Opinion

An appalling college basketball story

There was nothing either deplorable or surprising in the fact that Kevin Ross never became the big basketball star that Creighton University hoped he would be when it recruited him from a Kansas City high school. What was deplorable was that the 6-foot-9-inch center was admitted to Creighton — and that he played there for four years — without ever learning to read or write beyond the fifth-grade level. What was surprising — and heartening — was that the university eventually acknowledged that fact and is now paying to send him back for an elementary school education, and that Ross, himself, has the courage to sit in class with 10-year-olds to get that education.

Ross, of course, is hardly alone. There are hundreds of college athletes who can barely negotiate the basics of grammar school, let alone anything more difficult. At Creighton in his freshman year, Ross took courses in theory of track and field (grade satisfactory); theory of baseball (A); basketball squad participation (A); introductory ceramics (C); and theology (D). Athletic department secretaries, it is reported, typed his papers for him, though it's hard to imagine how many papers, and of what sort, most of those courses required. All over the country there are athletes taking similar programs and ending their college careers — sometimes graduating — in similar states of illiteracy.

Recently, in response to such states of illiteracy, the Los Angeles Board of Education imposed new regulations under which all students participating in extracurricular activities in that city's schools must maintain at least a C average. Further, the board is contemplating a proposal — still to be acted upon — to raise the graduation requirement from its present level of four D's and an F to something approaching a C average. The proponents of the graduation requirement reason that if athletes have to maintain a C average, it is only fair to impose a similar requirement on all students for graduation.

There is nothing magic in either idea. Some students — athletes and others — presumably will still get enough help from coaches, enjoy enough tolerance from teachers, and find enough Mickey Mouse courses to graduate without basic skills. Moreover, as some coaches and administrators point out, the requirements may drive out of school precisely those marginal students who, with the motivation of sports or simply with enough time, might eventually begin to develop some interest and do some academic work.

And yet there is hardly another logical course to follow. The schools have to make it clear that whatever the circumstances, academic standards come before athletic victories, whether in high school or in college.

Opponents of Los Angeles' proposed new graduation requirement point out that there is probably not another district in California that has such a requirement. But that's hardly an argument against upgrading formal academic standards. If anything, it indicates how badly such reforms are needed.

"Maybe we all share the blame for Kevin's failure," said Creighton University's athletic director. Indeed, we all do, not only for the failure of Kevin Ross but for the failures of all the others who progress through school and college without learning.

Newspaper good news!

Cable TV mogul Ted Turner and media analyst Lawrence Lichty obviously don't see eye to eye. Turner, whose Cable Network News is now watched by millions of Americans, has predicted the end of the newspaper as a major news force within a decade. Meanwhile, Mr. Lichty, a professor of communications at the University of Wisconsin, writes in the Wilson Quarterly that newspapers are still the top source of news and will be for years to come.

Mr. Lichty is one of delight, debunks the notion that Americans get most of their news from television. He claims the electronic medium has merely replaced the sensational "yellow press" of the early 20th century. His source of material is a 40-volume study by the Simmons Market Research Bureau, which according to Lichty, shows that the 50 million people who watch network news every night are highly fickle. Most regard the programs as merely another show.

Those claims are not likely to prevent a major restructuring of TV news or lull us into a false sense of security. Still, it's nice to see someone agrees with what we've been saying all along.

Letters from our readers

Liquor enslaves the innocent, says minister

To The Carlisle Mercury:

In his letter to the editor last week, Mr. David Kerns made reference to his prior residence in Lexington and Tampa, both wet cities, and both apparently prosperous, comparing them to Carlisle, which is dry, and which has "a very poor economy, very high tax rates, and little or no social life." Allow me to suggest that Mr. Kerns has unwittingly fallen prey to what is known in logic as the "fallacy of false cause." That is, he has associated the prosperity of Lexington and Tampa with liquor, and the less glamorous situation in Carlisle with the lack of it. Causation is a complex question, and may not so easily be proven.

