

It would also be fruitless to even try to count the number of “single fingered salutes” that I have received as a result of a short toot of my horn to alert the seemingly oblivious cyclists to my presence behind them.

(Nice Manners. Try taking the earbuds out of your ears if you cannot hear me coming!)

I am also astounded at how many times this occurs going into or leaving a blind corner. The number of times I have come around a curve (there are a few in this part of the state!) to be presented with a group of cyclists blocking my lane, or blocking the oncoming lane heading towards me, always stuns me. Is there no awareness at all of the danger that they are putting themselves in, and those they are sharing the road with, with such careless and unthinking riding habits?

And before you get the wrong idea, I was, all through my high school and college years, a cyclist myself, and not just to get from home to school or the dorm or to work. I used to ride seriously, and I have numerous Centuries under my

belt.

I am also a dedicated motorcyclist, with years of safe and accident-free riding under my belt, and am well versed in what it takes to share the road safely, and courteously with automobiles.

So it is with great frustration that I am compelled to rain on your somewhat rosy picture of what it is like to have the number of cyclists on the roads in western Albemarle and the back roads of Virginia that we do.

Too few of your fellow cyclists have taken the time to learn what it means to be responsible, safe, and sharing riders out there on our roads, and far too many of them are actively endangering the “moms, dads, sons, daughters” with whom they share the roads, as a result of their careless, arrogant, and unthinking riding habits.

You are right, all it takes is “one too-close call for something tragic to happen.”

In my experience, the cyclists are as responsible (or more) for those close calls as the motorists.

Wake up & learn the Rules.

“Share the Road” goes for everyone, not just motorists.

Thomas Bjornsen
Crozet

Ben Hurt's 95th Celebrated with 23 Former Students

Lunch was special on Friday October 25, 2013 for 25 Albemarle High School graduates who enjoyed a luncheon with their beloved principal, Benjamin F. Hurt. The event was to honor Mr. Hurt for his 95th birthday. Lunch was at the Shadwell Restaurant on Pantops Mountain. Arrangements were made by Penny Layman Ray, AHS Class of 1959.

Birthday cards have become an annual happening at the Hurt home in Crozet. The Albemarle High School Alumni Association notifies graduates from the classes 1954 through 1984 when Mr. Hurt was at Albemarle. Maria Hurt, wife of Ben Hurt said, “Thursday's bundle was large enough the mail carrier brought them to the door. The birthday wishes normally range in the 400-500 count. Opening

occurred on Sunday the 27th, which is his birthday.

A 1958 graduate expressed his feelings: “Mr. Hurt, there is no doubt, you are the most loved person in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. When you read your cards and messages, you will see mentioned your kindness, thoughtfulness, fairness, your leadership, your friendship, your sincere interest in people, your caring, remembering names, being a role model, inspiring people and setting the example to follow. Mr. Hurt, we are so thankful that you were our principal at Albemarle High School.”

A 1971 graduate wrote: “I have often thought of how lucky I was to have you as principal at Albemarle High School. You always had a kind word and a generous spirit. You were a great role model inspiring all of us to strive to be our best. I graduated from VPI and ended up living in New York City, where I reside today. In 1972 I became Miss New York State in the Miss America pageant. I know it was the firm foundation I learned from you that led to

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“I wanted to let you know that I'm seeing tremendous progress with J----, specifically his new ability to adapt to change. Within the last 2 - 3 weeks I have been pleasantly surprised. One example was on the first day of school (starting at a new middle school). He had no anxiety before, during, or after that first day ... amazing! I'm so happy and feeling very hopeful. I'm in awe of the work you and Linda are doing.”
— Connections Parent

To the Editor

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my many accomplishments including having written three published books. Happy Birthday, Mr. Hurt. Enjoy your day and reflect on how many lives you blissfully touched throughout your life. You are loved.”

A 1972 graduate wrote: “This is one opportunity I definitely didn’t want to miss out on! I’m an AHS 1972 graduate, and remember Mr. Hurt well and fondly. He was one who lead by example—quietly and confidently—and is the kind of principal every student wishes he or she had. A long and influential career, with the positive impact most educators can only wish they would have on their students. Thank You, Mr. Hurt!”

Mr. Hurt’s AHS kids express their sentiments at every opportunity including at class reunions and at birthday time. On May 13, 2011, the Albemarle High School Alumni Association honored Mr. Hurt and inducted him in the first class of

Albemarle High School Alumni Hall of Fame. Between 600 and 700 people attended the event. A 230-page book, Mr. Hurt’s 10,000 Memories, representing the AHS graduates during his tenure at Albemarle High School, was published by the Alumni Association and presented. In the book over 500 AHS graduates and faculty members expressed their admiration, feelings and thanks. The second edition is available on the Albemarle High School Alumni Association web site www.albemarlealumni.com, menu item: 10,000 Memories.

After a period of meeting and greeting, Mr. Hurt was asked to give the invocation. After the meal, Mr. Hurt commented on how much he enjoyed his years at Albemarle High School, his days in World War II and his birthday cards. He announced that he had his medical checkup recently and all was well. His thankfulness and appreciation was evident. All joined in singing Happy Birthday and enjoyed the birthday cake.

The AHS graduates who attended were a mixture mostly of classes of 1958 and 1959. Everyone had a great time. Mr. Hurt may have lost the spring in his step, but he still remembers everyone’s name, many of their parents, their brothers and sisters if they attended Albemarle High School and where they lived.

Upon leaving the event, Mr. Hurt repeated several times his appreciation. It was a great day for Mr. Benjamin Hurt and for all who attended. Mr. Hurt has made it a career of serving people. His working years were dedicated to education, serving his Church, and being a loyal Lions Club member and encouraging and helping individuals. If you know Mr. Hurt, you are aware he never seeks credit or recognition for anything he does, keeping many things secret for only himself and the individual or group being helped to know. This world needs more Benjamin Hurts.

Charles “Connie” Crenshaw
Charlottesville

Firefighter Awards

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Noise Award” was given to Captain Greg Pugh and firefighter Dave Layne for their assistance in providing professional sound production services repeatedly to the department over the years.

The evening ended with the presentation of the President’s Award as well as Firefighter of the Year to Captain Mike Boyle, who joined the department in 2008 after relocating to Crozet from Maurice, Louisiana. Gentry said of Boyle, “he is an energetic and enthusiastic member who really gives 110 percent to the department,” and, he continued, “I couldn’t think of someone better to win both awards.”

Boyle, joined at the dinner by his wife and brother, who came from Tennessee for the event unbeknownst to Boyle, said, “It was a shock,” when asked about the awards. “It’s an honor to be thought of that highly by the whole fire department,” he said. ❁



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