

Eastern Echoes

By Gail Roberson



Baby "Byrd"

He fell to the ground one hot day, a tiny bundle of pink skin with a mouth as large as his body . . . crying for food. His eyes were not yet open, so he could not see the wrinkled, gentle hands that carried him to the house and placed him in a small, dark box. But, he sensed protectiveness in her touch and in her voice that eventually lulled his minute, trembling form to sleep in the palm of her hand.

She was reminded of a song she once heard about God caring for the sparrows. She named him, "Little Byrd," and soon learned to drop food and water in his mouth. She carried him with her everywhere she went. She taught him to eat and to fly, and when he had outgrown the box, she moved him to his own spacious cage with a swing and other amusement. She knew it was against the law to keep wild birds without a license, but she couldn't find the nest. No amount of "law" would keep her from leaving him to die.

He was radar with feathers. He sensed every emotion she had, and joined her conversations with loud songs of cheer. When she got in a hurry, he slowed her down. When she was depressed, he cheered her up. If a bit of loneliness enveloped her, he was always there . . . pressing his tiny body toward her until she finally took him in her hand and put her loneliness to rest.

When the first spring came, he answered the songs of the birds outside the door, but was terrified as she tried to introduce him back to his own. He seemed more contented inside. During the day, he shared her routine. At night, he used his beak to pull the tissues around him and settle down to sleep as she placed her shoes beside the bed.

She was filled with so much Thanksgiving for the little sparrow. He had changed her life, and others too. Children came. They listened eagerly, observing and loving "Little Byrd." She watched the sparkle in their eyes as he settled in their palms while she answered all the questions of young minds.

One child, in particular, learned more from the sparrow than all the rest. James was the only one who liked to hunt. Upon his introduction to the bird, he said, "Let me go get my gun and I'll shoot him!" The sparrow flew to the side of the cage in rage as soon as the child spoke, and showed the same fear each time the boy came near. Eventually, with the old woman's explanation and guidance, the child returned and got down on his knees beside the cage and told the sparrow he was sorry. He had to come back several times before the bird felt him sincere.

Finally, the little sparrow accepted the child. The boy painted an outdoor scene to place behind his cage and made little crafts to go inside. The sparrow eventually nestled and slept in his hands. The boy told her that he was practicing more kindness to people, because he did not want them to feel like he once made the sparrow do. The old woman carried those words in her heart.

About four years later, "Little Byrd" died. She had a warning it was coming, for he only wanted to stay in her hands and sleep. She rocked in her chair and talked to him all afternoon, her fingers smoothing the warm feathers of his breast.

The only person she asked to his funeral was the child, James, who, of all the others, had learned the most from "Little Byrd." Together, they buried the sparrow beneath a wild cherry tree in the meadow. Then, they held hands and prayed in unison: "Thank you for the sparrow, whose wings bore down your word, and for all the gentle lessons we learned from 'Little Byrd.' Now accept him in the bower of your blossomed, bough-filled land, to live with other sparrows who are sheltered in your hand."

Thank you, dear reader for sharing your story of "Little Byrd." Now we know that He truly does see every sparrow that falls.

Par For The Course — Golf Would Really Get Me Teed Off

By MIKE VOSS

What it was, was golf; to borrow a phrase from Andy Griffith. I've watched golf on television, I've tried it once or twice in my life and I even took a golf course in college.

But none of that prepared me for seeing my first tournament in person. And I don't know if anything could have prepared me.

The Coastal Conference Class 3-A Golf Tournament was held at Fairfield Harbour. Being editor of the West Craven Highlights and knowing full well that Fairfield Harbour is in the paper's coverage area, I did my duty and went to help cover the event with Daily News sports editor Mo Krochmal.

When we arrived the skies were azure blue and the sun was more than warming. The nice folks gave us a golf cart to ride around in. The golfers had to walk. That's was the first sign that told me I did not want to ever think about taking golf seriously.

