

Tell us what's on your mind. No need to give your name.

Speak Your Piece

Call 633-7508 from 9 am Tuesday to 9 am Friday.

E-m@il address

In addition to the telephone and the U.S. Mail, *The Mountain Eagle* accepts comments to Speak Your Piece by electronic mail. Our address is: mteagle@tgtel.com

It amazes me how certain projects that don't seem to have much support can be funded year after year. Number one has to be the Jenkins school, and number two the amphitheater. The Jenkins school only has four or five supporters, and the amphitheater probably even fewer, but they are a drain on the county budget every year. Isn't it time, especially with the budget crisis, to cut our losses on these and get on to critical needs like water and sewers?

I am a World War II veteran of Letcher County. I am calling about the remark that was made in opposition to Jenkins getting a World War II memorial. I don't know who the caller was, and I have no desire to know them. But without men like me and thousands of other veterans, you wouldn't have the freedoms you do today, especially the freedom of speech and the freedom to worship. If Old Glory ever falls around your shoulders, God bless you. I am glad we have people in office like Mrs. Combs and Mr. Fleming who put their time and effort in so we won't be forgotten. I think World War II history should be taught in schools so that the young generation would know what a price was paid for our freedom.

When did this certain man leave home? I never knew he left. Or is that what he told you?

To a certain woman: Roses are red, violets are blue. Lonnie is here waiting on you. Love you.

Some say I'm not the sharpest tool in the shed and my elevator doesn't always go to the top. But it seems to me if we want the economy to straighten out we need to cut the fuel prices in half and put a freeze on prices for a year or two.

I'm calling in about the person who called in complaining about people wearing PJ's in public: Last time I checked, no one in Jenkins or anywhere else buys my clothes.

To the lady who was complaining about the coal company working her man so hard on Saturdays: I know exactly what you're going through. Years ago my company made me work every Saturday and a preacher took my wife away from me.

If you're waiting on me you're going to be waiting a long, long time.

I would advise all drivers to stay away from a certain trucking company. He takes everything for his side.

I'm a nine-year veteran who moved back to Letcher County, in the Jenkins area, during the last five or six months. I am really disappointed in the way the Jenkins community deals with the American flags. In the memorial park on top of Jenkins Mountain, the American flag is in tatters. The American flag at the Jenkins water plant down by the dam is also in tatters. I'm just wondering when somebody is going to replace those flags. I'm going to remove the one on top

of the mountain myself, because it's in shreds and lying on the ground.

When I got to a certain market to get feed for my livestock as usual the price had changed. Every price has been raised. This is hurting us farmers.

What about a nephew who would trade a good uncle for another uncle that is a Vietnam piece of trash? This will stand when the world is on fire.

I hope my girls at LCJ had a happy Easter. That's to Christy, Amy and Megan.

It's a shame that a nurse who is a married woman has been sleeping with a high school boy. I would be ashamed to show my face out in public if I was her.

I'm watching the news about the flood in Arkansas and see where two idiots are out in a boat trying to tie a truck to a wrecker. They've been out there half an hour, and they just don't want to get their feet wet. They're not in two feet of water. I wonder why they don't get off the boat and walk over to the truck and hook the cable up and come on back. I've been watching this for half an hour. If they are volunteers they're sure making themselves look bad. If they're being paid they don't need to be paid — the operator of the tow truck of the people trying to hook it up.

I am just so disgusted by Delania Fields getting such a light sentence after being responsible for the death of her baby. How do the lawyers and court officials lie down and sleep after such a light punishment? Every woman bleeds when she has a baby, and every woman knows when she is pregnant. She had enough sense to work in a bank while she was pregnant, but yet she didn't have enough sense to go to the doctor to deliver her child? Couldn't she have put it up for adoption to somebody who did want it? Every person involved in this case should be ashamed.

This is to the man who is interested in the single woman in Coon Hollow: Please respond as to which woman you are after and how to contact you if you are serious about what you said. Thank you.

This is for the girl who is out saying someone stole the computer she had rented: You sold it to get pills. Quit lying on people.

Concerning the woman who is acting like a teen-ager and going out with a high school boy: If her mother and dad would quit giving her everything and make her stand on her own, maybe that would help. She wouldn't even have a home without her mom and dad. She is biting the hand that feeds her.

