

Editorial opinion

Friends of Life makes news take a turn for the better

It isn't often that we have the opportunity to publish good news. That is not to say that "good" news is scarce. It's just that there is only so much space in a newspaper, and most of the news which must receive priority, for a number of reasons, is bad.

However, this week we are pleased to be able to report on an activity involving high school students which restores in us an optimism about our youth and, therefore, our future.

We recommend that you take time to read a story herein about the Friends of Life Organization (FLO), a new club at the Estill County High School with the goal of offering students the opportunity

to have fun without drugs and alcohol.

As the story will tell you, FLO is an outgrowth of a multi-state effort called "Project Graduation." This effort began in 1980 with the shocking death of 7 students in Maine who were involved in a tragic automobile accident in which the excessive consumption of alcohol was a factor.

Project Graduation in Kentucky is being sponsored by the Kentucky State Police and the Department of Education. These government agencies are providing technical help to teenagers in local schools, informing them of the hazards of substance abuse, and encouraging them to organize at least one

night of drug and alcohol-free entertainment.

Estill County students, with the energetic, undying encouragement of teacher Sharon Niece, are planning an all-night party after the prom in May.

If that shocks anyone, it shouldn't. All night parties have long been the custom after proms and graduation ceremonies. Giving one which will be enjoyable and drug and alcohol-free is a wonderful idea. We tip our hats to them.

This activity is being considered a community project. Citizens are being asked to provide help in any form. We hope the help comes in bushels, and that the event becomes a successful annual event.



Arts proposal exciting idea

An exciting proposal was given to the Estill County Board of Education Monday night, one which it should make every effort to implement.

Representatives of the Estill County Arts Project asked the board for \$4,500 to go toward local funds needed to match grants the group has received.

Plans for the project's \$27,000 budget include the establishment of an art gallery here,

workshops for students with instruction from an "artist in residence" and even a theater group.

Appalachian art, the stated emphasis of the proposed gallery and workshops, would provide a vehicle through which a greatly needed sense of pride in community and region could develop.

Also, art programs at local schools could be enhanced by an opportunity for area students to publicly display their work.

And a theater group is a marvelous idea which should be pursued with vigor. Currently, locals with an interest in theater must travel to surrounding counties to share their talents.

A contribution of \$4,500 is a mere pittance in relation to the potential benefits to schools and community from a quality project.

The school board should, however, study such quality before obligating funds.

House wastes no time so far

Time can tear down a building or destroy a pretty face, hours are precious so don't let them waste.

The House of Representatives has wasted little time during the 38 legislative days that have transpired thus far

CLARENCE NOLAND, JR.
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

There are several other vital programs we hope to in-

clude in rural Kentucky.

Once again, all the calls, letters and visits are greatly appreciated. The people's business is elevated to the height that it deserves when everyone participates. The toll-free legislature message line is 1-800-372-7181.

LETTERS TO THE Editor

Former sheriff responds to Sound Off

To the Editor,

To the person who is calling Sound Off concerning Loretta Lynn Willoughby's death:

I am glad to know you are interested in the death of Loretta Willoughby. You must have a great concern. I feel that if your concern is as deep as it appears, you will not have any problems or reservations about going before the Estill County Grand Jury and telling all that you know.

It appears from your sound off calls that you have evidence that could be used in the apprehension and conviction of the four people that you indicated were involved in her death. I'm sure you wouldn't care to give the Grand Jury or authorities the names of those that were involved in her death.

It appears that you want to give the local authorities a black eye, when you are the person they are looking for -- for the answers. You stated in one of your calls that you were carrying out your own investigation, and that you had eliminated several leads, that you have narrowed it down, that you were ready to break the case, and that it would do no good to give it to the police because they wouldn't do anything.

So what do you intend to do with the evidence? Are you going to make the arrest yourself, or are you just going to go on mouthing? I guess you realize that if you are withholding information, and if your identity is learned, you can be charged with obstructing justice. So, what do you intend to do?

The Irvine Police Department got the initial report of Loretta's disappearance, shortly after she was discovered missing. My office at the time, the Estill County Sheriff's Office, was later advised of the situation.

We did try to locate Loretta. We also put her name in the computer at the Kentucky State Police, with all the necessary information, as a missing person. The Irvine police and our office were working to locate Loretta. Then her body was found in town on the hill behind John Winn's garage.

We notified the Kentucky State Police, and they sent detectives in to work on the case. All three departments, the Irvine police, the sheriff's office and the state police ran all the leads that were available to them. At no time have I tried to cover up or protect

any person in this case.

I tried to find the person or persons who committed this crime against Loretta. As to my report on the Willoughby case, Bob Walker was as interested in solving it as was I. So, he took the report that was at the sheriff's office with him so that he could continue working on the case.

As for the new sheriff, I've been right here all the time. If he wanted to know anything, he knows where I am. It's not my place to go to him and tell him what to do. There would be no problem getting any information he would need from the Irvine police or the state police. I have always found them more than willing to share. After all, the report that I had was from the state police.

I encourage you to come forward and give the authorities the information you have. Perhaps the case could have been solved long ago if you had been willing to share your information.

You must know who did it or your conscience is bothering you. I hope you will have guts enough to come forward from behind the Sound Off column and let your name or names be known.

Montie Parks

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