The second sign was when dark clouds appeared out of nowhere, the torrential rains fell and the golfers (by use of school vans) beat us back to the cart shack as I had to put up with Krochmal's golf-cart driving. If the rains weren't enough, he had to hit all the puddles left by earlier rains.

Play began about 45 minutes

later, after they took our golf cart away from us. Actually, the walk wasn't too bad. Not if you forget the man-eating dog on the 15th hole, the dead mole somewhere on the front nine and having to duck these white things falling out of the sky. We'd be standing around admiring a nice green and we would hear it. Thud! Maybe with my bright Hawaiian shirt flapping in the wind, the golfers thought I was the flag.

Several golfers kept talking about birdies and eagles. All I saw was the ducks and geese on the course. The majority of the golfers talked about a famous movie star. Hey, I thought Bogie was dead. But according to what I overheard, the golfers saw him a lot that day. And if they weren't talking about him, I think they were talking about Jack Paar. It was Bogie this and Paar that all day.

(Yes, I know. A golf bogey is spelled different from the Hollywood Bogie.)

Golf coaches have it made. Every other sport I've ever watched the coaches are just a few feet away from the players. But considering the lightning that flashed a few times and the rain, I guess I would have stayed in the pro shop and looked at red, yellow and bright green pants all afternoon.

Now I know where coaches get their wardrobes.

I don't want to talk bad about high school kids, I was one myself once. But I think the schools need to do a better job of teaching math. Several times I heard golfers yell "four" when they teed off. Why they wanted to yell their score on the last hole to the group in front of them, I don't know. Especially when most of them shot more than four on the previous hole. I saw several sevens, nines and even a twelve and on the next tee each golfer yelled "four."

The one thing they were pretty honest about was when they talked about their lies. I sure heard plenty of them.

One golfer was really consistent on the number-three hole. Three times in a row he hit a long, high shot. Three times in a row he hit the same bass in the same lake. The bass thought it was a fisherman trying out a new lure.

I finally figured out what the spikes on golf shoes are for. Instead of buying fancy equipment to aerate the golf course, some-one years ago figured out spikes on golf shoes would do the job. That man soon opened a pro shop that featured spiked golf shoes and retired three years later to Florida to play golf.

It was educational and fun. But I do have one last question. Just how do you use those ball washers on the course?

VICA Sets Car Show On May 15

Gentlemen, start your . . . polishing cloths. That might be the call given Sunday when the West Craven VICA Club holds its first car show at Twin Rivers Mall in New Bern.

The car show features 10 classifications, with a best-of-show trophy and first- and second-place trophies presented in each category. Registration is from 10 a.m. to noon. Trophies will be presented at 3 p.m. Registration fee is \$10.

The 10 classes are: best original, open, best street rod, best street machine, best mini-truck, best 4-wheel drive, best full-size truck, best Camaro or Firebird, best Mustang and best unfinished.

Class winners will be chosen by participants. Door prizes will be given away.

Rams Clip Eagles, 3-2 With Error

An unusual play and error cost the West Craven Eagles a shot at taking a baseball game from Havelock's Rams last Friday.

The Rams remained in third place in the Coastal Conference, improving to 5-3 in the league and 11-6 overall, while the Eagles dropped to 3-6 and 8-8.

With the score tied 2-2 in the top of the fifth with runners on first and third and one out, Havelock tried a suicide squeeze. However, the batter missed the signal and William Means, the runner on third, was caught coming down the line.

The Eagle catcher had the ball get by him and Means sprinted home safely to tie the score.

One batter later, Kim Duncan singled, stole second and scored what proved to be the winning run on Steven Gainey's single.

Means batted 2-for-3 with a double for the Rams while Gainey and winning pitcher Steve Daub added one hit each as Havelock was outbait by West Craven 3-4.

Darren Bizzell went 1-for-3, but his solo homer in the second gave the Eagles a 1-0 lead.

Monty Brown batted 2-for-3 for West Craven.

