

# Education

## SCHOOL TALK

By Dr. Marshall C. Darnell

### "Sentenced to Read: Not Jail"

School districts across the nation are being afforded with a new approach in discharging their responsibilities toward youth offenders. In Kentucky, a program has been established that says simply: "Sentence juvenile offenders to a program which will teach them to read and not to jail." The basis on which this concept has been developed came from a prestigious research journal, "Focus", published by the Joint Center for Political Studies in Chicago. This publication states "that illiteracy breeds illiteracy, and that 71 million

Americans cannot read well enough to function in our society. The Journal further states that 33 percent of our welfare population is functionally illiterate and 70 percent of those sentenced to jail terms cannot read or write.

In many sections of our country, close to 50 percent of our children reaching the eighth grade, do not graduate from high school. So the comments made by the National Commission on Educational Excellence that there is "a rising tide of mediocracy in our public schools...a crisis so severe

that America's status as a nation and as a people seems endangered" cannot be challenged.

C.J. Bailey, Director of the "Sentenced to Read Program", has proposed that truants, misdemeaner and felony offenders the ages of 14 and 21 appear before a sentencing judge and if conditions warrant that these offenders be placed in a pre-employment skills program which teaches writing, mathematics, and reading. The offender will be permitted to stay in the program without going to jail as long as there is evident growth of one month achievement in each of the academic areas for each month spent in the program. Mr. Bailey has estimated that it costs between \$8,000 and \$15,000 nationally to incarcerate a juvenile offender. By contrast, the new education program would cost approximately \$1,800. The end result of the program just outlined would be that the participants are closely monitored and supervised and illiteracy is eradicated. Bailey notes that the youth who breaks the law is much more likely to turn into a repeat offender if he is sentenced to jail and forced to spend time with hardened criminals. But, if he is allowed to get an education and find work, his chances for reform are much better.

The schools do not have, nor should they be held totally accountable for the "rising tide of mediocracy" in our educational system. Society, as a total entity, must deal with the problem and each segment of our society, as institutions, must shoulder its share of the problem and blame. In like manner, the solution to our rising illiteracy rate must be dealt with in a cooperative effort by many institutions. When courts and schools work together and the importance of education becomes not a "byword" but a reality, we have made a first step.

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## School District and Educators Cosponsoring Drug Abuse Symposium

The Southern Nevada School Counselors Association, the Alliance of Black School Educators, and the Hispanic Educators Association will assist the Clark County School District in sponsoring a Drug Abuse and Prevention Symposium October 27 at 7 p.m. in the Las Vegas High School Activities Center, 315 South 7th Street.

The presentation is open to all parents, students and members of the community.

Several experts will serve as presenters. They include Peter Bell, executive director, Minnesota Institute on Black Chemical Abuse, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Flavia Rose Walton, Ph.D., consultant on drug and alcohol abuse, Las Vegas, Nevada; Sherard Morgan, M.D., medical director of ALL-MED, Woodland Hills, California, and Beny Primm,

executive director, Addiction Research and Treatment Corporation, Brooklyn, New York. All have extensive knowledge and experience in conducting workshops on drug abuse and prevention throughout the U.S.

The workshop was spearheaded by school board member Yvonne Atkinson who recommended the concept to CCSD. Referring to the problem of drug abuse locally, Atkinson said, "There is a crisis in our communities throughout Clark County." Atkinson said the symposium represents "a joint effort to educate the public and simultaneously combat drug abuse."

Principal funding for the presentation comes from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in Washington, D.C.

## School Counselors to Sponsor Clark County College Fair

The Southern Nevada School Counselors Association would appreciate your assistance in helping us publicize the following announcement on your newspaper.

The 8th Annual College Fair sponsored by the Southern Nevada School Counselors Association will be held Monday, November 3 and Tuesday, November 4 from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Cashman Field Center. Financial aid presentations will be given on both days from 7 to 8 p.m. Approximately 130 colleges, universities, vocational schools and military services are expected, compared to 120 in attendance last year. The number of students and parents attending last year was 4,000 compared to 1,200 the first year it started in 1979. Juniors, seniors and parents are invited to attend.

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## Bishop Gorman Holds Homecoming This Week

Bishop Gorman High School is proud to announce their 1986 Homecoming activities.

Homecoming '86 is being held this week, Oct. 19-25. The following is a list of activities that are scheduled: Friday, Oct. 24, 1986 - 10:00 a.m.: Pre Assembly Coffee, 11:30 a.m.: Homecoming Pep Assembly, 5:30 p.m.: Pre Game Tailgate Party, 8:00 p.m.: Varsity Football Game Gorman vs Valley Silver Bowl. After the game there will be a party sponsored by the Gorman Booster Club in the Gorman Gym Saturday, Oct. 25, 1986 - 4:00 p.m.: Memorial Mass Gorman Gym.

## CCCC Offers Prelicensing Classes

Prelicensing classes for people who want to become insurance agents, brokers, or solicitors will be offered at Clark County Community College, beginning November 8 and ending December 13. These classes are approved by the Insurance Division of the Nevada Department of Commerce and are required for anyone who plans to take the insurance licensing examination.

Two classes will be offered: one in life and health insurance; the other in property and casualty insurance. Classes will be held Saturdays for five weeks from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. in Rooms 2205 and 2207 at Clark County Community College.

To register, call The Training Institute, Clark County Community College, 643-6060, Extension 442. Cost is \$90.00 per class. Two credit hours will be earned by those who complete each class successfully.

## Decker Elementary to Hold Fourth Annual Nevada Birthday Party

Fourth grade students at Clarabelle Decker Elementary School will hold the fourth annual Nevada Birthday Party celebration the admission of Nevada into the Union on Thursday, October 30, 1 p.m., in the multipurpose room.

Decker School is located at 3850 South Redwood. Students in Mrs. Boulton's and Mrs. Gayler's classrooms wrote letters to local dignitaries, civic leaders and elected officials to personally invite their participation.

In preparation for the celebration students performed work on a variety of special projects related to the history of Nevada. The results of much of this research will be on display during the party.

Sunset High School will register students for the 2nd quarter between 3:30 and 6:00 p.m., Monday, November 3, 1986 in the Hyde Park Junior High School cafeteria. For information about regular classes, child care center, young adult classes, or job placement please call 799-4160 after 2:00 p.m.



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