

IN THE SHADOW OF HOGAN'S MOUNTAIN

BY DR. WARREN HOLLAR, WHOLLAR@CHARTER.NET

Adventures of Buttercup and her Friends

The closest most people today come to milking a cow is deciding which milk carton to select from the supermarket dairy case. People who never have been in a cow barn might think milking a cow is a unique earthly experience where one relates with his or her cow while communing with nature. Just milk her for a while and presto: fresh, creamy milk. But the truth is, milking can be a very challenging and often dirty job.

For those of us who grew up on farms, taking care of the cows was an everyday affair. In the 1960's, I left for college and left cow milking, mucking stalls, etc. as past life activities. Clearly, I did not miss enduring the undignified assaults from milk cows. A long heavy tail, weighted by matted cockleburs and after product of grass digestion, often swished briskly back and forth and connected heavily with the side of my face. I was also quick to avoid the cow stepping in the bucket resulting in a special treat for the barn cats. One finicky cow, less than aptly named Buttercup, was plain mean. She loved to kick me and sling her head at me. One day, she even caused me to miss my high school bus by standing on my booted foot for a long period of time. My teacher thought I gave a pretty lame excuse.

I have heard and been involved with mishaps and funny occurrences involving cattle over the years. One story that has been told repeatedly involved my wife. She spent most of her life in the city and had little contact with farm happenings. Indoctrinating her to farm life was quite interesting at times. She had never been close to a cow or calf. The pas-

ture near my mother's home was surrounded by an electric fence. During a visit, she wanted to pet the calves near the fence. I distinctly remember telling her to watch the fence. Unfortunately, she reached down to pet a calf and tried to steady herself by grabbing the electric fence. You know the result. The story has been embellished over the decades to make me out as the villain in her shocking experience.

A second cow story occurred soon after the construction of Bethlehem School. Kevin Fox, the physical education teacher, had a group of kindergarteners walking around the track. Unfortunately, two pastures were on the south and west side of the playground. An amorous bull decided he wanted to visit several comely cows in the opposite pasture. Ever vigilant, Mr. Fox quickly became shoeing his flock toward the school building. He picked up at least a half dozen stragglers to move them to safety. We obviously requested fence repairs and moving the amorous bull to another location.

A third cow story involved my father's prize black angus bull. As a teenager, I had instances where meeting the curfew was an issue. If I turned off the engine and lights of my 1951 Chevrolet, I could coast from the county line to my parking space at the base of Hogan's Mountain. Unbeknown to me, my father's prize black bull decided to stand in the middle of the road near my parking spot. You can imagine my mortification when my prize car and prize bull made contact. Fortunately, the bull only had a small limp and my car only had a small dent.

The final story involved

a group of hunters. A carload of hunters, on a scouting trip, were looking for a place to hunt, pulled into a farmer's yard in Wilkes County. The driver, Jack, went up to the farmhouse to ask permission to hunt on the farmer's land. The old farmer said, 'Sure you can hunt, but would you be doing me a favor? That old horse standing over there is 20 years old and sick with cancer, but I don't have the heart to kill her. Would you do it for me?' Jack replied, 'Of course I will,' and strolled back to the car. While walking back, however, Jack decided to play a trick on his hunting friends. He got into the car and when they asked if the farmer had said if it was alright, he said, 'No, we can't hunt here, but I'm going to teach that old fellow a lesson he won't forget.' With that, Jack rolled down his window, stuck his gun out and shot the horse. As he shouted, 'To be sure, that will teach him,' a second shot rang out from the passenger side and one of his hunting mates yelled, 'Same with me, I got the cow.'

Let's end with a couple of cow facts not commonly known. To produce a potential 8 gallons of milk per day, a cow produces 125 pounds of saliva, drinks up to 50 gallons of water, and eats about 100 pounds of grass and feed during an eight-hour period and chews her cud for about 8 hours. Cattle are red-green colorblind, so a bull cannot see a red cape, but they can smell things six miles away. Next time you put milk on your cereal, remember all the efforts of the milk-producing animal and of course our dairy farmers who bring the milk to market.



SERVANT'S HEART — Alexander County Schools Exceptional Teacher and Special Olympics Coordinator Amy Pruett was awarded the Servant's Heart Award during the honors and recognition portion of the school board meeting on September 10, 2019. Pictured above from left: Christy Hopkins, Amy Pruett, Kim Sheeks, Pat Pine, and Greg Pine.

Pruett honored at Alex Board of Education Meeting

By TOSHA BROWN

The Alexander County Board of Education met on Tuesday, September 10, 2019, at the Central Office with all board members present. The meeting started with a moment of silence.

