PAGE, SAGE Set Joint Meeting

Iredell County parents and students with special interests in educational services for gifted children will meet in Statesville Sept. 22. The organizational session will begin at 7 p.m. in the Salisbury Road administrative annex of the county school system.

Parents for the Advancement of Gifted Education and Students for the Advancement of Gifted Education will meet jointly to discuss activities and programs during this school year. PAGE was established several years ago, but this is the first year for SAGE.

Both organizations exist to serve education in the county, and, specifically, to encourage and nurture educational services for academically gifted students. Parents, students and schools in the county's three systems participate, as do several private schools.

Caroline McConochie is president of PAGE. In announcing this month's meeting she said the public is welcome to attend, and that $5 family PAGE memberships are encouraged.

McConochie said she invites persons who wish more information about PAGE and SAGE to contact her. She lives at 241 Nottingham Circle in Statesville.

PHOTO FILE

By Catherine Stearns

Now is the time to start thinking of your holiday photos for cards and gifts. A pictorial greeting lasts longer and is much more enjoyable for family and friends.

The fall, in all its brilliant colors, makes the ideal setting for group portraits. Take the photo outdoors so that you can make the most of the color contrasts. Of course, a knowledgeable friend can take the shot if he/she has adequate equipment and a good eye. A professional photographer is also a consideration. It will cost a bit more, but the results will surely be worth it.

When arranging a group portrait, use the difference in people's heights to a setting of several levels to get an arrangement in which everyone's face can be seen clearly. Position people so that their heads form an uneven, staggered pattern. If you're dealing with several generations, you might want to keep them together; although you know who everybody is, friends you've lost touch with may not understand who belongs to whom.

Everyone should wear colors that complement each other but with enough contrast to make the photo visually striking. Lighting should be either front angle or side lighting, but position your group in the shade so that nobody squints. When a scene, such as a group portrait, is complex, front lighting brings out every detail and color. Side lighting, on the other hand, brings out more texture and contrast. Be very careful no to include too many shadows that might obscure faces. It's difficult getting everything and everybody just right. But surely one out of a roll of film will be the perfect family portrait that will delight those on your holiday gift list.

Constitution Bicentennial Gift To Mooresville

Last week, Mooresville received a special gift from the Iredell County Bicentennial of the Constitution Commission. The commission, formed to coordinate Iredell County's recognition of the 200th birthday of the U.S. Constitution, presented a limited-edition print depicting the signing of the Constitution. Charlie Benbow, left, and Judy Lazenby, co-chairmen of Iredell County's commission, made the presentation to members of the Mooresville Town Board during the board's monthly meeting. The highlight of the bicentennial celebration will be Sept. 17 when Mooresville and Iredell County will join communities across the country in celebrating the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. Several activities are planned in Mooresville and Statesville. Mooresville's events will include special church services and a 7:30 p.m. "Constitution Concert" at Roland R. Morgan Auditorium. The concert is being sponsored by the Mooresville Civitan Club. At 4 p.m., church bells in Mooresville, Iredell County and throughout the nation will ring for 200 seconds in honor of the Constitution's birthday. A 200-second moment of silence to reflect on what the Constitution means will follow.

Denver Methodist Plans Homecoming

Members of Denver United Methodist Church will take a giant step backward — in time — Sunday.

It will be the first annual homecoming celebration for the 92-year-old church that was organized in 1895.

The pastor of the church, the Rev. Eddie Black, will start the day's activities by riding a horse to church, arriving there about 10:30 a.m.

"We'll get started on time if the horse is agreeable," says Mr. Black. "Otherside, it may be a few minutes after 10:30. It's been a long time since I've been on a horse."

Mr. Black will be wearing the garb of a Methodist Circuit Riding Preacher of the 1890's, including a black hat, cape, boots and other articles of clothing from that period of time.

The old time days theme will center around the 11 a.m. worship service, and a sermon by the Rev. W.A. Rock, entitled "Little Sheep Don't Wander." His sermon will be based on scripture taken from Matthew 8:9-13.

