

THE PILOT

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"In taking over The Pilot no changes are contemplated. We will try to keep it as good a paper as Nelson Hyde has made it. We will try to make a little money for all concerned. Where there seems to be an occasion to use our influence for the public good we will try to do it. And we will treat everybody alike."—James Boyd, May 23, 1941.

The 1950 Account

CASTING UP accounts at the end of the year, we feel that Southern Pines has come through 1950 very much the winner, with gains far exceeding losses, and many things which are cause for thankfulness now and for the years to come.

On the credit side of the ledger we note the acquisition of a new water plant and system, or enlargement of the old, placing this community in an enviable position, in regard to water supply, held by only too few in the state.

We count also our beautiful, modern and capacious new school gymnasium and auditorium, centers of community activities of great diversity and interest. We don't see now how we ever got along without them. These are truly the "gifts that keep on giving."

Installation was almost completed this year, to go into operation early in 1951, of a new telephone system, like the water plant designed not only for present relief but to care for needs of many years to come.

A splendid acquisition has been the radio installation at the police department, to make our town safer as it grows in size and prosperity.

We count as definite assets the many new homes which have been built here during the year, and the multiple-unit apartment now under construction which will provide living space for 60 families within a few weeks.

We count, too, the fact that Southern Pines citizens voted themselves a municipal recreation department, and by the same vote made civic advertising and promotion a part of the town budget. We count also the city mail delivery service, which started this year. These are definite steps forward, and matters for civic pride.

At the head of this list, perhaps we should have put the acquisition of a great new industry for the Sandhills section. However, this is still in the realm of things to come. We hope to list the Wyandotte Worsted company's new plant as a great new improvement for 1951.

Also coming up—the new home for our National Guard battery, for which the land was deeded by the Town this year.

All of these are, or will be, modern improvements in keeping with the spirit of a progressive town which values its tradition of old-fashioned good living, and uses modern means in its securing.

On the disappointment side of the ledger we note that, despite continuing efforts and a promise of action by the State, we still have no bus station. We are using the same old outmoded jail; we still have no municipal playground or swimming pool, nor any prospect of one at this writing.

Good things cannot come all at once. Step by step we move, keeping abreast of the times in many ways quite remarkable for a town of our size. We have great cause for self-congratulation at what 1950 has done for Southern Pines; and also for stimulated ambition to keep moving ahead in 1951.

Red Sabotage or Irresponsible Journalism

There was a great deal of talk before World War II, about the danger of sabotage. There was said to be a vast network of enemy agents here ready to create havoc generally, but it turned out, as everyone will remember, that most of this was tall tales and the FBI had the situation well under control.

The Herald Tribune has lately been running a series of articles reminiscent of those sabotage stories. Through access to secret files of the American Communist party, they were able to publish details of the organization's plans for weakening this country. The Tribune makes the whole thing sound very dangerous and very imminent. If it is, they are doing a good job in issuing this warning. But in the only one of the articles that dealt with an actual attempt to undermine American unity, the success of the saboteurs seemed to be so slight that one wonders how effective the organization really is.

It is the second article that deals with attempted sabotage of our unity behind the government's foreign policy, when last summer, the US communists tried to work up public feeling for the so-called Stockholm Peace Manifesto. The party directives, as quoted by the Tribune, outline a program of stupendous magnitude. This country was to be saturated with communist propaganda, "to mobilize the nation for peace." Every member of the party was directed to "turn his or her entire activity to this gigantic peace effort." "Peace brigades" were to be established in every community; parades were to be held, motorcades to tour the land; rallies, meetings of every type among farmers, businessmen, union groups, women's clubs, were to be held at which "full attendance must be guaranteed." This vast program was "aimed

at rallying millions." The whole thing added up to an appallingly impressive plan of subversive action whose directives the Tribune said, "reveal the meticulous planning and the rigid control that goes into every major party effort of disruption, confusion, and ideological sabotage that can be as effective as dynamite."

That last phrase contains the point that interests us: Dynamite, to be effective, has to go off. Did this communist party dynamite go off? Was this vast program carried out?

The Tribune does not tell us but it wouldn't seem so. The date set for the start of the rallies, parades, motorcades etc. was July 4th of last summer. It was to be completed October 24th. If all or if many of these things took place, it seems strange that a press, not noted for restraint, failed to report them. Barring the serious Peekskill riot, we do not recall reading of any excitement of this sort during those months. Of the numbers of signatures which were to be added to the "peace petition", of which, according to the plan, "millions" were to be gathered from the labor unions alone, only 1,250,000 is the final number reported. Considering that the petition was skillfully worded to seem a genuine appeal for peace, and in view of the number of pacifists who would presumably sign it, as well as crackpots and ignoramuses and all the perfectly sensible but heedless people who will sign anything if a pen is put in their hands, this number does not seem very great.