I was just calling about a girl I saw the other day driving a blue Lumina. I have known her a while and am glad to hear she's away from the guy she was with in Jenkins. She told me they've been split up for about seven months. Girlfriend, you look

good. You look real good.

Honey, are you talking about the woman who drives a black car and lives on Turkey Creek taking an old man's money? Let me tell you something: I've worked hard all of my life and the money I spend is mine, not his.

Hey, butter boy. You work at one of the fast food places. I'm fixing to take that butter and slap it up side of your head and expose you for what you really are.

Jenkins has torn down just about every historical building we've had. Is the old high school next? Why should people come to Jenkins? There's nothing historic left to see, except maybe the coal museum.

Congratulations to the Hemphill Community Center for the decision not to let a group needing to raise funds and a bluegrass band use the facility for a fund-raising project. I hope this is a sign of good things to come.

This is to the parties and party on Little Colley: Tell me who would want to come on your property. I would be afraid I would take something and end up dead, too.

They're still selling the drugs in Long Branch. We need some law enforcement in here.

It seems like everywhere you look in Adams's Branch, Doty Creek, Carbon Glow, Elk Creek and Bull Creek there are coyote tracks wherever you look. Every night there's a full moon you can hear them howl. How come people won't come in here and do something about these coyotes? I am sick and tired of them. We can't have any turkey hunting because the coyotes have eaten the turkeys up. I think it's time somebody gets a spotlight and a good shotgun and goes out and spots these coyotes at night and kills them.

Well, there went time number three. Nobody went to jail, no money was paid to me. Now we're waiting for number four to see what's in store — to see who the law enforcement officials are really for. Are they for us or for the insiders? I don't know, but I'm getting too old for this and I'm not a Potter. As for myself, I don't think there will be a trial, because our officials are in denial. They take the word of a thief over the word of a man, his wife, and his child. Only in Letcher County, now isn't that wild? Even with the detective I had my doubts. I talked with an old mayor and this is what he said: You better listen to me, boys, and don't mess with them. It's all dirty and you can end up... well, that's what he said. I think the reason we got sold out on our timber theft case is because we're from out of state and have no clout. So if this is the last poem for awhile you have read, then it must be true what the old mayor said.

This is from the woman at Mayking: As for being a mother, I am more of a mother than what you have ever thought about being. My children know who their mother is. My children hear you and their daddy call me names. But let me tell you something, I am their mother, not you. I love my kids more than life itself. I don't care if you marry every one of the Cornetts. It is a free road. I can go by there anytime I want when I want. You don't own Linefork. And as for me having a bench warrant, I don't have one because I pay my child support. But it's fixing to turn around on you two. I love my kids and I am going to get my kids. You two don't deserve to raise a dog, much less a child. As for you marrying him, go for it. I don't care. Instead of me paying child support he will be paying child support. You two better take heed of this.

I would like to say to a certain 28-year-old woman in Coon Hollow that she better quit making passes at everybody's boyfriends and spouses. It is disgusting and not right. From a concerned citizen.

I would like to wish a happy birthday to a sister in Colley who celebrated her birthday on the 21st of March. Happy birthday, Barb, from your sister in Tennessee.

If you're a person like myself who likes railroading, you'll be challenged, like myself, in the

next couple of months because the price of coal has gone up 35 percent in the Central Appalachian market. Because of the weather conditions in China and Australia — snowstorms in China, rains in Australia — the market price of coal has gone up 35 percent and CSX will be rolling a lot of trains on the Big Sandy and the E&K going towards Newport. So if you're a train watcher you'll see a lot more northbound and southbound action in the mountains. That for sure will be putting a lot more profits in the pockets of the coal companies.

I would like to dedicate this poem by Margie McAlister to my loving and hardworking husband, Glendal: Take a look at these hands, Lord, they're worn and rough. My face scarred with coal marks, my language is tough. But you know in this heart, Lord, lies the soul of a man who toils at a living that few men can stand. There's sulfur and coal dust and sweat on my brow, to live like a rich man I'd never learn how. But if you've got a corner when my work is through, I'd be mighty proud to live neighbors with you. Each dawn as I rise, Lord, I know all too well I face only one thing: A pit filled with hell. To scratch out a living the best way that I can, but deep in this heart lies the soul of a man. With black-covered faces and hard-called hands, we ride the dark tunnels, our work to begin. To labor and toil as we harvest the coal we silently pray, Lord, please harvest our souls. Just a corner in Heaven when I've grown too old, and my back it won't bend, Lord, to shovel the coal. Lift me out of the pit, Lord, where the sun never shines, 'cause it gets mighty weary down there in the mine. But I'd rather be me, Lord, though no riches I show, though tired and weary, I'm just glad to know. When the great seal is broken the pages will tell that I've already spent my time in hell.