Daub went the distance for Havelock, striking out seven batters. John Dizon, West Craven's southpaw ace, also went the distance, striking out three while walking four to fall to 3-5 on the season.

Havelock . . . 81 828 8 — 1
West Craven . . . 819 108 8 — 2

Hearing From Page 1

Tom Regan, operations vice president for Texasgulf at Aurora, said that under the new permit the company would reduce by 90 percent the amount of phosphates and by 75 percent the amount of fluoride discharged into the river.

"That, we believe, is a dramatic reduction," he said.

The reduction would be accomplished, he said, by a new method in which water the company uses in its mining process would be used in a continuous loop rather than dumped in the Pamlico and replaced. The company would continue to discharge between 40 million and 50 gallons of uncontaminated water from the Castle Hayne aquifer each day.

The recycling concept met with praise from representatives of the N.C. Environmental Defense Fund, the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation, the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, the N.C. Coastal Federation and other groups, but all said the proposed permit was inadequate.

Mainly, the speakers suggested that the permit specify what the company must do and how long the company had to do it.

David McNaught, director of the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation, said, "Despite the strong conceptual basis of the permit, there remains a significant flaw in the draft." McNaught said the problem was the draft permit "does not define the exact nature, extent or frequency of permitted discharges" but allows these details to be ironed out in

later engineering studies.

To correct these perceived shortcomings, McNaught's group suggested that the permit approval be delayed, the permit be an interim one, or that more specific requirements be written into the permit.

Steven Levitas, director of the Environmental Defense Fund, presented a series of proposed modifications to the permit, including more specific requirements for the exact nature and extent of the discharges, a suggestion that a timetable be established under which the company would have to meet specified goals and guarantees of continued public involvement in the implementation of the permit.

Regan said that Texasgulf officials had reviewed the proposed modifications and agreed that they should be included in the permit.

The suggestion that the permit include a timetable for reducing discharges on a step-by-step basis rather than taking several years to develop and implement a process at once received widespread support.

Many speakers also supported inclusion of strict water-quality monitoring guidelines.

While most speakers supported the central idea of the permit, some said more drastic measures must be taken.

Tom Caroon, a commercial fisherman from Oriental, said the company was killing the river and the state was doing little about it. He said the permit's failure to address the issue of the de-

salination of the Pamlico Sound by the intrusion of fresh water was a major shortcoming.

He said he thought the state had not protected the river—and hence the livelihoods of commercial fisherman—and that he was going to contact federal authorities in an attempt to force the state to regulate Texasgulf more severely.

Other commercial fishermen also said that something must be done to stop or decrease the freshwater intrusion and said that pollution on the river—which they attributed largely to Texasgulf—was bringing an end to their way of life.

Texasgulf has been operating under an expired permit since 1984 in accord with law. The permit being considered is the result of a cooperative effort between environmental groups, state officials and company representatives.

Forrest Westall, regional water quality supervisor in Asheville for the Division of Environmental Management, served as hearing officer. He said that written comments would be accepted until midnight Friday, at which time the public comment period would be closed.

Westall said he would make a recommendation on the permit to Paul Wilms, director of DEM, after the close of the comment period.

Needs Your Support
Give
Through Your Local Unit



DECA

From Page 1

that takes hard work in itself." He also noted that Ms. Bennett, Ms. Scott and Ms. Burt were instrumental in organizing the marketing education program's first fashion show. It was held earlier in the school year at the Sheraton hotel.

Thomas Bennett, who works at a grocery store in Vanceboro, was recognized for working the most hours under the program. Bennett is credited with working over 1,700 hours this school year. Other students were recognized for their participation in the program.

DECA gives students the opportunity to grow and exposes them to proven ways to succeed in their chosen careers, said Becky Hardison. Miss Hardison is a first-year marketing education teacher at Havelock High School. She was introduced by her niece, Miss Ippock, as "my favorite aunt."