Mr. Rock, now retired and living in the Kannapolis area, was pastor of Denver United Methodist Church in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

Other former ministers of the church have been invited to attend the homecoming as special guests, and invitations have also been set to members and former members who have moved away.

Special arrangements of flowers will decorate the sanctuary in memory of the founders and deceased members of the church.

Homecoming chairperson Dot Sherrill said: *"We hope a large number of folks will come and enjoy this special day with us."*

Following the morning worship service, there will be a picnic dinner, featuring roast beef, country ham, fried chicken, green beans, meat casseroles, squash, okra, potato salad, home-grown tomatoes, pies, cakes and cookies.

The afternoon program will get underway at 1:30 o'clock.

The church's choir will present a program of special music under the direction of Neil Underwood.

The church's children's choir will present a musical pageant in the fellowship building and there will be several quartets, as well as duets, trios and soloists.

A room will be set aside for memorabilia from the turn of the century. Featured will be an old time "mourner's bench," home-made quilts, butter molds, dough bowls of wood, and flat irons — all handed down from generation to generation.

Pictures of the early church and its members will also be on display.

The public is cordially invited to attend the activities of the day.

Morrow Clan Plans Reunion

The Morrow reunion, celebrating the 247th birthday of John Morrow, who settled on a portion of land (640 acres) in Maybewtown in 1740, will be held Sunday, Sept. 20, at the War Memorial, 220 Maple St., Mooresville.

Dinner will be served, picnic-style, at 1 p.m.

All members of the clan and friends are invited to attend. Each family is requested to bring a well-filled basket of food.

Robert Morrow of North Wilkesboro is president of the clan, while Mrs. Jeannette Morrow Smith of Route 5, Clover, S.C., is secretary and treasurer. Jay Morrow of Statesville is the clan's historian.

Brannon Receives BS Degree

Terry S. Brannon was among some 200 summer graduates at *Winthrop College at Rock Hill, S.C.*

He received a bachelor of science degree in business administration.

Brannon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brannon of 285 Heritage Place, Mooresville, is a graduate of Mooresville Senior High School. Presently, he is employed in Charlotte by The Charlotte Observer.

The 200 graduates completed work toward undergraduate and graduate degrees during the summer sessions at Winthrop College.

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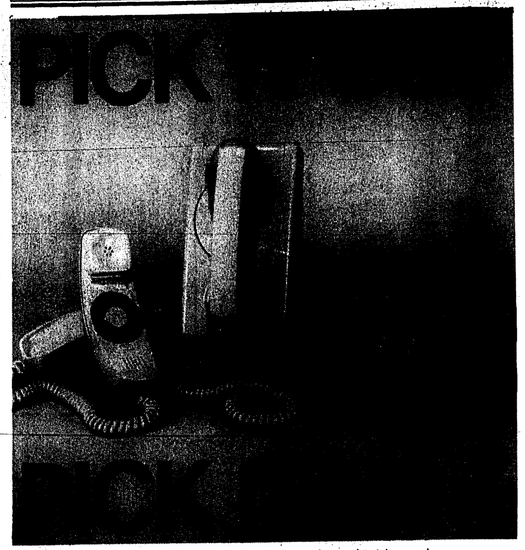

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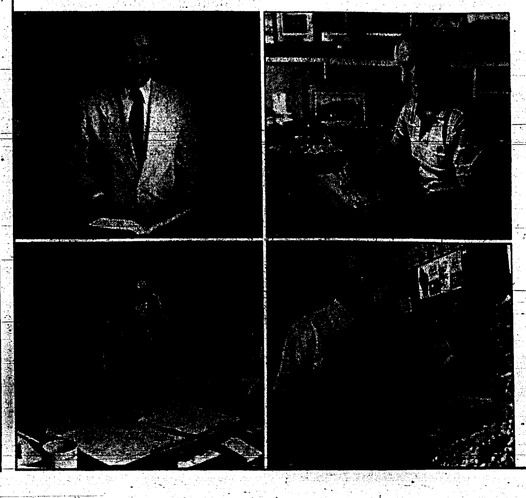