Does this warning of communist activity here show the US communists to be an effective group of whom we must beware, or is this warning like that of World War II; that is what we must try to find out. To war against real danger is a public duty, but to rouse public anxiety without good reason is not so helpful. In fact, in its invitation to irresponsible action, such as the McCarran bill, passed in a moment of hysteria, and in its confusing effect, it may distract from the real issue and be far more of a menace than the danger of sabotage that it purports to disclose.

Radio and Law Enforcement

Our law enforcement officers and their helpers from the outside are to be congratulated on the 24-hour sweep which netted 37 illicit liquor sellers in Moore and bordering counties last weekend.

The raids provided a shining example of the modern uses of radio in the control of crime, helping the officers to perform near-miracles.

"We could not have done it without radio-equipped cars," said County ABC Law Enforcement Officer C. A. McCallum, who has used such equipment for more than a year. In the recent raids he had the assistance of ATU investigators and special investigators, also with radio equipment. The only drawback to the expedition was the fact that assisting members of the sheriff's department had no radio, slowing down the proceedings somewhat, and causing some backtracking and occasional missed cues.

The radio in use by our own police department for the past several months has already proved worth its weight in gold, according to members of the department. However, its usefulness would be greatly multiplied if it were part of a county network of radio, with a central station.

Equipment which gives law enforcement officers instant communication, flexibility of operation and up-to-the-minute information provides them with advantages lawbreakers cannot surmount. We believe also it will serve as the best deterrent to crime.

Sheriff McDonald has requested radio equipment for his department. We believe the county commissioners are for it, but as usual the lack of funds stands in the way. We approve their thrift and the "pay-as-you-go" policy they hew to whenever possible, but in this case believe that postponement of the purchase may be too costly. By the time a new budget is set up next July, the equipment may have doubled in cost or be impossible to get.

We believe the sheriff's department should be radio-equipped without delay, if the money can be found anywhere at all.

Good Neighbors

Serious trouble in the form of destructive fire came to two local families at Christmas, and while our sympathy goes out to the distressed persons, our heart swells with joy at the outpouring of friendship and help which ensued in both cases.

To the Keller family of Southern Pines and the Vann-Ferguson family of Manly, kindly aid went out without a moment's hesitation, in volume to confound the cynic. Not only their friends but total strangers wanted to know what they could do, and did it. The cynic might note that at Christmas sympathy is more quick than at other times—but by the same token people are busiest then, with less time and money to spare from their immediate obligations.

The total record of the community's response in these two cases may never be made known. Nor is the sum total of all kindness, at Christmas and other times of year, a matter for any man's, or editor's, accounting. Occasionally, we see it in its full glory of selflessness in a case which happens to make headlines. Actually, it goes on all the time—the gesture of friend to friend, of neighbor to neighbor, of people who do good not only because they ought to but because they want to.

It is hard not to feel sometimes, these days, that the world is cold and hard; that its Christ-like qualities are lost, and with them the world itself. But this isn't true; humanity's heart still beats warm and true, and there is hope.

With The Armed Forces

Cpl. Durwood L. Epps, 26, son of Mrs. H. L. Epps, has been serving with the First Marine division in Korea. His mother has heard from him once since his unit penetrated through communist lines to reach the comparative safety of the Hungnam beachhead. Now the evacuation has been completed, she is looking anxiously for another letter soon.

Corporal Epps, a veteran of Pacific and China duty in World War 2, has a very special reason for wanting to get home in a hurry. He has a month-old son who has yet to get acquainted with his daddy. His wife and baby are in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Eugene Brown, son of Mrs. Henry Bradford, was sworn in as a member of the U. S. Air Force at Raleigh Tuesday, and has been sent to San Antonio, Tex., his basic training. Gene was a 1949 graduate of the Southern Pines High school, and worked at the Broad Street drugstore during and after his high school course. In the fall of 1949 he went to the Cal-Aero school at Glendale, Cal., where he just completed a year's course in aeronautical engineering.

Enlisting in the Air Force with him Tuesday was Ramon Watkins, an American boy whose home is in Mexico, his classmate at Cal-Aero who drove east with Gene and has been a guest at his home during Christmas.

Capt. O. G. Garrett, of 267½ E. Illinois avenue, left Tuesday night with a group of officers from Fort Bragg who are being transferred first to Fort Lawton, Seattle, Wash., then to the Far East Command. Mrs. Garrett and their two little boys, Tommy, 4, and Bobby, a year and a half, will stay here during his overseas duty. They moved from Fort Bragg to the Roy Newtons' garage apartment about two weeks ago.

The Garretts, who hail from Birmingham, Ala., are by no means newcomers to Southern Pines. They lived here during World War 2, before Captain Garrett went to the ETO, and returned here after the war to live for a while.

Christmas was made happier for Mrs. Frank Shea, of the Parkview hotel, by the arrival last Saturday of a letter from her son, Cpl. Francis Shea, who is in Korea. Monday, another came for her elder son, Bill Wilson. Both were written December 15.

These were the first letters from Corporal Shea since October—before the desperate, losing struggle against the communists in North Korea began. He wrote that it was still mighty cold but he was fine, and that he had received the Christmas box his mother sent him and enjoyed the fruitcake, cookies and other good things it contained.