Marketing education and DECA exposes students to interviewing skills, teaches them how to dress for success and how to sell themselves, she said. It also teaches them to deal with job-related problems on a professional and mature basis, she said. She said part of their education was being put into the role of an employer so they can understand an employer's point of view in different circumstances.

"I am definitely impressed with the students of today," she noted in her closing remarks.

Those attending the banquet held at Western Steer steakhouse dined on ribeye steak, baked potato and salad.

Chamber

From Page 1

Twin Rivers Council of the International Reading Association, Beta Alpha Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa, and the faculty advisor for the "Liberty Bell," the student newspaper at Roger Bell Elementary. Mrs. Salter is married to Paul Salter and they have one daughter, Katie. She enjoys outdoor activities, reading, collecting fine art prints, writing poetry and fairy tales for Katie, building ship models and working on her new house.

We Buy Standing Pine and Hardwood Timber



919-633-7455

Center

From Page 1

through with the building by the end of June.

"The center will be used to provide lunches for senior citizens and will be available for anyone in the Vanceboro community to use," said Bryan.

\$ CRIME STOPPERS \$

REWARDS UP TO--\$1000.00

CALLERS DO NOT HAVE TO GIVE THEIR NAME

CALL633-5141

GRAVEN COUNTY BUSINESS AND SERVICES

WARREN BROTHERS HARDWARE We Sell PVC Pipe-All Type Fittings-Hardware Garden Seed & Fertilizer SPECIAL 24 Ft. Aluminum Ladder \$99.00 Foot of the bridge-Vanceboro 244-1545	Braxton's Stop & Shop * Fresh Sausage * Timex Watches * Fresh Chickens * Groceries * Friendly Atmosphere * * All kinds of Frozen Food Open 6:00-11:00, Every Day * Film & Flash Buys Hwy. 17 N. Vanceboro 244-1461	244-1381 H. M. B. Monts Plaza Vanceboro Complete Family Insurance Coverage
The Reliable Corporation "We Deliver Customer Satisfaction" Robinson Insurance Agency, Inc. P.O. Box 177 New Bern, NC 28560 633-1174	Hearne's Jewelers 226 MIDDLE ST. NEW BERN, N.C. 28560 TELEPHONE 637-4990 Your Diamond Store	ROY L. WIGGINS & SON ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR Residential, Commercial & Industrial Wiring Service and Repair 244-1665 NC License No. 11905-U
A.T. Coward Construction Co. • Residential • Commercial • Additions • Remodeling • Decks • Insurance Jobs Sub-Contract Specialist Office Home 788-0063 244-0723	Toler & Son Garage Owner & Operator Louis Toler Custom Exhaust & Mufflers Radiator - Transmission & Motor Service Hwy 17, 3 miles North of Vanceboro 24 Hour Wrecker Service 244-1253	VANCEBORO HARDWARE P. O. Box 820 Hwy 43 North Vanceboro, NC 28586 J.D. Whitley (919) 244-2444

West Craven
Highlights

Craven County's Family Weekly Newspaper
 P.O. Box 487
 Vanceboro, N.C. 28586
 (Main St. Across From Post Office)
Published Each Thursday
Ashley B. Futrell, Jr.
 Publisher
Mike Voss
 Editor
Terri Jamieson
 Advertising Manager
 And
 Staff Writer
Edith Hodges
 Office Manager

Office Hours
 Mon.8:30 am - 10:30 am
 Thurs. & Fri. 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Telephone 244-0780 or 948-2144

IN-COUNTY RATES
 Single Copy 25¢
 1 Year \$7.35
 2 Years \$11.55
 3 Years \$15.75

OUT-OF-COUNTY RATES
 1 Year\$8.40
 2 Years\$12.60
 3 Years\$16.80

Above Includes N.C. Tax.
 Payable in advance. Subscribers desiring their Highlights terminated at expiration should notify us of this intention, otherwise we will consider it their wish to continue to receive the paper and they will be charged for it.
 U.S.P.S. 412-110
 Second Class Postage Paid
 Vanceboro, N.C.
 Member: N.C. Press Association