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The National Guard: Much More Than Just An Armory

Two weeks ago, Carl Malz, plant manager of Sterling Engineered Products in Mooresville, took part in a four-day tour of Army National Guard facilities in Ecuador. Malz was part of a VIP group from Western Carolina selected to take part in the program, which was designed to give civilians a first-hand look at National Guard activities in the Southern Command Theatre. Malz submitted this report about his unusual adventure.

Racing through the historic traffic-clogged streets of Quito, Ecuador in a taxi is a memorably unsettling experience. Like all vehicles in this busy capital, our cab possessed a noteworthy horn which was tested on the average of every 17 seconds. The young driver did not speak a word of English nor I a word of Spanish. Halfway through the trip, I became convinced that because we could not communicate, our destination was uncertain.

Quito cabbies enjoy their own brand of the game of road "chicken" and seem to thrive on delivering a passenger who has developed an adequate state of pale breathlessness. Apparently, the strategy is to produce passengers so thankful to leave the vehicle that they forget to ask for their change. I later learned that most impatient Americans will get into a Quito cab and say "pronto, pronto" are not really in a hurry but rather are suspicious over cab charges. We apparently feel that if we indicate an emergency, the driver will take the most direct route and not run the meter up. Over the years cabbies have been handsomely rewarded for exhibiting great skill in fast delivery, so the practice has become standard performance.

The problem was that I was not in a hurry, and valued seeing my wife Diane again much more than experiencing an exhibit of stock car thrills in the middle of this two-mile-high city of one million people. What a difference effective communication can make! If only I could have understood.

COMMUNICATION

Communications was what this whole trip was all about. Gen. Charles Scott, Col. David Jennette, and Maj. Baron Hignite, all of the North Carolina National Guard, were joined by Gen. John Matthews and Col. Tom Brewer of the Utah National Guard in a trip to observe and communicate the progress of their troops in the U.S. Southern Command Theatre.

We were guided through the South American operations by Col. James O'Keefe, who understood the language and geography thoroughly. I was invited along with 14 other civilians (mainly state senators, representatives and news media) and five other Guard officers to receive an orientation on our military involvement in the "Abriendo Rutas" exercise. The media people were to report about our involvement in the area. The Mooresville National Guard is a part of the 505th Engineer Battalion which is heavily involved in the exercises when they are not saluting all the visiting dignitaries or posing for pictures.

Prior to this trip my knowledge of the National Guard consisted of a couple of field trips to the inside of the Mooresville armory building and routine communications with our Sterling Engineered Products employees who serve in the local unit. This trip would provide me a look beyond the agenda items and prepared speeches into the real heart of the operation. I was determined to write exactly what I saw. However, much of the information which we received could not be confirmed because of the press of time.

THE JOURNEY

The trip began with a meeting at the Charlotte Air National Guard building at 0500 hours. (That's army talk for 5 a.m.) We were greeted by Col. William Bundy and other Guardsmen who had recognized our need for coffee and doughnuts. The most striking first impression was the cleanliness of the facilities. The place was not just clean, it sparkled. Desks were in order, files organized. The memos on the bulletin board were all current. This place was well organized and cared for. Any visitor would quickly pick up a clear message of professionalism and pride.

The second most prominent impression was the strong fellowship and commitment that existed between Guardsmen and officers. Morale was high even at our unhumorous meeting time. Guardsmen and officers were dressed in freshly pleated uniforms, anchored by glossy shoes and their pride was evident everywhere. There was a high degree of organization and timely information flow. The trip handouts were complete, instructions were specific and as I was later to confirm, all scheduled events happened on time. There was a clear plan and the plan was to be implemented as planned...no excuses!

