

THE PILOT

Southern Pines North Carolina

"In taking over The Pilot no changes are contemplated. We will try to keep this a good paper. 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.

Southern Pines As A Resort Town

(Second of two editorials)
A perceptive observer, commenting on a recent suggestion that the town appropriate more money for resort advertising, said that if Southern Pines had no resort background or facilities and that if ambitious promoters undertook to create such an activity here, many thousands of dollars would likely be contributed by persons who would see the good sense and economic promise of such a proposal.

This observer cited the fact that over \$450,000 was pledged by the people of Moore County—a great deal of this sum originating in Southern Pines—in a recent effort to induce a college to locate here. Yet a pitifully small amount of money is now forthcoming for maintenance and promotion of Southern Pines as a resort—that is, to build and improve an "industry" that already is well established, with a half-century of background and experience, not to mention a measure of fame and acclaim.

In an editorial last week, we pointed out that a great many of the permanent, year-round residents of Southern Pines are here because this community is a resort, offering greater attractions than does the average community in entertainment, sports and general hospitality.

Improving and promoting Southern Pines as a resort, therefore, is an activity that cannot be divorced from the welfare of the year-round community as a whole. The resort business is an industry as actual and valuable as a plant with smoking chimneys.

Southern Pines is not starting on the ground floor in any such improvement and promotion effort. Aside from its long resort background and impressive but yet inadequate facilities for sports and hospitality, there is now on the books at town hall an ordinance, authorized by the voters in a 1950 election, that permits the town to spend for advertising and promotion an amount that would be not more than one-tenth of one per cent nor less than one-fortieth of one per cent of the total property valuation here.

At the current property valuation of about \$7,000,000, this authorizes an annual expenditure of between \$1,750 and \$7,000. The advertising appropriation in the 1956-'57 budget, now before the council for consideration, is only \$500.

Hotel and many business people think this sum is far too little for the town to spend; and they speak with authority because a number

of them are willing to chip in to help provide for Southern Pines a coordinated advertising program that would effectively utilize both public and private funds.

Under the budget now before the council, at a time when the No. 1 thru-way project, heavy equipment replacement and other items have strained it to the utmost, it may not on such short notice be possible this year to make any drastic upward revision for advertising funds. But we think the council should give town participation in advertising its careful attention, with a view toward increasing the appropriation in the future, if not this next fiscal year.

Aside from the matter of advertising, as was noted by the spokesman who appeared recently before the council, there should be improvement and expansion in our resort facilities. Mentioned before the council was a Country Club operated independently of any sponsoring organization (comparable to the Pinehurst Country Club) and improvements in golf courses to make them "as well maintained as any in the area." With these points we agree.

Once these moves are made—a Country Club, better golf courses and more advertising—there would be created, according to one informed observer who knows the resort business, a "climate conducive to further investment." And we agree with this observer that major investment in modern hotel facilities here is not likely to be made until there is progress toward a new resort "climate" via the moves suggested to the council.

While Southern Pines does not have any strictly modern hotels, neither does Pinehurst, a notably successful resort, and we do not see in this fact a major block to a substantial increase of resort business here. We do think that the potential resort business here, if properly developed, would warrant additional modern hotel facilities. From the sidelines, we make the suggestion that a kind of cottage colony facility, with central dining room and other conveniences, may be the type of installation that would be best suited to the needs of this community and the preferences of the golf and horse people who like or would like to come here.

So, we give a boost to those persons who are anxious to improve the situation here in resort facilities and to advertise more effectively. We agree that these are essential first steps to other developments in Southern Pines as a resort in the future.

Rural Zoning: Best Answer To A Problem

In writing about zoning recently in these columns we noted that zoning is something that people are inclined to forget about until they need it to protect their neighborhoods from some undesirable development—or until they themselves attempt a project that runs up against zoning regulations.

This applies, of course, only in an area where zoning is in force. And nearly all such areas are within the limits of municipalities, except around those cities and towns which have taken advantage of a North Carolina statute that authorizes them to zone outward a mile from their city limits on the assumption that this territory may at some future date become a part of the city and should therefore be controlled in its development.