Alexander County Schools Exceptional Teacher and Special Olympics Coordinator Amy Pruett was awarded the Servant's Heart Award at the meeting. The award was presented by the Rockwell Civitan Club. Pruett was recognized for her dedication to providing support to families and individuals affected by intellectual and developmental disabilities. It was noted that Ms. Pruett does not do her job and volunteer her time for recognition, which in part makes her dedication, joy, compassion, and humility even more remarkable.

Ms. Kim Sheeks presented the award and was accompanied by the North Carolina West Governor of Civitans, Christy Hopkins, the Rockwell Civitan President Greg Pine, and the Rockwell Civitan president-elect Pat Pine. Civitan is one of the major supporters of Special Olympics. (Alexander County does not have a Civitan Club.)

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Hefner announced the enrollment for the 10th day of school is 4,728 students, which is 63 less than last year at this time. [Editor's Note: Previous years' 10th day enrollments include: 4,791 (2018), 4,893 (2017), and 4,931 (2016).] The state will monitor enrollment through two cycles of 20 days to determine if the loss of enrollment merits a revision in funding based on projected enrollment.

Dr. Hefner announced upcoming events and meetings. School board members will visit Hiddenite Elementary on Sept. 18. The Fall district meeting for the North

Carolina Boards Association is Sept. 26 and the Annual Conference for board member development is Nov. 18-20.

The school board members reviewed the five policies presented by Finance Director Sharon Mehaffey for a first reading. These policies will be presented again next month for a second reading.

One policy revision was approved on the first reading, Policy No. 4320/5026/7250, 100 percent Tobacco Free Schools. This policy revision adds a section on consequences for possession of electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and other electronic devices by middle school students and is effective immediately.

All Alexander County Board Policies are available for review by the public at www.alexander.k12.nc.us or the Alexander County Board of Education Office on Liledoun Road, Taylorsville.

Repairs to Concession Stand Approved

The board approved an allocation up to \$6,000 for repairs to the Alexander Central stadium concession stand. The athletic booster club will provide equal funding and be responsible for the repairs.

September has focus on Attendance Awareness

Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Hefner, with support of the school board, proclaimed September as Attendance Awareness Month. The proclamation cites chronic absence is an early warning indicator that can reveal that a student needs help long before test scores or grades do and regular attendance is essential to grade-level reading, academic achievement, and graduation. For the full proclamation, go to www.alexander.k12.nc.us under District Newsroom.

The next regular meeting of the Alexander County Board of Education will



"HAIR" CONTINUES SEPTEMBER 12-15 AT H.C.T. — Kayla Simone Ferguson (front) leads the tribe (L-R: Toré Ledford, Sheena Forbes, Brandon Nuhfer, Tatum Terry, Donovan Harper, Ella May, and Sierra Doyle Rios) as they sing "Aquarius" in the musical "Hair." Performances continue this weekend, September 12-15, at the Hickory Community Theatre. The show closes on September 22. For tickets call 828-327-3855 or visit hickorytheatre.org.

(Photo by Ken Burns.)

Glenn Wilson, Alex. Central's first football coach, passes September 7

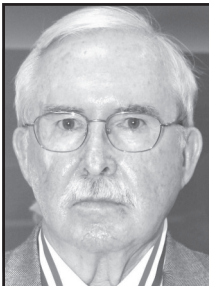
By D.N. PENNELL, Jr.

The first football coach in Alexander Central High School history, Glenn G. Wilson, passed away on Saturday, September 7. He was 79 years old.

A graduate of Appalachian State University in Boone, Wilson came to Taylorsville after coaching stints at Burlington Williams and West Mecklenburg High School. He served as the Head Football Coach at Taylorsville High School for four seasons before becoming the first coach at the newly formed Alexander Central High School in 1970. For the next 22 seasons, Wilson served as the sideline general for the ACHS Football Program. In all, Wilson coached teams at Taylorsville High School and ACHS for 26 seasons. He was a five-time Conference Coach of the Year and compiled a 149-114-6 overall record over this 26-year coaching career in Alexander County. During his tenure at ACHS, Wilson also maintained the role of athletic director. He led the 1983 ACHS Cougars to the best record in school history, starting the season with an 11-0 mark and the top spot in the Charlotte Observer Sweet 16 Poll. Wilson guided Alexander Central teams to five Conference Championships and was selected to coach in the East/West All Star Game in 1973. In 2009, the playing field at Cougar Stadium was named Glenn G. Wilson Field following a push by his former players to honor the school's first and winningest coach.

For his accomplishments on and off the grid iron, Coach Wilson was inducted into the Alexander County Sports Hall of Fame in 2013, as part of the second-ever class of inductees.

Coach Wilson is survived by his wife, Camilla, of Hickory, and sons Eric and Kirk.



WILSON

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