

Editorial opinion

Governor due commendations for efforts to improve education in Ky.

Governor Martha Layne Collins and legislators are due commendations for their efforts to improve educational opportunities for Kentucky children. The public should accept the changes as a beginning and not as a solution to the problems.

It is generally accepted that money alone will not do the job, and the current session of the legislature has been acting accordingly, but even the changes made can stand a lot of future improvement.

Basically, it's the system that needs changing. The old political spoils system is still too prevalent at the grass roots level and reaches up through the State Superintendent's office. It also penetrates the colleges and universities.

The fact must be recognized that it is going to take some years to do this. Expecting too much of the current actions can be a big mistake that could be very harmful in the future.

The governor and others are claiming the present effort is the greatest effort for improvement in the system, but there are others who will argue with this.

Some will claim that changing from the school age census method to the average daily attendance method through the minimum foundation for distributing state aid to local schools was the most

**S.C.
VAN CURON**

progressive step. This put thousands of children in classrooms across that state that had been left out before. The incentive for politically motivated superintendents then was that he would have more money to spend elsewhere if children were not in the classrooms.

Kentucky is such a political state that it is going to take a lot of time to correct these ills. It goes back to the early days when the sheriff was a kingpin in the county for he was the chief law enforcement officer and tax collector. This gave him power.

Next, in line was the county judge, working in tandem with the sheriff created a powerful duo and it wasn't hard to draw in the county attorney.

The tax assessor also had a lot of power for he had a string on the pocketbooks of the property owners and he carried their favor.

It didn't take the school superintendent long to gain power in terms of years for in many counties he and the school boards controlled the largest single payroll. This combination formed the "courthouse" gang that had

so much political power but is now waning.

The Kentucky Education Association has not escaped the political arena. KEA celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1957. College presidents first controlled it even though there were not annual meetings in some of those early years.

Then, school superintendents gained control, until the principals took over and now the classroom teachers who finance it with their dues are in control, so to speak.

But the superintendent and school boards at the local level still are the single most dominant force in the state's education system and this is where politics is played the hardest because in some cases they are still the largest single employer in the county with the largest payroll and respected buying power.

All of the laws pertaining to schools and their operations have been influenced in one way or another by one education group or another. And don't overlook regulations to implement these laws are drafted through or influenced by the state superintendent's office which in turn is influenced by local superintendents.

These can't be eliminated, but the system can be improved which leaves a lot of work yet to be done.

Pigs make muddy creeks

The Reverend Dr. Bill Arnold of the Irvine United Methodist Church recently told a group of children a story about soul cleansing.

That hardly qualifies as a revelation, I'll admit, but it was an interesting story nonetheless, because of its universal appeal and usefulness.

Even that is not surprising if you've heard many of those analogies that ministers are so good at relating, especially this minister.

Sometimes I wonder if Dr. Arnold, or any of his contemporaries, might have access to a book filled with appropriate parallels, complete with a subject index. It might

**John
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be entitled "Short Stories for Sermons," or something on that order.

But if I know Bill, and I think I know him well enough to dispense with the formalities, he made this up.

There's no doubt that he's capable of such creative expression. I know imagination when I see it.

Since I consider the man a friend, I'm sure he won't mind my playful and public dissection of his tale.

In other words, I'm going to steal his material.

Anyway, back to the story. It seems there was a city boy who moved to the country.

