



Joë Lanier

**SON of A
GUN**

It takes a good bit of nerve to stand up in front of a group of people and say your thinking, especially if your ideas oppose the flow of the meeting. No one wants to be booed or heckled, but to be sincere to one's thoughts is to be praised, not to just join along with the crowd to be popular. Thus I think Gerald Bell of Beutancus and Ruby Ramsey of Teachey are two special people. . . . They got up and spoke their thinking even though it was against the seemingly flow of the meeting. Whether I agree with their thinking or not is not important. What is important, I believe, is they had the guts to stand up and oppose an organized crowd. There were no boos nor were there any outbreaks of applause. Bell and Ramsey were the opposition at the half-cent sales tax public hearing held last month. Bell opposed the tax unless the tax was used strictly in the proposed budget just passed by the county commissioners. Mrs. Ramsey's opposition was to letting the schools have all the money. The municipalities are in need also, says Mrs. Ramsey. If I had some type of an award, I would certainly present those two with one for being so sincere to their thoughts and saying what they thought. . . .

There was one error in the Son-of-a-Gun story about the liberal vehicle use policy for the town-owned vehicles in Warsaw. There was a comma left out. . . . One should have been placed after Wilmington. The sentence should have read. . . . "The town clerk has the use of a town-owned auto, not so much to drive home and to work, as he lives within the city limits. . . . but he is also allowed to drive it to Wilmington, to the golf course each Wednesday afternoon when the town offices are closed and where ever else he so desires. . . ."

As we look around the countryside, we see things we once thought very important to life disappearing. The tall, wood-fired tobacco barns used to dot the country side. This time of year they were smoking and smelling of tobacco. . . . Mules, one time the staple of the farm, has all but vanished. . . . There are a few still around, but they are now a curiosity. . . . The pack house. . . . At one time it was probably the most sound building on the farm — more sound than the house. This building housed the corn crop, the tobacco crop, the hay, the cotton, the mules, the cow, the farm plows and disc, and the harness. The pack houses are about gone. . . . All these things were very important when I was young, but the changing way of life has caused most to be filed under "No Longer Needed," or "Not Important." The thing I haven't mentioned yet that seems

to be diminishing but is still important in my opinion is the family get-togethers. . . . the family dinners, or reunions . . . or whatever you may call them. Once a year my wife's families get together and eat and reminisce and meet the newborn and the new-wed. The husband's families did the same thing. However, it has gotten to be too much trouble anymore. . . . Why, there are football games on TV — There is a party at the beach — too lazy or too tired. . . . There are plenty of excuses for not going, and only one for going. . . . That excuse is it's family and you should keep in touch. One day in the future, it wouldn't surprise me if we will not know who our first cousins are. . . .

I wish I knew all the facts about the shooting down of the Korean airliner. I doubt if we will ever know all the facts from Russia, the U.S.A., Korea or Japan. I also doubt if there is sufficient facts from anyone to convince me the killing of innocent civilians is justified. How can any nation put a value on life? That is an individual responsibility or choice. . . .

I overheard a lady say, "It was so cold in that fast food joint, I didn't even have to chew my food. . . . Just stuck it in my mouth as my teeth were chattering so." . . .
Son-of-a-Gun. . . .

CLARKE SERVES AS PAGE Governor Hunt's offices in Raleigh during the week of Aug. 29 - Sept. 2. Donna is a ville, daughter of Bertha B. senior at East Duplin High School, served as a page in School.

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