It simply is not true that making liquor legal will lead to lower taxes, if this issue is isolated and forced to stand on its own merits. Alcoholic drinks carry so sales tax in Kentucky, and cities can receive no profit from its sale except license fees, which are quite small. For every dollar in revenue which government receives from the sale of alcohol, approximately six dollars of tax revenues will be spent to clean up the tragedies it leaves behind. No one benefits financially from alcohol except those who make it and those who sell it.

Perhaps those who think alcohol is a good thing have never seen the tragedies in human lives because of alcohol that I have seen in Atlanta, Charleston, Fort Worth, Memphis, Los Angeles and London. Perhaps they have never had the privilege of carrying drunken sailors back to a naval vessel overseas after they have made a laughingstock of our country. Perhaps they have not seen the revenues from alcohol in emergency rooms, intensive care units and morgues that I have seen.

Let the record be clear. I am not only opposed to the marketing of alcohol, legally or illegally in Carlisle and Nicholas County, but I am opposed to its existence anywhere. It is my conviction that to make, sell, buy or drink alcohol is physically, socially, economically and morally irresponsible. It may be that the enslavement of the innocent and the bargaining away of public health and moral vigor may continue in our land because of alcohol, but it won't happen by my vote!

Sincerely,
David C. Stancil

Praying for no alcohol

To The Carlisle Mercury:

If it takes the sale of alcohol in our town to improve it we don't need that kind of social and economical reform.

We don't need what they have in Lexington and Florida. We still want our town safe for our young children.

I never saw anyone under the influence of alcohol conduct themselves properly.

So let us all pray we don't have any more alcohol, controlled or not.

Thank you,
Rose Mattox

The Cloverleafs

To The Carlisle Mercury:

We would like to remind the people of Nicholas County about the Carnico Cloverleafs. They are a great group of young people.

We attended the square dance they sponsored for the Senior Citizens. It was the most wholesome and entertaining afternoon we have ever spent.

So a big pat on the back to all of them.

Sincerely,
Bobbi and Pete Reid

Notices the new Christmas decorations

To The Carlisle Mercury:

I want to express my appreciation for the Christmas decorations on Main Street. I noticed them as soon as I drove into town.

It really boosts the holiday spirit to see pretty decorations in our town again.

Rose Brady

Senior citizens express thanks

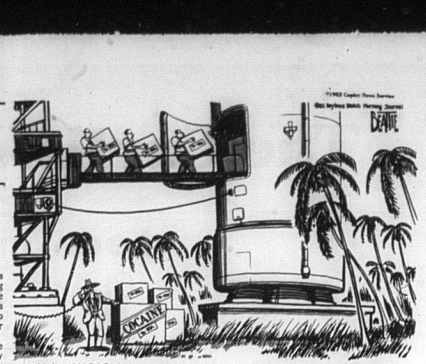
To The Carlisle Mercury:

We, the participants of the Nicholas County Senior Citizens, would like to express our appreciation to the Carnico Cloverleafs for the entertainment and potluck supper provided for us.

Nicholas Countians ought to be proud of this group. They treated each one of us with so much respect, by waiting on us and carrying our drinks.

These young people need to be commended for a job well done.

Sincerely,
Bettie Hunt
Burl Hunt
Edna Riddell
Christine Deelly
Jouett Springate
Reba Mahoney
Lucille Buntin
Ruth Stewart
Rebecca Stewart
Miranda Wilson
Geneva Pete Duppo



"Hello, NASA? Is it possible to have the shuttle bring cargo back from space?... Yes, we can afford to spend $20 million or so..."

Agree or not

Ho hum, it's election time again

by S.C. Van Curen

Two of the three announced Democratic candidates for governor have promised a respite for the voters until after the holidays, probably until February or March.

However former Human Resources Secretary Grady Stumbo's campaign chairman said Stumbo and his forces will be busy. Bennie Ray Bailey said, "We'll treat it like April and May," since he has Stumbo needs to gain more name recognition.

Meanwhile, the Republican camp is quiet with only one potential candidate having said some months back that he would make the race. State Representative Raymond Overstreet of Liberty has been in the hospital in Lexington and had not announced any plans early last week.