In all of the debate about the way the county is spending its money, and in all of the project lists, there is a glaring omission — the drug problem. What could be more critical? Week after week in Speak Your Piece people make the case for drug rehabilitation and the need for those facilities. Those aren't just academic exercises, either. They are compelling accounts that come from experience, and they have a ring of truth. Communities from Ulvah to Jenkins are represented, and I don't think there is one community that isn't affected. I agree with the fiscal court's insistence on water and sewer projects. We're third-world in that area, too, but there has to be consideration and a share of the funding for sensible drug treatment. There also has to be a corresponding realization of the failure of what we are doing, and the necessity for another direction — rehabilitation. How can we possibly think about spending on that long list of projects, which range from 'nice to have' to blatant foolishness, when we have problems that threaten our very survival?

This is to the school board concerning the school attendance: When a child gets sick and the parent keeps them home the parent shouldn't have to take the child to the doctor every time the child has a cold or a sore throat and is running a fever. If the fever isn't gone by the third day the doctor will give you medicine. A lot of doctors like you to wait a few days to see if the fever will break by giving them Tylenol or Motrin. Some parents can't afford to take their child to the doctor every time he or she gets sick. Some don't get a medical card or have health insurance. The ones that don't have to pay for the office visit and that is high every time you take them. I think they should allow ten parent excuses instead of five parent excuses.

Urge the fiscal court and legislators to give high priority to funding for the sheriff's office. It's almost certain that state budget cuts will reduce the state police presence even further, and they're pretty stretched out already. People prefer dealing with the sheriff's office anyway, rather than the impersonal, less helpful state police dispatchers.

Hi. I just got back home to Summerville, South Carolina from McRoberts. I was there for two weeks and got to see the snow and had snow cream. It was good and the first I had in 30 years. We don't have snow in

Summerville — a little every few years, but not often and very little. My granddaughter came in from Whiting, Indiana to see me. We all went out for dinner and had a nice time and saw a person I had not seen in 30 years. It was nice seeing old friends, but all good things come to an end. But I will be back next weekend. Lillian.

If the commonwealth's attorney felt it necessary to make a statement about the Potter case, why didn't he describe the entire situation rather than leave us wondering?

Which is more important, security in your home and neighborhood or an animal shelter? Patrolled roads, safe from drunk and drugged-up drivers, or an amphitheater? Sewer systems and clean streams or an aging school conversion which apparently will never be finished? Monuments and memorials, or plentiful water for everyone? Think it over. It may be a long time before funding gets any easier.

Times are getting tough and money is getting tight for the country, the state and the county. This is no time to be thinking about 'nice to have' things, but to concentrate our spending on the essentials — water, sewer, roads, and public safety. Everyone may have a pet project in that list the fiscal court is trying to eliminate, but it's time to think about the common good. Support them in their attempt to confine our spending to necessities.

I thought the public library in Neon is supposed to be public. Well, you will be kicked out for no reason. And another thing: I thought the library was supposed to stay open until 5 p.m.

People should beware about putting money in donation boxes that are often in place at certain stores and restaurants. At the fast-food restaurant where I worked, some of the employees steal all of the money, meaning none of it goes to any kids. They take two plastic knives and stick them down through the top and pull out the bills.

The projects sent to the legislators have no correlation with county needs. How does Mountain Outreach benefit anyone? Who would use the amphitheater? How about the old Jenkins High School? A small group of people who seem to consider it a hobby have gotten enough from the fiscal court over the years for that boondoggle to have built a new one. Our spending needs a giant infusion of common sense and a lot less political influence.

Why does it seem so hard to get a case to the grand jury here? They seem so particular about what all is needed that it is discouraging to try to get it all together. Why don't they just take the complaints and the evidence that people have, and let them go to the grand jury and let the grand jury decide? No case can be perfect. I hope how soon this loosens up.