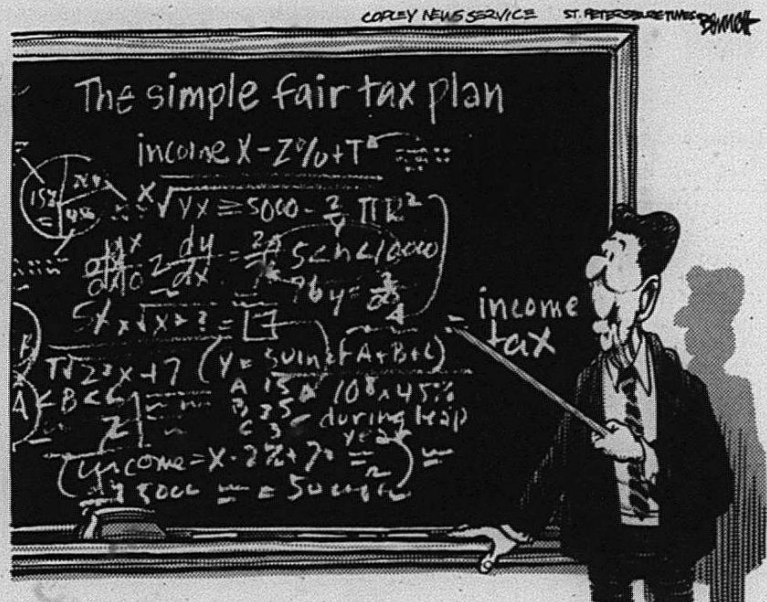
(I can relate to that, being from the city. But what worried me was the fact that I'd heard many a bad joke with just such a lead-in.)

This city boy bought a respectable parcel of land, and built a house near a creek.

He felt he could enjoy country life even more if he had a swimming pool, and set out to have one built.

How nice it would be, he thought, if he could fill the

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...And the beauty of it is, it's just as fair as it is simple...

To the Editor

Dear Editor,

In response to the letter by Agnes Moore in July 18 issue of the Citizen's Voice and Times, first of all, we are all troubled over the brutal murder of a young girl.

Criminal investigation work is a slow, drawn out process. It does not happen in real life as it does on television series.

Please consider the following: (1) The murder investigation is being conducted by the Kentucky State Police Department. They are responsible for the investigation and if they feel the need to brief other officers, they will do so; (2) The murder is a high priority to everyone, including myself as a citizen and the mayor of the City of Irvine, as well as the Irvine Police Department, the Estill County Sheriff's Department, the Kentucky State Police Department, and the citizens of Irvine and Estill County; (3) The murder occurred in Estill County, not the City of Irvine. If you had had your information correct, you would have found that our (the City of Irvine) Police Department assisted the Estill County Sheriff's Department and the Kentucky State Police Department in the said investigation.

Every bit and piece of information is passed onto the Kentucky State Police Department. All effort is being made to solve this murder. We all grieve for the murdered girl's family, and no stone is being left unturned in solving the murder; (4) The Irvine Police Department has worked a few "stake out" as you call it, in an effort to cut down on thefts. That is also a part of the officer's job; (5) Did it ever occur to you, Ms. Moore that the officer you spoke with may not have known what he was talking about, or that he may have or had a personal "ax" to grind against someone and possibly is not man enough to stand up. No police department is perfect and all police departments have problems at one time or another including the City of Irvine. Currently, all but two (2) of Irvine's police officers have been certified and trained through the Department of Training at Eastern Kentucky University. Every effort is being made to help those two (2) officers to become certified and trained through ECU as all of the other officers have been. It is not up to one (1) police officer to set the priorities. The priority of the Irvine Police Department is to serve and

protect the people of the City of Irvine.

If you or anyone else has something they would like to say about the Irvine Police Department or any other branch of our (the City of Irvine) government, or if you or anyone else has an idea of how we (the City of Irvine) can better serve our community and the people in it, please feel free to contact the City of Irvine Mayor's Office.

I checked the local records and could not find an Agnes Moore at Star Route or any other address in Estill County.

Leon Roberts, Mayor
City of Irvine, Kentucky

Dear Editor,

The article that appeared in the Citizen Voice and Times (To The Editor) on July 18 was not written by Agnes Moore at Sand Hill.

Thank You,
Agnes Moore
Route 2
Irvine, KY,

Editor's note: When someone submits a signed letter to the editor, we assume that the letter is from that person. We have no way of knowing if it isn't. We aren't omniscient.