There is still another and more remote group who sometimes wish they had zoning regulations—the suburban and rural zoning residents who find that a peaceful and lovely landscape has been disturbed by poorly planned and inadequately engineered developments. With no recourse whatever, these folks must watch while trees are cut down, land is stripped and cut to pieces by machines, lots are laid off and an area of beauty is transformed into

the site of trailers, unsightly houses or other developments detrimental to the character of the rural neighborhood as it once existed or as it should, by every dictate of good taste, common sense and intelligent planning, be developed in the future.

The moral of all this is: suburban and rural residents in areas favored by nature should look to their surroundings and make sure that property around them is in the hands of persons who will use it well. Lacking zoning, this is their only recourse—but it is, alas, a recourse that is by no means always possible or practical.

So, as much as this entire Sandhills resort area has at stake, by way of keeping up its appearance for visitors and investors, we think some suburban and rural areas should be subject to zoning regulations. And we think that residents of such areas should press for such regulations before the county commissioners. A concerted effort by landowners in the Sandhills area should produce results. We are unfamiliar with rural zoning procedure, but are confident the matter merits vigorous investigation and county action, even though it might require a special act of the next General Assembly to authorize the necessary legislation.

Letters To Editor: Everybody Benefits

An item elsewhere in today's Pilot notes a new deadline of Monday noon for letters to "The Public Speaking" column that appears on this page. So we take this occasion to tell readers again that we welcome letters on any subject but particularly on those matters which affect daily life in this community, such as the two appearing last week about the proposed site of the new municipal buildings.

Speaking generally and repeating what has been noted on this page before—we will print any letter that is not libelous nor obscene, with this exception: we dislike to print and sometimes have not printed letters that are obviously not original with the writer. We are thinking of a few letters we have received which were sent as a means of introducing into print material originating from a source other than the writer, designed to serve by their publication, some special political or commercial interest. But judicious, original and sincere use of quotations within a letter would not, of course, be barred.

No material that comes into a newspaper office is treated with more care and respect than letters to the editor. No doubt it is just because

they are accorded such attention that an attempt is sometimes made to use them as a propaganda vehicle.

The reason editors brighten up when letters for publication are found in the mail is that these letters are, above everything else, an expression of opinion. And opinion, especially on local subjects, is interesting: any reader is challenged to agree or disagree. Thought is stimulated—a good thing for readers, for the paper and for the town. What makes an editor sleep really sweetly at night is to have a good controversy going between readers, in his letter column, on a subject of dominant community interest.

Often, hearing street-corner conversations, we say to one or more of the persons involved: "Why not write us a letter saying what you're saying right now? People would be interested." Usually, no such letters are forthcoming; it is easier to talk than to write. Sometimes—and one of the interesting letters printed last week originated in just this way—people do write, as well as speak what they think. And when this happens, everybody benefits,



Man With A Hoe

SPRING DAWN IS LIKE THE SPIRIT COMING

Early Morn: The Sun Steals Up

This is the time when you hear the quail early in the morning. Maybe it's their soft whistling that wakes you, or maybe it is the loud jays and cardinals talking over the day's plans.

Or maybe it is—not the first rays of the sun—it's too early for that—but the feel that day is coming.

Daybreak is a fine word for certain times of the year, but not for now. It is too sudden, too dramatic, too strenuous a word. The sun steals up these spring days. As you catch the soft glow through the trees, not yet fully aight, that wonderful phrase in the Bible comes to mind: "The dayspring from on high." And yet, even that isn't quite right. The words described the coming of the Messiah, glorious hope and faith of the Jewish people in the coming again of the living Christ. But, again, that is too strong, too real, too much of this world for the coming of the spring dawn. This is the Spirit coming.