He is with a chemical motor battalion, at present attached to a British brigade below Seoul.

Mr. and Mrs. Sam C. Riddle heard December 15, after a long and agonizing wait, from their son Cpl. Sam C. Riddle, Jr., who is with the 178th Regimental Combat Team of the Seventh division, the only UN unit to penetrate to the Manchurian border. The heart of the whole country was with the unit in its perilous struggle of more than 200 miles through mountainous, communist-infested territory to the sea. For safety's sake, it was under a news blackout the whole way.

Sam's letter was written December 9, after the team had reached Hungnam. He told his parents he was all right. Since then the evacuation of Hungnam has been completed without further loss of men, to be announced to a grateful country on Christmas day.

Grains of Sand

Southern Pines is the kind of place where even rats ride around in Cadillacs. We got this information from no less a person than the president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Arch F. Coleman, Chamber president, thought he was doing right well to have a Cadillac himself. He didn't intend to share it with a rodent. But one moved in, building a nest of straw and such under the hood every night, for Arch to move out every morning.

He got the nest out, but not the rat. He could hear the critter but never see it as it scuttled into the interior regions of the car. He sought help at a local service station the other day. The attendant lifted the hood, and there was the rat, caught by surprise. They stared at each other for a second, then she disappeared again and as far as anyone knows she's still in there.

For those who don't care to ride with him after they learn this, Arch says the rat is no bother at all and can't get into the passenger portion of the car.

The study of history is an illuminating thing, and the pathway toward the future is often made clear by the past. This is one reason we are eager to see history taught well, and thoroughly, to our young people, and to see them have a proper respect for it. As for their elders, do we sometimes let our views be circumscribed by today's headlines, without turning back the pages to see what headlines history wrote long before we were born?

A note of hope in what seems to most of us a pretty hopeless situation was sounded by Samuel Porter, a writer of history and former history teacher of Rochester, N. Y., in a letter last week to a friend in Southern Pines, Miss Frances Campbell:

"The national situation, and international, are appalling. If we can avoid war with Russia, I feel sure that Russia will, in time, collapse internally. History shows that dictatorships always fall in time. Human beings will not continue in slavery forever—the natural human desire for individual freedom and civil liberty is inherent in man everywhere, and will, as it always has, burst all restraining bonds. Give the Russian people time. The human urge for liberty to live a life in one's own free way is deep-seated in everyone. This may be a long time in coming, but the Iron Curtain will in time, I do believe, be shattered by explosions inside."

This is to serve notice on whoever delivered a pile of new bricks and sand to the back lot behind the Nicholson and Kleinspehn homes on East New York avenue: nobody in either family knows where they came from, whom they are for nor why, but

they can find plenty of uses for them, and if the bricks and sand aren't reclaimed by the end of this week, they are going to be considered the property of aforesaid Nicholson and Kleinspehn families, to be dedicated to whatever uses they decide.

In fact, there are just about enough for an outdoor fireplace. In case this isn't strictly legal, the Nicholsons and Kleinspehns state that rather high storage charges began the day the mysterious delivery was discovered, Sunday, December 17.

The Tom Vanns took their disastrous Christmas Eve loss with philosophy and irrepressible good humor, though the fire which destroyed their homestead at Manly also burned up practically everything they owned.

Tom and Cornelia Vann said they had a mattress they'd been wanting to get rid of for years. It was old and lumpy, and sunk in the middle, and they'd often remarked that the only way they knew of to get a new mattress was to burn up the old one.

Came the fire—and what was the first thing that got saved? The mattress.

Unloading the few possessions they had left from the car in front of the Southland Sunday, Tom stood with a box of crackers in one hand and a carton of tea bags in the other. "Somebody threw them to me out of a window and I caught them and started to throw them right back," he said.

This was not belittling in any way the help which was given them by neighbors and friends, who came apace from everywhere as soon as the alarm went out. . . The Fergusons and Vanns all expressed themselves as eternally grateful for the swift response and wonderful aid that was given. . . The crowd included people who had been sitting up trimming Christmas trees. . . People who had gone to bed and just gotten to sleep. . . Young people in evening clothes straight from a party. . . People who had turned in early, not expecting to awake again until odors of Sunday morning breakfast summoned them from slumber.

A question of perennial interest—what would you save first in case of fire? We know an elderly lady who mullered over this problem often. . . She lived in a third floor apartment, and felt sure that if fire broke out belowstairs, she wouldn't have much time to decide. . . She had various cherished heirlooms and family pictures earmarked for rescue first, then her purse and heavy clothing.

One day the fire she had anticipated so long actually broke out, and she unlocked an old trunk which had not been opened for

years and saved a waspwaist corset 50 years old.

And Clyde Council tells us of a fire he witnessed in which a man stood at a second floor window and tossed china wash bowls and pitchers to the ground, where they broke with a resounding smash, then struggled down the stairs with a mattress over his shoulder.

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