This promised respite shouldn't be considered as a relaxing of efforts by the two candidates for they have strong positions to keep their names continually in the news. Louisville Mayor Harvey Sloane is almost continually in the newspaper and on television in relation to his duties and can be expected to make a few appearances out in the state on some sort of business.

Then, Martha Lane Collins can continue her campaign at the taxpayers' expense from her office as lieutenant governor. This won't be any different from what her predecessors did. U.S. Senator Wendell Ford and former Gov. Julian Carroll both won the governorship from the lieutenant governor's office while Thelma Stovall will be busy. Bennie Ray Bailey said, "We'll treat it like April and May," since he has Stumbo needs to gain more name recognition.

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Other statewide offices and the competition will be just as keen although not as publicized as the top spot.

Nevertheless, this will not keep them from beating their drums although it may sound a low tempo to the voters.

In the lieutenant governor's race there are former Jefferson County Judge Todd Hollenback, Attorney General Stephen Beshear, George Atkins and Agriculture Commissioner Alben Barkley.

None of these is shy. Beshear may not have officially begun to spend campaign money, but he has been courting public recognition for months via the tube. His gimmick is telling the public about the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's office. He doesn't mention his race for lieutenant governor, but his picture and name are there for public recognition when the people go to the polls in May. All the while this is being paid for by the taxpayers.

It's an old game that has been used before and people over in the Education Department are wise to the gambit. Mary Alice McDonald, who is running for superintendent of public instruction with the blessing of the current incumbent Raymond Barber has her show on television to tell the public about a special service of this department.

Barber is running for state auditor and McDonald dutifully mentions his name as Superintendent of Education, keeping his name before the public at taxpayer expense.

If this election holds true to form, there will be charges before the May voting that state office equipment, supplies or employees on state time have worked for some of the candidates. And don't forget the WATTS line of Ma Bell.

Down Memory Lane

Nicholas County goes dry on Dec. 3

Thursday, Dec. 6, 1962

The winning float in the annual Christmas parade sponsored by the Carlisle-Nicholas County Chamber of Commerce was the entry of the Carlisle Christian Church and depicted Christmas under the "red" star, armed guards and Christmas in a free country. Second place was the Community Woman's Club entry with Miss Paula Guthrie reigning as the "Holly Queen."

Two foul shots by Jackie Fryman with eight seconds remaining in the game gave Nicholas County the sufficient margin to beat Montgomery County by a 69-68 margin Tuesday night. Fryman sacked a total 21 points.

Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, has opened a local service office at 12 East Eighth Street in Paris, FCIC District Director John Soper announced this week. It will serve Bourbon, Bath, Clark, Harrison, Montgomery and Nicholas counties.

BORN — To Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Ritchie Jr., a son, Barry Allen, Nov. 30. — To Mr. and Mrs. Robin Vaughn, a daughter, Dec. 3. — To Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. King, a son, Nov. 27 at St. Joseph's Hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Argo, Ewing, a daughter, Lisa Carol, Nov. 27.

DIED — Sherman Richard Fisher, 69, Thursday at home on the Dog Walk Pike. — Arthur Raymond Call, 65, Friday at Nicholas County Hospital. — Jack J. Thomas, 79, Friday at the Nicholas County Hospital. — Mrs. Frances Atkinson Collinsworth, 51, wife of Virgil Collinsworth of Lexington, Friday at the home of her mother-in-law in Salyersville.

Thursday, Dec. 3, 1942

Nicholas County will go "dry" in fact next week, as the sale of legal whiskey and beer here will stop at midnight Friday, Dec. 11. The closing will be the result of a local option election held in Nicholas County in October, when the dry forces were the winner by a plurality of about 500 votes.

Housewives are asked to save their tin cans for the duration. When emptying the can, wash, remove paper, cut both ends out and mash the can. The City truck will pick them up on Tuesday each week if they are placed by the garbage can.

BORN — To County Circuit Clerk Lacy Barnett and Mrs. Barnett, a son, Saturday at Johnson Memorial Hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. George Bowles, a daughter, Sunday at Johnson Memorial Hospital. — Mr. and Mrs. Millard Deckard are receiving sympathy over the loss of their baby son born Saturday at Johnson Memorial Hospital.