Nodding Shapes

The quail are whistling closer. As the light grows, you can see them now. Quick movement close to the low growth of the azaleas. A nodding of round little shapes, breasts almost white in the shadow of the leaves, the dark, sharply-etched bobbing heads. It is a covey; or, now, perhaps you'd call it a family at this stage. Father, mother, can't tell how many children. You can hear their peeping and see the rustle, but they keep close; well behaved are the quail children.

The parents whistle, their melodic "bob-white!" and from across the garden, still dark in shade, comes an answer: another brood is out sampling the early worm.

In fact, a lot of broods, by the increasing chorus. The thrushes are fluting, their silver liquid arpeggios touch the scale, from note to note, from leaf to leaf through the trees. The cardinal slips off her nest in the silver-moon rosette that shades the terrace with its overgrown clusters, and joins her mate high in the biggest pine. Whew! Good to get away from the children for a bit and stretch your wings.

Orange and Blue

The light steals quicker now; the first ray of the sun lights the sky and catches red birds up there, turning their plumage to an orange glow against the pale blue. And the father lifts his cocked head and starts his dog-whistling.

Dog? Dog! That's what you were subconsciously hearing: scratch, scratch; knock, knock; scratch; and then: "W-h-i-n-e!" from behind you somewhere. Poor Tuffy! Run and open the door and almost fall down the

stairs as she races past to get to the door. Out she goes, black and white shape bounding, and out you go onto the dewy grass, feeling the cold shiver of air creep suddenly around your shoulders. Get out where the sun strikes through; kick off your slippers and feel the dew between your toes.

She Saw Again

What was that story? Your mind searches back: Hans Anderson or Grimm: something about the dew in the early, early morn. Was there a blind girl, a poor girl or else a princess. . . no middle classes in fairytales. But she was beautiful and she was blind. She walked in the dew of early morn and someone, an old woman or a fairy or both in one said: "Bathe your eyes in the dew of the grass on yonder hillside, my dear, and you shall see what you shall see." And she did and she saw the fair world again and the sun coming up over the hill.

And Tuffet comes racing back right then and runs in wild cir-

cles round and round, like a toy train on its track. She leans on the curves, her feathery tail flying, and then she takes off into the box garden, jumping the low box hedges as if the place were an Olympic training course.

In Jubilation

Is it her strenuous appearance that really wakes the birds? The quail whistle louder than ever, but not in alarm: just a sort of joining in jubilation. Cardinals have a note of successful achievement in their call. They whistle to the silent house and, behold, The Dog came forth!

Summer tangers have joined the chorus now, their soft descending chuckling adding a touch of mirth. Jays cackle, a crow creaks out his squawking caw, after a good deal of preliminary old-gentleman's morning hawking of the vocal passages. Finally he gets them clear and then sails off over the gleaming pinetops. The very batting of his wings shows his impatience with the lowly choristers still down there in the shadows. —K. L. B.

Tarheel Delicacies Lauded

North Carolinians would cast a heavy vote for barbecue and counseled him on their "greatest treat" in the food line.

This was indicated from a sampling of tastes among State officials, editors, broadcasters, and hotel, restaurant and food merchandising executives by the State Advertising Division. The straw vote was conducted to compile the latest information on North Carolina's favorite food for a Chicagoan who wrote Governor Hodges that he is writing a story on gastronomic features of all the states for a national magazine.

Responding to the request for the Governor, State Advertising Director Charles Parker stated that the "diversity and multitude of superlative North Carolina dishes makes it impossible to select one." He listed three as follows:

Country Ham

This is a subject to launch the Tar Heel gourmet into superlatives—and words to the wise—because genuine North Carolina Country Cured Hams are like great vintages. Only a small percentage of the State's extensive pork production can attain this exalted estate. Formerly available only direct from farms with an especially gifted ham curer, the art of curing has spread and genuine North Carolina Country Hams are finding their way to wider markets.

This ham is no kin to the pink, bland product described in the Tar Heel State as "packing house ham." Its origin is a "smoke house," and its red meat is redolent with the aroma of hickory

smoke. Six months is minimum age for these hams, and connoisseurs who like their ham really robust age them with tender care for two years or more.

