



Gazette Photos by Shih Fa Kao

Elisa Costner, left, and Aaron Costner enjoy milk shakes Friday after buying it at 1960s prices at Tony's Ice Cream. Below, Pat Sellers drinks a black cherry milk shake while holding a black walnut ice cream cone. Sellers has been coming to Tony's Ice Cream since the 1940s.

Milk shake memories

Ice cream lovers flock to Tony's for '60s prices

By **NANCY RINEHART**
Gazette Correspondent

Roy Lee Farrow remembers the days when Tony's Ice Cream served milk shakes for 50 cents. Farrow served customers those milk shakes in the 1960s, and returned to Tony's Friday to enjoy the prices of the 1960s.

Tony's offered customers 50-cent milk shakes and 25-cent cups and cones from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday as part of a promotion by Charlotte radio station Magic 96.1.

"They really were that cheap," Farrow said of his days working at Tony's in the 1960s, "and drinks were 10 cents."

Approximately 1,000 people started waiting in 90-degree heat shortly after 3 p.m. By 3:30, the line wrapped outside the building.

Two Gastonia Police officers provided crowd patrol



by directing traffic along Franklin Boulevard. At one point the officers blocked the door and wouldn't let any more customers inside.

The day brought back memories for Farrow. He and his friends would ride homemade skateboards on Franklin Boulevard when he wasn't working during the summer. Owner Tony Coletta would walk outside

the ice cream shop and tell the boys they were going to get hit by a car, said Farrow.

Those who came to Tony's Friday said it wasn't just the prices that brought them, but also the tradition and memories.

"I have been raised on Tony's ice cream," said Cynthia Hilliard of Gastonia. Hilliard brought her daughter, Brittany, and nephew, Brandon Gay, with her. Cynthia started bringing Brittany to Tony's as soon as she was able to feed herself, she said.

Cynthia also remembers coming down to Tony's during the summer as a child.

"I would trudge myself on my bicycle just to get some Tony's," she said.

Going to Tony's was a tradition, said Vickie Hord of Gastonia.

"We used to come here every Sunday after church," said Hord.

See **Tony's**/Page 4B ▶▶

▼Tony's

continued from Page 1B

Workers scooped ice cream of all varieties. They didn't expect that they would run out.

"We're so glad we've had such loyal customers," said Melinda Bradley, promotions director for the company. "We really appreciate them."

So what makes Tony's ice cream so special?

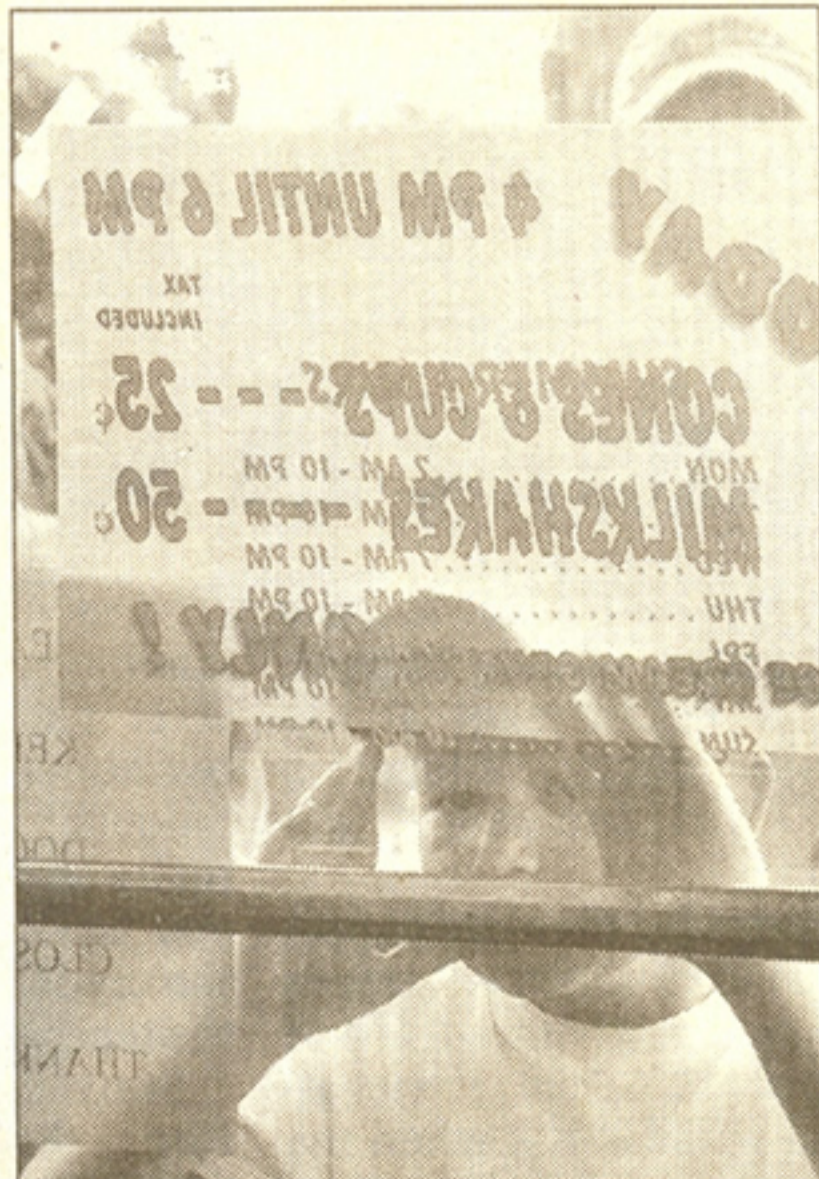
"It's a true milk shake, it's not like anything else," said Laura Costner, a teacher at the new Ed Sadler Elementary School. "I guess it's the malt they put in it."

"It's perfect, not too sweet," said Anne Mathis of Bessemer City. "Nothing compares."

Others cite the smooth texture of the ice cream that makes the milk shakes irresistible. But everyone seemed to agree—a milk shakes from Tony's can't be beat.

"It's just real good ice cream," said Oren Fulton of Kings Mountain.

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Korey Haney, 10, peers through the door of Tony's Ice Cream that shows '60s prices for ice cream and milk shakes.