MARRIED — Mary Esther Richards and Lt. William Paul Struthers, Nov. 12 in Brookline, PA.

DIED — Miss Mary Lou Snapp, 67, Friday at the home of her brother, Ora Snapp near Milford. — Rolla Edward Hammonds, 56, Nov. 26 in Hillsboro, Ohio. — Gilbert Orville Gaunce, 79, Tuesday at home near Headquarters. — Mrs. Ed George, 63, Tuesday at home on the Pleasant Springs Road.

Thursday, Nov. 7, 1922

A rumor has been current here for the past several days that the Kentucky Utilities Company is on a deal for the purchase the plant at the Carlisle Electric Light and Power Company. Officials of the local company would not comment on the matter. A representative of the utilities company has been here this week making a survey of the town.

E.D. Goodwin has leased the room in the Kimbrough Hotel building, formerly occupied by Joe Gordon, and will open a restaurant soon.

BORN — To Mr. and Mrs. John Mathias, a daughter, Monday, Dec. 5. — To Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Black of Frankfort, a son, Nov. 29 at St. Joseph's Hospital in Lexington.

MARRIED — Miss Katherine Williams and Guy Dwelly, both of this county, last Friday. — Miss Lottie B. Clavell and William Goebel Cassity, last Thursday by the Rev. Bela Metcalf.

DIED — George Sambammer, son-in-law of B.F. Snelling of this city, Saturday at home in Cincinnati. — Riley McFarland, 49, Nov. 28 at his home in Illinois.

The Carlisle Mercury
(USPS 090-820)
Established 1867
Phone (606) 289-2464
Published every Thursday at 734 Locust Street, Carlisle, Nicholas County, Kentucky 40311. Postage paid at Carlisle.

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Op-Ed page

Win, place or show . . . election betting is the only way to go

The talk at a coffee break turned to the election. "I wonder what the turnout will be?" mused one fellow. "Twenty percent of the registered voters, I'd guess," was the answer. "Twenty-five? They say that more people will be watching old movies on teevee than the elections returns."

"Isn't there any way," asked another, "to encourage people to participate in elections?"

"There's one way," said still another. "Legalize election betting."

"Say what?"

"Establish odds on all races," he explained. "Print 'em in the papers, like the betting line on football, basketball, baseball and horse races. Put in betting windows at supermarkets, banks, the polling places. If a guy's got $2 on a candidate's nose, you better believe he's going to vote for him."

"Aw, come off it," said one of the others.

"Election night would get the same sort of teevee ratings the Super Bowl gets, and then some," he insisted. "Picture it—the teevee announcers are seated in front of a big tote board. One says: 'We now project Fogbottom, the favorite, winning in the magistrate race, paying $2.20.' Another will chime in: 'And here's another projection—Guttersnipe, the long shot, is the winner for sewer commissioner and he'll pay '14.40!'

His companions were unconvinced.

"There'd be a daily double," he continued. "There'd be tout sheets to stimulate voter interest. There are all sorts of possibilities. And the state would get a percentage of the pot to pay the costs of the election so it wouldn't cost the taxpayers a cent.

"The public would never hold still for election-betting," said one of his companions.

"Does the public object to someone's contributing to a candidate's campaign?"

"No."

"Well, what's that, if it isn't betting? You show me a guy the morning after the election who contributed $5,000 to a loser's campaign and he'll look and sound just like the guy on the morning after the seventh game of the World Series who bet a bundle on Milwaukee."

"Maybe so," said the companion, "but I still say the public would never buy it."

"I know," said the guy who favored betting, sighing. "It would have to be voted in. And, without legalized betting, you'd never get the kind of turnout to put it over."

— RM —

Don't you ever believe it!:

- Don't worry about it, pay me back when you feel like it.
- You haven't changed a bit.
- My ex-wife and I are better friends now than when we were married.
- Wanting doesn't make any difference to me, I just play golf for the exercise.
- I don't agree with you but I respect your opinion.
- When I was your age I worked for everything I got.
- Sure it's a male cat. I can always tell.
- We don't need a plumber. I can fix it myself.
- Mother says she'll only stay for a few days.
- That's not poison ivy. I know poison ivy when I see it.
- You don't have to bring the boat closer to the dock—I can jump it from here.

