky accidents.

One example - the inventor of the first telescope. A Dutch spec-

Accidental inventions we still use

tacle maker named Hans Lippershey one day held a lens in each hand. Looking through both of them at once, he found that two lenses in line will magnify. Hans then mounted a lens in each end of a tube and Eureka! - a telescope.

Another lucky accident happened in 1878 at Harley Proctor's soap and candle company. He was trying to produce a creamy, white, scented soap to compete with imported castile soaps. His workers were making a soap developed by his chemist, James Gamble, but they forgot to switch off the mixer and too much air was whipped into the soap solution.

Not wishing to destroy the batch, they hardened and cut it, thus moving the first floating soap into stores. Again, Eureka! Proctor was flooded with letters requesting more of this great new soap because it could not be lost

in murky bathtub water and kept bobbing up to the surface! So Harley Proctor and Jim Gamble decided to give all their white soap an extra period of time in the whipping mixer.

The name "White Soap" however had to go. One morning in church Harley was inspired when the pastor read the 45th Psalm, "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloe, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad."

So the first bars of Ivory Soap were produced. Proctor had a groove cut across the middle of each economy-size bar of Ivory. People could then decide whether to use it as one large laundry-type bar or two small toilet-size bars. That way the company only had to make a single bar.

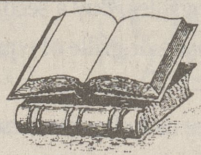
To test Ivory's quality Proctor had sent the soap to independent labs and one analysis struck him,

stating it had few impurities, only 56/100 of one percent. He turned that into the statement, "99 and 44/100 percent pure," and the Ivory advertising campaign for decades went into full gear.

Purity and floatability went hand in hand to sell soap, and lots of it. Proctor then gave store owners full-size cardboard displays introducing the "Ivory Baby" and plugging the percent pure aspect, and of course, the slogan "It Floats!" Madison Avenue still salutes his campaign to persuade American home owners to purchase Ivory Soap as one of the most effective in the history of advertising.

Harley Proctor was only 32 when his workers accidentally invented floating Ivory soap. He had promised himself that if he was a success in business, he would retire at age 45. He didn't quite make it, retiring at 44.

LIBRARY NEWS



The auction committee of the Back Mountain Memorial Library is trying to find the person who bought the Everready razor blade clock at the 50th auction. The clock was red and trimmed in gold. This clock was a reproduction purchased by the antique committee. We hope the person who has it will call the library and let us know.

The 50th auction was a tre-

Auction committee seeks buyer of clock

mendous success financially and every way. The account receivables totaled \$32,832, which seems to be the highest amount charged to date. The first billing has gone out and the payments are coming in. The support of this library has been super.

New books at the library: "The Outsider" by Penelope Williamson is a story of Rachel Yoder whose life had been a straight path, however brutal. Until...he stumbled into her life one cold, bitter day, almost dead from a bullet in his side. Instinctly, Rachel reached out to help the stranger, for kindness was in her nature. This act of mercy would change her life.

"The Informant" by James Grippando sends readers on a spine-tingling trip into the heart of evil. A serial killer has struck again. FBI agent Virginia Santos is tracking the string of gruesome murders from New York to San Francisco, from Miami to Oregon. Her only lead: the distinct savagery of the slayings, "signed" with the killer's own brand of barbarism.

"We Were the Mulvaney's" by Joyce Carol Oates is more enthralling, moving, and unforgettable illuminated by profoundly human truth than most stories. This is the story of the rise, the fall, and the ultimate redemption

of an American family. They seemed blessed by everything that makes life sweet—a successful father, a loving mother, three fine sons and a sweet daughter. Something happens on Valentine's Day, 1976, that crushes their world.

"Murder Makes an Entree" by Amy Myers is a Victorian whodunit. A sumptuous dinner turns deadly in this Edwardian mystery introducing master chef and amateur detective Auguste Didier—featuring the charismatic Prince of Wales himself. Throgmorton has been poisoned at a first-class dinner and Inspector Naseby of the local constabulary believes the banquet is to blame.

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