



point of view

BY BILL NIXON

Editor's note: Nixon, an Edenton native, is vice-president of Parker Brothers Newspapers of Asheville. His column appears weekly in a number of that group's publications.

Having your child properly restrained while a passenger in your vehicle is not only the safest way to ride, it is now the law.

Effective January 1, both North Carolina and Virginia, and 18 other states plus the District of Columbia instituted laws making child restraints in vehicles mandatory.

At only 30 mph, a crash will cause an unsecured 20-pound child to become a 600-pound missile. If being held in a passenger's arm, chances are the child will be crushed between the adult and the car's dashboard. Even today's padded dashboards offer little protection from crashes at moderate speeds.

While the restraint law has been in force in North Carolina since July, no fines will be imposed for two years. In Virginia, the fine for violating the law is \$25, but enforcement of the law will be difficult because of a variety of exceptions to the law. Virginia's law requires only parents or guardians to restrain children, while North Carolina only requires the actual parents of the child to restrain their children. North Carolina law also applies to children 2 years and younger, while in Virginia a child under 4 years of age or weighing under 40 pounds must be restrained. Vehicles not designed for seat belts or vehicles registered out-of-state are exempt in both states.

While actual enforcement of the law may prove to be difficult, officials indicate rigid enforcement can be expected. Police officials also report that most drivers are in compliance with the law.

With the easy availability of acceptable restraints for children, there is no reason why they should continue to die because of a lack of proper equipment or care. For those parents who feel they can't afford restraints, there

are programs offered by local social service to lend restraints. Virginia is considering furnishing the equipment to low income parents.

Even without assistance, no clear thinking adult should attempt to transport a child without the proper equipment. If an individual can afford to own and operate a vehicle, he or she can afford a car seat. Proper restraint of children doesn't just make sense anymore, it's also the law. We hope it is enforced.

Here's a story you'll enjoy. When I was a small child my grandfather often took me with him on Saturdays to do the weekly shopping. On one of these outings, we walked by a house with a fenced-in yard. The fence was covered with the most beautiful roses I had ever seen. I stopped to gaze at them and smell their glorious scent. Wonderstruck, I declared my amazement. "Grandpa, aren't they the most beautiful flowers you've ever seen?"

Then a voice came floating out from the front porch of the house. "You may have one, dear. Pick any one you like." I glanced first at my grandfather who nodded, then back to an elderly woman rocking on the front porch. "Are you sure, ma'am?"

I quickly chose a full red rose. Thanking her, I told her how lovely her whole yard was and turned to go. She spoke again. "I grow the flowers for others to enjoy. I can't see them, you know. I'm blind."

I was stunned. I knew this generous woman was special even then. Later I realized she had given me much more than a rose. To this day I try to live her example—to give something to others so that they might be happy, regardless of what you yourself get from it.

Have you given any roses lately?

In closing, I'll leave you with the story of the insurance salesman who was having a problem selling a policy to a

farmer. "Look at it this way," he said finally, "How would your wife carry on if you should die?"

To which the farmer replied; "Well, I don't reckon that's any concern of mine — so long as she behaves herself while I'm alive."

Card Of Thanks

St. Anne's Catholic Church would like to express appreciation and gratitude to all who participated in the Caribbean Cruise Raffle for the Church Restoration Fund. Ms. Jean Donovan of St. Francis Parrish, Raleigh, N.C. was the winner.

The Social Security Report

By

Lee E. Wallio

A person who has worked long enough in Social Security-covered employment may choose to retire as early as age 62.

However, early retirement means that the amount of the monthly checks will be permanently reduced.

Payments amounts are also reduced for a wife, husband, widow, or widower who begins to get payments before age 65.

The amount of reduction depends on the actual number of months before the 65th birthday that the individual starts receiving checks.

Retirement at age 62 nets a 20 per cent reduction; age 63, at 13 per cent reduction; age 64, a 7 per cent reduction.

The average person who chooses to retire early will get about the same amount of total benefits over the course of the years as he would receive if retirement were delayed; however, the amount of each check will be smaller since they will be received over a longer period of time.

If you're thinking about retiring, call the Social Security office at 3 months before you plan to retire. The telephone number is 338-2161.

Artists, John A. Ruthven, Designs Ohio's First Duck Stamp

CHICAGO—Mallard, black duck and teal are among the numerous species of North American waterfowl that will benefit from the talented brush of renowned wildlife artist, John A. Ruthven, whose recent \$106,000 donation to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., will be translated into life-giving wetland habitat by the international conservation organization.

A native Ohioan residing in Georgetown, Ruthven designed Ohio's first duck stamp in 1982 and was elected as Ducks Unlimited's first artist of the year in 1972. "I've painted wildlife most of my life," Ruthven said during the check presentation at DU's national headquarters, "and I'm delighted to be able to

contribute to an organization that is so strongly dedicated to securing a future for this continent's waterfowl."

Ruthven's \$106,000 donation

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Hoke Roberson, Jr.

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