— RM —

Know what a maxim is? It is a pithy sentence that states an obvious truth and is supposed to provide guidance in everyday situations. "Haste makes waste"; that's a maxim. "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points"; that is another.

Less familiar, perhaps, are minims—possible because they were only recently invented by a fellow named Tom Weller. "Minims," according to Weller, "sound the same as maxims but they express a trust so specific, of so obvious, as to be completely useless. Stupid? You bet. Weller has just published a little book containing

some of his better minims. They sound very profound until you think about them for a moment. Here are some samples:

- Two heads are more numerous than one.
- Man is the only animal that wears bow ties.
- The early worm gets eaten by a bird.
- If it's Monday, today is the first day of the rest of your week.
- Time heals all non-fatal wounds.
- The bigger they are, the harder they hit.
- You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time and that should be sufficient for most purposes.
- An apple a day is 365 apples a year.
- Home is where the house is.
- You'll never get rich with a kind word and a gun than with a kind word alone.
- There are more things on heaven and earth than there are anyplace else.
- A bird in hand is probably dead.

— RM —

Weathermen have to have a sense of humor. They need it because they are about the funniest fellows around. But to give their profession a little respectability, they have come up with a glossary of terms they use and it is nice to understand what they are talking about.

Here is the meaning of some of those terms:

Meteorologist: a weather person who attended school past the eighth grade.

Isobar: Tavern where the bartender refuses to turn up the thermostat.

Isotherm: Tavern where the bartender turns up the thermostat and nothing happens.

Frontal high: Bib overalls.

Frontal low: Evening gown.

Occluded front: teaser.

Precipitation: That which happens before clpitation.

— RM —

A West Virginia woman reports that her family recently visited the Amish country around Lancaster, Pa., and one of their stops included a tour of a restored Amish farm and home.

"In our particular tour group," she said, "were families from such places as Wisconsin, North Carolina and Minnesota. As the tour guide led us through the house, she carefully took the time to explain each of the items in the rooms as well as telling us about Amish customs and lifestyle.

"One family of four was so ctiffied that the two teenage children were practically thunderstruck at such marvels as a non-electric ice box, a butter churn, a cordless iron, a rug beater and other such, to them, prehistoric artifacts.

"The guide led the group into the first upstairs bedroom. She spent 10 minutes or so talking about the feather bed, the chests and the Amish clothes hanging in the closet. One of the city teenagers had spied something strange. "What,' he wanted to know, 'is that pot with the flowers on it doing under the bed?'

"There was some giggling from the knowledgeable in the group. The guide, who had doubtless been asked the question before, identified the item as a chamber pot and, as delicately as possible, explained its use.

"As we followed the guide into the next room," said the woman, "I saw the boy lean toward his sister, and with a puzzled look on his face, I heard him say, 'Boy, that took some real talent—crawling under the bed at night and using that thing!'"

One woman in the group asked the tour guide "What are those bonnets that the Amish women wear?"

"They're called prayer caps," explained the guide.

"But they wear them all the time," the lady said.

"Of course," smiled the guide, "They never know exactly when they'll want to pray and they want to be ready."

Onward, upward.

An editor's random thoughts...

by Warren R. Fisher Sr.
January 14, 1926

SNOW

'A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him.
And it was nothing more.'

So, alas! to the most of us was the fall of the "silent rain," the feathery crystals of which drifted noiselessly down all of last Friday, to spread a fleecy quilt of eiderdown over the chilled body of the sleeping earth. To those of us who are no longer young in heart it came unwelcome to clean and more coal to buy, wet feet, doctor's bills and furnace-stoking — this snow — inevitable precursor of slushy pavements and muddy streets. Alas for the inexorable march of the years!

For there was a day, when a snowfall on Friday would have brought a thrill wonderful, a thrill inexplicable, as one watched with eager eyes the feathery flakes drifting past the windows of a droning 'school room. "Hurrah!" cries the school boy, "it snows!" And thrice lustily the shout, when it snows on a Friday.