By 6 a.m., we were in the air and on our way to Raleigh to rendezvous with the other assault team members. We boarded an Air Force Boeing 747 used by the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado to train navigators. Needling our way west into the Gulf of Mexico to avoid Cuban air space and then east to avoid Mexican air space, we landed at Howard Air Force Base in Panama. Commanding General Loeffke provided a detailed strategic perspective of U.S. policy in Central America. Loeffke is impressive. Here is a man who has accumulated two doctorate degrees, manages vast responsibilities across our Southern Theatre and yet finds time to run every day with various groups of his troops. Each run ends with the participants holding hands in a circle while being led by the general singing "God Bless the U.S.A."

NEW PERSPECTIVE

It is difficult to find something good in print about what the United States is doing in our own back yard, because that sort of news does not fill much space on the national wire services. Associated Press Bureau Chief Robert Scott spoke from first hand experience during the trip, when he mentioned to me...that tearing down and finding fault with what the United States is attempting to do in South America guarantees a reporter print exposure. Scott reminded me that we seem to have forgotten that in 1962, we had a three-way agreement with Cuba and the Soviet Union. The agreement was that the Russians would take the missiles out of Cuba, we would not attack Cuba and Cuba would not undermine the governments of the rest of Latin America. The first two things happened. The third didn't.

Today Cuba and the Sandinistas have successfully turned Nicaragua into a mirror-image of Castro Marxism. Moscow is providing more than a billion dollars a year in military and economic aid to float the regime of Ortega's Sandinista commandantes.

Perhaps the most interesting point of the debriefing was the fact that Latin Americans do not want any U.S. military in the area to do the fighting for them. They want to fight their own battles and they have succeeded in overthrowing the many brutal military dictatorships that have prevailed. Costa Rica was the only Central American democracy in 1979. Today Nicaragua is the only military dictatorship left. Nicaragua is working overtime to undermine the fledging democratic government of their neighbors.

IGNORED NEIGHBORS

All of South America can best be described as a market. It's a market that U.S. marketing has failed in. Billboards everywhere advertise Japanese brands. I did not see one advertisement for any American made products. Everywhere our team visited, it was clear that the Japanese totally dominate the market for automobiles.

We make van interior components in our Mooresville plant, but I never saw one U.S. van in any of the three countries we visited. By contrast, all the vans used at the U.S. bases we visited were Japanese. It was the arrogant indifference 15 years ago of U.S. auto makers towards the needs of the third world markets for high quality, low-cost transportation that allowed the Toyotas and related family members to dominate South America's transportation industry. By the time we realized that third world market needs are not that different from our own needs, it was too late. Now, we have probably indefinitely lost our ability to successfully compete.

The growth of democracy in our own back yard is a market we cannot afford to ignore. We cannot take an indifferent attitude toward the heavy Cuban initiatives in the area. The growth of democracy is what gives hope in Central America today and U.S. policy to support the development of genuine democracy is what is most needed. The strategic importance of the entire area can be easily illustrated:

—Two-thirds of the oil imported by the United States, as well as many strategic minerals, pass through the Panama Canal.

—The oil refining and tanker port facilities in the region are among the largest in the world.

—The Panama Canal and pipeline transport 45 percent of Alaskan crude oil to those refineries.

—U.S. Gulf ports and Caribbean shipping lanes handle almost half of all foreign trade tonnage entering and leaving the United States.

Clearly our presence in Central America is important. The entire area is a pad of power projection. Effective communication in all its forms is so important.

THE MESSAGE

One of the most effective messages of support for these young democracies that we can deliver is that of the compassionate humanitarian. The North Carolina National Guard is in Ecuador to send just such a message. There are 100,000 people trapped by the results of a earthquake in March of this year. In addition, the line that transports oil to the shipping ports has been ruptured and all Ecuadorian oil shipments have been stopped. This heavy blow by Mother Nature comes on the heels of a major volcanic eruption that killed 1,700 people and 3,000 cattle.

