



Joë Lanier

**SON of A  
GUN**

At its last meeting, Warsaw's town board added another first, or another high, to the list. Warsaw residents now have to pay more for their town tags than any other town in Duplin County. . . To those who live in Warsaw and must pay, the cost is \$3. Other Duplin County towns have fees of one or two dollars. We should rejoice, I suppose, for they could have raised it to \$5. How they raised it is the bad part. Town Clerk Alfred Herring advised the board a new law allows them to raise the fee for town license tags to \$5. . . The board decided that if they pay 57 cents and sell it for \$1, they do not make enough money, so they upped the price to \$3. What they needed for the extra money for was not discussed. . . "We can always use it. Just put it in the General Fund," was the remark. . . That is a poor reason to raise fees as far as I am concerned. . . Just because you can raise them, raise them? Warsaw already has the highest tax rate of any Duplin County town; the water-sewer rate is also among the highest. Check this one out. . . When Warsaw accepted federal funds, it mandated the sewer and water systems should pay for themselves. . . In the past, town tax money was used to help keep up the water and sewer systems. . . But, this is no longer the case. . . So, up went the water and sewer prices. . . However, now that the tax money can no longer assist in the upkeep of the sewer plant, what do you think? . . . Of course they raised the tax rate too. . . The tax money that was used to keep the sewer plant operation can no longer be used as such. . . So, where did this money go? Another first in Warsaw is its vehicle-use policy. . . There is none. . . Apparently town employees can do or drive wherever they desire, using a town vehicle and town gasoline. . . If a vehicle is not in the best of shape, it may be all right to haul things from the town maintenance office to the sewer plant. . . But, what the heck. . . Buy a better one for \$2,500 and let an employee drive it home. . . The water and sewer rates were just raised. . . Use that money to pay for the trips to and from home as well as for the new truck. . . After all, let the tax rate go up or the sewer rate go up. . . This employee and others do not live in town. They just drive a town vehicle. . . There is no wonder that the people who live in Warsaw have to pay the highest taxes, water and sewer rates, license tag rates, and so on the way town-owned things are used. . . Worse yet, things don't seem to be heading in a better direction. . .

When the county commissioners set the 1983-84 county budget, they allowed for a surplus, or reserve, of half-a-million dollars. They raised the tax rate so this could be true. . . Now, since this time the half-cent sales tax was passed and with a different distribution plan statewide. Also, revenue sharing was renewed. . . So, what we have here is extra money. . . Well, what does this extra money amount to? . . . If we were to change it into tax rate, it would amount to about 30 cents. . . Had all this income been taken into account and used to operate the county government, the county tax rate could be less than 50 cents. . . Now that we have this extra money, let's hope someone will put together some plans of growth and use it wisely, not helter-skelter. . . I don't mind paying for growth, but not political growth. . .

I have been planning to retell this ever since I heard it. . . It happened to Deborah Millen, who works for the Mount Olive Tribune. . . Or at least, I was told that. . . I don't know all the details, but I do have the general idea. . . It seems Deborah saw this mouse drowning in a pool of water. Of course females are frightened of mice and rats, but also, drowning is a horrible way to die. . . So, thinks she, if she could use a long pole or stick and throw the mouse to the other side of the pool or puddle, it wouldn't drown and would not get on her, either. . . Now, it took a lot of nerve to hold a stick out to a mouse that could easily run up the pole or stick and get her. . . But, she got down under the little mouse and with a flick threw it to the other side. However, lurking nearby and watching the whole thing was a cat. . . And, as the mouse went hurtling through the air, the cat jumped and caught it in midair like an old hound dog catching a biscuit. . . What a way to be saved. . . Son-of-a-Gun. . .

**Home Economics  
News**

**Dependents**  
When is a child no longer a child? You will probably get a lot of disagreement, especially from parents, older children and even insurance companies. Health insurance companies have their own ideas about when a child is no longer a dependent. Usually this occurs when a child reaches his 19th birthday, marries, or becomes gainfully employed — whichever comes first. But you might do well to check your family's

policy. Some health insurance companies consider children to be dependents up to age 23 or even 25; that is, if they meet certain requirements. To qualify for coverage on the parent's policy, the child must be a full-time student who is unmarried and who relies on the family for support. If he meets those qualifications, the family policy may continue to cover him. But, you will want to read your policy carefully to make sure this is the case.

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—Mark Van Doren

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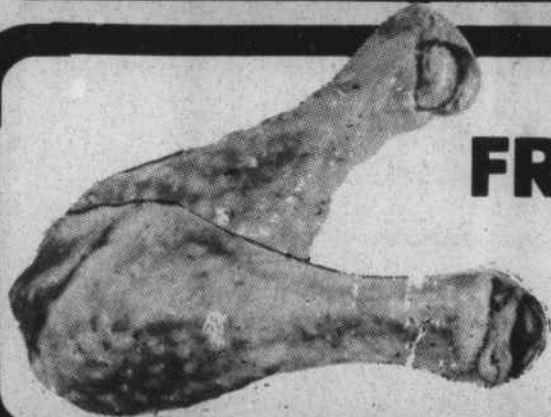
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