* * *

"Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years!
I am so weary of toil and of tears,
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain!
Take them and give me my childhood again!"

Take us back to that little lad with his first sled and his first goal cuisting dropped the rope and skated on — and suddenly a little lad faced the fact that he was alone and far, far from home, in a world grown suddenly cold and still and fearsome.

Something was acting queerly in his throat, as he labored up the bank to the roadway. A star popped out and winked at him encouragingly, but it was somehow necessary to apply a none-too-clean fist to an eye before he could return the wink. One had to swallow mighty fast, when troubled with this strange malady in the throat, and the swallows were merging into gulps, when there came the jingle of sleighbells!

Never shall the young explorer forget the whimsical smile on the ruddy face of the man who drove, as he proffered his services in this fearful dilemma, not the safe feel of his great fur coat, as he tucked him into the front seat of an old "family sleigh," already comfortably filled. "Kinda lost, aren't you son?" he asked. "Yessir," said the young explorer. "Like to go home?" Again the strange throat malady, but another "yessir" slipped past. The man chuckled and then the mother spoke from the back seat, as mothers have spoken always since creation's dawn. "Bless your little heart," she said, "of course we'll take you home."

And with her words the throat stopped misbehaving and one could wink back bravely at the evening star. And there was straw in the bottom of the sleigh and great fur robes to cover

• See Random Thoughts, page 4

In this corner.....

Battleships are about to appear

by Jim Butler Wanke

The program approved by President Reagan to bring back four battleships from mothballs will shortly become highly visible.

The first battleship or "BB" as the U.S. Navy calls it, is the "New Jersey" which underwent overhaul on the west coast and is currently on sea trials.

Word from the New Jersey is that the 16 inch guns still work well and can hurl an 18 inch projectile over the horizon, a distance of 35 miles. But what still worries the Navy is the effect firing those big guns might have on the shipboard's newly sophisticated electronics. When one of the 16 inchers fires, the resultant shock to the ship moves the "BB" about 10 inches. So far, reports from the ship say that all is well.

President Reagan is expected to be present at the recommissioning of the New Jersey, which is now expected to be moved up to either January or February of 1983.

The Iowa

In the meantime, the next battleship, the "Iowa" has been taken from the Philadelphia Navy Yard and towed down to the refit yards at Pascagoula, Mississippi where it is undergoing the changes necessary to go to sea again. The Iowa is expected to come out of the yards there in January of 1984 for sea trials.

Two other battleships lay in wait, including the Missouri, on which the Japanese surrender was taken by General MacArthur in 1945. These last two battleships will have to undergo serious changes, since they were not brought up to date for the war in Vietnam like the New Jersey and the Iowa.

The point of all this is firepower. And we can't think of a better place where this could possibly be demonstrated than the Middle East. Think of the effect of an American battleship lying offshore a middle east country, with the capability to lob a shell from 35 miles away that could obliterate half a city block. It certainly would make someone think twice.

Survivability

In addition, the survivability of the battleship is great. She has so many watertight compartments that the possibility of her sinking is quite remote. It is theorized a battleship could take six or eight Exocet missiles like the one that did in the British destroyer at the Falklands and still be afloat and 85 percent battle capable.

We hope that this theory will not have to be tested, that these great monster ships will never go to war, but it is the unfortunate way to get some parity with the burgeoning Russian fleet. They are building ships like mad over there, even though they don't have the crews to man them. But the Russians are smart. They know it takes three years just to lay keels, so they're stacking them up in port.

Peacetime role

The battleship peacetime role will be one of showing the American might in foreign ports. You can bet the New Jersey in the Pacific and the Iowa in the Atlantic will have a crew grown weary of inspections in whites at the end of their first cruise.

But they are such proud ships that old sailors in their late 40's and 50's who were on the New Jersey and the Iowa during the Korean War are coming back out of civilian life just to take another two years aboard. They are a class all their own...the biggest and the most powerful ships in the world. We can be thankful they are ours.

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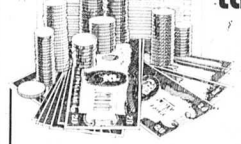

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