Mooresville's Company A of the 505th Engineer Battalion, along with other Guard units from throughout the United States, are sending a message to Ecuador. Our humanitarian efforts are not limited to the confines of Fort Bragg. There will be a minimum of 856 Guardsmen from North Carolina helping to rebuild extremely important roads. As we headed toward the base camp just outside Archidona, I had to reflect on how little most of us know about the military and specifically the work of the guard units.

ECUADOR

Blackhawk helicopters with their unmistakable jet-powered fwop-fwop carried us over some of the most dense and remote jungle anywhere in the world. This is a sloping entrance to the Amazon Basin and the bushes contain every type of dangerous creation you can imagine.

We were told that this is the most poisonous snake-infested area in the world and that natives have the highest death rate known from snake bites. On this issue, we did not challenge the information by asking for a first-hand look.

As the country name implies, the area is at the equator, which means heat — steaming heat. During a dry week, it rains every day and during a wet week, it rains twice a day. The humidity will wit your starch or your resolve with equal force. However, because of the elevation, the evenings are very cool, mostly high 60's and low 70's.

It's an extremely beautiful area with most people still living a basic life of struggling for existence. The basic home still consists of the one room bamboo hut, a tired looking wife and a yard full of beautiful children. These kids are happy with nothing. Forty percent of them die before their teenage years of diseases unknown in the U.S. Polio, chicken pox, stomach parasites and ameobic diseases are unseen enemy. Inspite of their difficult life, these kids manage to be quick to smile and so bright-eyed that it's hard not to stare in admiration of their beauty.

GOOD RELATIONS

The troops are getting along very well with the natives, who are setting up their retirements by selling home made tourist goods to the GIs. These are mature, married soldiers and they are excellent ambassadors of everything that is good about Americans. Local business outlets have become very modern since the Americans came. The building may only be a bamboo hut with no windows, but it does have a gasoline generator and a refrigerator. What's for sale in the fridge, you may ask? Why Coca-Cola, of course, in glass bottles. They also have Oreo cookies. So, I bought a Coke and some cookies. Rarely has anything tasted so good. I was reminded here in the middle of the jungle that Coke always did taste much better in the glass bottles.

Security, fuel and all building materials are provided by the Ecuadorian army. Soldiers with automatic weapons and machine guns are everywhere. The sight of all this loaded firepower so close gives one a very edgy feeling. This is still wild country, with the violently savage Waorani Indians still out on patrol. We did not go looking for them.

Life has not changed here for hundreds of years. Within the last several months, two missionaries were killed by Waorani blow guns.

Life is changing now. Roads, pipelines, powerlines and timber companies are all leaving their obvious marks. Our generation may be one of the last to see this unspoiled raw way of life.

THE MISSION

There are no airfields close by because the ground would not support the weight. Because of the endless rain, the soil has spoiled to where it smells like a garbage dump. The engineers are unable to build the roads in the traditional manner with a stone base. The soil sinks the stones like quick sand and the road returns to mud.

The only way the road will last is by laying a base of full length split logs like a ribbon of corduroy and then building up the stone base on the logs. It is very slow and difficult work.

Without the logs bulldozers try to escape the heat by sinking into the soft earth. The men work in two six-hour shifts starting at 6 a.m. and at noon. It took 6,000 loads of stone just to get a good foundation layer for the base camp.

VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

The training value of all this seems ample until one begins to talk to the logistics people, the water is undrinkable, so if the material planners do not send enough chlorine and purification chemicals, 900 men are going to get sick.

This is not North Carolina, where if you forget something you can hop into your topless jeep and visit the local Seven-Eleven. The planning must be complete and the implementation perfect because the chance for spoilage loss if very high. Suddenly, the work of the schedulers and support people is elevated in this environment to its proper place of honor. We are learning first hand that keeping equipment operating in North Carolina is entirely different from keeping it running in a jungle.