I have been studying the list of coal severance projects that have been submitted to legislators for, what I guess, is a final decision. I agree with the priorities of the majority of the fiscal court — water and sewer. I think most of the other projects are just frivolous foolishness. Some people in the county are getting all their water from gallon jugs from the supermarkets. Considering spending on anything else before this situation is taken care of is irresponsible. Sewers are also essential. We can't clean up the rivers until straight pipes and mining and logging pollution are stopped, and we can't do anything on tourism until the rivers are clean. I would like to add another essential priority factor, and that is personal security. We must have more people and resources in the sheriff's department. The county is too big and crime too pervasive for the department to be able to handle it all with their stripped down manning, and limited resources. They do well with what they have, but they should not have to work under budgetary strains, and there is plenty of money available if superfluous projects are downgraded. Spending priorities must be established with one standard — the well-being of the people.

Roland and Ellen, even though I forget to mention you in Speak Your Piece sometimes, you both know that I love you very, very much. Thanks for remembering our anniversary. You made it special. Come see us when you can. Hope you had a happy Easter.

Oma Hatton, hope the Easter bunny was good to you.

The coal severance list that most of the fiscal court is trying

to reject has some bizarre projects. The one we're most familiar with is the old Jenkins High School. Does anyone know how much money has been poured into that hole? Enough for a good-sized new school, probably. I heard they don't have one room completed yet. How about the amphitheater? Those things went out 40 or 50 years ago. With all the entertainment so close at hand in today's world, why would anyone go to one of those? Then there is the seeming obsession with museums and memorials. The best way to honor veterans is to give them better health care and to aid them in ways that benefit them individually. Museums and statues are of little use to someone who needs expensive prescriptions and medications. How about Mountain Outreach? Is there a political consideration there? I support the majority of the fiscal court in their rejection of these wasteful ventures, and I hope the legislators will allow for coal severance money to go to the basic essentials of water and sewer.


Those who expect coal to last for the foreseeable future are just whistling in the dark. Coal production will diminish before the coal runs out, for many reasons. The big investment houses and investors are moving out of coal and oil. Those people aren't particularly interested in the environment, and certainly aren't interested in debating mountaintop removal. They are only interested in their bottom line, and they don't think their best interests lie in these resources. Oil is well past peak production, and informed energy professionals give coal less than ten years. This is not a time for heads in the sand; it's a time for a hard-nosed look at reality, and for planning for the future.

Today I watched as my son was hauled off to Breathitt County Detention Center for a minor infraction that other children in the same system, namely drug court, also have done and had nothing said or done to them. Needless to say, writing reports or performing community service just isn't the same as being taken away from your family. Although the people who operate drug court deemed this a necessary act, I have been told by other parents and other members that my son has never received equal or fair treatment during this past year in drug court. At this point I have nowhere to turn nor do I have any information that can help me to help my son. All I am asking for is that anyone else who has had unequal treatment or unjustified treatment please contact me by e-mail at hd_softtail_girl@yahoo.com. Something needs to be done about the court system's and UNITE's actions towards our youth. This was supposed to be a program that helped our children to get off drugs, but all I have seen is favoritism and children being set up to fail. I am now going to contact a lawyer — one outside of Letcher County who isn't afraid to deal with this kind of case. I will also contact my local congressman and the attorney general's office. If you feel that you or your child has been treated wrongfully, then write or take it upon yourself to write letters to our congressmen and finally put a stop to all of the nonsense that is going on here. Thank you so much.

This is to all the Christian people out there: I really wish you would stop talking about one another, because you're in the wrong and I think it's a dirty shame you hop from church to church. Why would you get mad just because the preacher has preached a little on you? The truth's the truth. The Lord comes first always. If someone has done something wrong, pray for them. Don't get out and talk trash about them. The way I see it, you better clean the mold out of your own eyes. You can't talk about people and then make it to Heaven. You've got to love everyone, not just a few. I think you may know who I am talking about, but all I know is you better straighten yourself up and stop running those long tongues and spend more time praying to the Lord that He forgives you for all the sins you are doing.

Jesus said 'Let there be no waste,' but we're acting like He said 'Get rid of all these treasures you've been blessed with as fast as you can.' Huge expanses of land so barren it won't even support scrub trees, mountains criss-crossed with logging roads and covered with stumps that are only memories of trees, and rivers so polluted it's dangerous to get near them all attest to the waste prohibited by the Lord. The most tragic thing about this forbidden destruction is that it wasn't necessary. It isn't necessary to tear up the land to get energy, it's just more profitable. It isn't necessary to cut all the trees; they can be
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