The curing process is similar but there is a difference in flavor and texture of hams from corn-fed pigs, and those fed on peanuts—mostly in the northeastern part of the State. Peanut fed meat is softer. Both types have their loyal following.

N. C. Barbecue

This is succulent young pork, slow roasted over hickory coals and hotly seasoned. It is served coarsely chopped, not sliced or ground. It is at its prime when hot off the coals, and is served that way when possible, but it can be refrigerated and sold through commercial outlets. The origin of North Carolina barbecue is lost in ante-bellum lore, but within memory its preparation has been unchanged in the time-honored method.

Hushpuppies

This is a corn meal bread, deep fried, and equally good with North Carolina barbecue and seafood, of which North Carolina is an important producer. Legend has it that hushpuppies originated in plantation days when slaves cooked corn meal batter in grease remaining in the huge iron skillets in which country ham or fish had been fried, to feed hunting dogs to keep them from barking while their masters feasted.

The straw vote also brought out enthusiastic votes for North Carolina oysters, salt herring, spoon bread, pickles, peanuts, strawberries and unusual sweets.

Grains of Sand

Reader, Be Brave

In mercy to GRAINS readers, who have no doubt had their fill of dog and cat items lately, we have been holding a couple of the same genre, thinking to slyly slip them in some week in the future. But, noting they fit the space available today, we are throwing them both at our patient public in one swoop. May we be forgiven and, cross our heart, we will not mention dogs again in this column until . . . well, until another cute dog item comes along. Be brave: next week you might have to read an item about (shudder) PEOPLE:

Caught In The Act

Pooch troubles again, or nearly. Only avoided, in fact, by some unusual thinking and action on the part of helpful friends.

When we got back from a recent trip, Valerie and Silas Nicholson were there to meet the train and drive us home. All talking like houses afire; turned into Ridge Street, still talking, and then our eye fell on an annoyingly familiar object, not to say character, edging along by the Madigans' gate.

"Hey! There goes my dog!" "Where?" says Silas, "That pooch? That long-haired, black and white, kind of dirty. . .?" "Yes," we said. "That's Tuffet."

Silas slammed on the brakes, hopped out and started to run back.

Just then a car drew up beside Tuffet, who ran to the curb wagging her tail. The door swung open and she hopped in.

Silas ran harder, and let out a roar: "Hey! You! Stop!"

The car stopped and as Silas came alongside, a familiar face peered cautiously out.

"Friend," said Silas in no friendly tone, "You've picked up the wrong dog. That's Mrs. B's dog."

"It sure is," said Bud McPhail, "and that's why I'm picking her up to take her home."

And just then Tuffet drowned all further conversation by letting out a shriek of welcome as we stuck our head in the window to apologize and say: "Mr. Nicholson, please meet Mr. McPhail." "Gracious!" said the good dog-samaritan, "I thought you were the sheriff at least!"

And the culprit, Tuffet, shed hairs on everyone and licked everyone's face, and that, for the time being, was that.

We repeat: for the time being.

Dogs And The US Postal Service

The Post Office Department, (national) is biting its nails over what to do about the cross-dog-versus-mailman problem. Certain dogs do not like mailmen. Conversely, or perhaps only logically, some mailmen do not like dogs. Some dogs just naturally go for the postal department's legs and some of the legs just naturally kick. Quandary.

Suggestions:
(1) Equip the postal trousseaus with padding, or even wire mesh linings. Objection: too hot and too heavy and just about impossible to walk in the things.

(2) Arm postmen with ammonia-filled guns. Objection: dogs indifferent; owners furious.

(3) Feed candy to the dogs to make them friendly. Objection: then they will follow the mailman in hordes in the way the rats did the Pied Piper of Hamelin; they will lose themselves and render collection of letters unduly difficult, also create a traffic hazard.

(4) Use psychology by looking the dog straight in the eye and refusing to give way. Objection: Supposing it doesn't work. . . and then there's the difficulty of getting the right address while looking the dog in the eye. And what about the cross-eyed mailman? A rarity, perhaps, but, after all, bitable.

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