The base camp consists of rows upon rows of brownish green tents laid out in very fashionable military style. The bathroom consists of a row of one hole outhouses with a catch bucket. Once a day, the buckets are removed and, with the help of diesel fuel, the entire concoction is set on fire. While we were eating lunch, some untimely private, who was unaware of the V.I.P. visitors, decided to set four buckets on fire. The experience was unforgettable.

The lunch was called a "Meal Equivalent" which was most kind. It came in a little black plastic bag about the size of a transistor radio and tasted worse than it looked. The freeze dried potatoes in the package tasted like cotton balls and they sucked all the moisture out of my mouth such that I could not swallow.

However, there was one saving part of the meal. SFC Joseph Burrell of the Mooresville Guard unit baked some fantastic homemade Carolina biscuits and some of the best pastry turnovers I have ever had. After seeing and tasting Joe's work, I abandoned the plastic bag and enjoyed a sweet lunch from Burrell's bakery. *Joe is responsible for all the* highly complimented food services except those pitiful little black plastic bags.

LOCAL TIES

Many of Mooresville's Guardsmen remained on duty at the site. Maintenance is a major part of Company A's duties and maintenance in this weather is a real challenge. If a vehicle gets off the road and breaks down, the challenge is to fix it where it sets, rain or shine, in knee deep mud.

I must say that when it came time to reboard the Blackhawks for the fwop-fwop trip back to Quito, I honestly hated to leave. This place is another world but it's a beautiful world. Children are the same everywhere and they all ran out of their huts to watch the black bird fly.

As each of them waved, they communicated a silent thank-you the language barrier could not obstruct. I could not help but feel great pride for what our troops are accomplishing under less than ideal conditions.

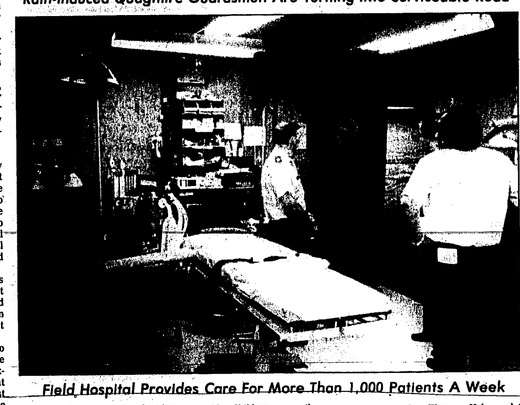
During the entire trip, I took time to privately discuss with the guardsmen their feelings about the operation. There was not one complaint. They have a job to do and they are doing it. We are a blessed community and part of our blessings are in the Ecuadorian jungle, helping people who have no way of helping themselves.

Among our men are 1st Sgt. Max Skinner, 1st Lt. Stuart Thomas, Platoon Sgt. Thomas Hoke and 35 other company members. We are building 11 bridges and opening a much needed road.

In Honduras, we are operating a field hospital where seemingly tireless doctors and nurses see over 1,400 sick people per weekly field trip into the jungle. These GI doctors got really excited about the possibility of receiving polio serum from Rotary's Polio plus program. This is anotherlocal tie, because the Mooresville Rotary Clubs are helping to raise $350 million to rid the world of polio.

The compassionate GI is well remembered by history. History is repeating itself today in the dense jungles of Ecuador and Honduras. No communication problem here. We have a lot to be proud of!

Rain-Induced Quagmire Guardsmen Are Turning Into Serviceable Road



Field Hospital Provides Care For More Than 1,000 Patients A Week

Malz, Right, With Fellow VIP Rep. Coy Privette, Left, And Appetite-Saver Burrell From The Mooresville Unit

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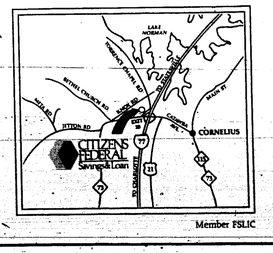

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