

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Thursday, March 28, 1985

Town Deserves To Know Why

The abrupt suspension of Shallotte Police Chief Wayne Campbell late Monday is an unfortunate situation not only for Campbell and the police department, but also for the entire town.

Questions about the reasons for Campbell's suspension cast a cloud of doubt not only on his personal performance, but on the position itself and the department.

Shallotte residents have gradually learned to respect the department and to trust in the professional integrity of its officers. It would be a shame for a single incident to mar this relationship.

As a courtesy to Campbell pending a hearing next Wednesday night, town officials are not discussing the March 14 incident that apparently led to his suspension, with pay, by Mayor Beamon Hewett. It must be noted that the mayor did not act in haste, but only after talking with all five town aldermen, the town attorney and Campbell. For some reason, he felt action had to be taken immediately rather than at the board's April 3rd meeting. Yet, reassuringly, he made clear he thought the chief had done nothing illegal.

In his 20 months as chief of police Campbell has helped restore dignity to a department stolen and demoralized by his predecessor's involvement in illegal activities that led to a conviction in "Operation Gateway."

Campbell has chalked up, by the mayor's account and that of others, an excellent record—excluding this single incident.

For the sake of not only Campbell, but for the office he holds as well, the townspeople of Shallotte deserve to know the reason he was suspended—whether his suspension is upheld or if he is dismissed, reprimanded or reinstated without fault. It's the least due them.

Write Us

The Beacon welcomes letters to the editor. All letters must be signed and include the writer's address. Under no circumstances will unsigned letters be printed. Letters should be legible. The Beacon reserves the right to edit libelous comments. Address letters to The Brunswick Beacon, P.O. Box 470, Shallotte, N.C. 28459.

Ocean Water: A Soup Of Nutrients

Even on the brightest of days when the water appears cleanest, scientists tell us ocean water is made up of millions of tiny nutrients. Microorganisms live in the water and in the minute channels between sand grains on the wet beach. Remains of crabs, snails, clams and fishes add to the mix. The "soup of nutrients" brings in many small creatures eager to take their fill from the generous ocean.

Microscopic organisms feed on some of the nutrients and are fed on by "filter feeders" who pass the water through their cilia or gills and sift out the nutrients. On most of our beaches, the abundant mole crabs and small, colorful coquinas are among the filter feeders. We see these two species in the spring and summer, active in the intertidal zone where waves are washing on the sandy beach. Coquinas and mole crabs move with the tide and sift food from the sea.

The presence of coquinas and mole crabs and hundreds of other small



Bill Faver

species means that crabs and fish and birds will come to the shallow beach to feed on them. One of the favorite baits for pompano fishermen are the moulting mole crabs which seem to be a delicacy for those fish feeding in the rolling surf. Sandpipers, willets, whimbrels, knots, and grackles are among the birds brought to work the wet beach by the presence of mole crabs and coquinas. Gulls eat mole crabs left too high on the beach by a retreating wave. Ghost crabs search for them at night and will carry small ones back to their burrow entrances and feast there.

Ospreys, herons, pelicans, and terns get their coquinas and mole crabs by picking fish that have eaten

them from the water. This example of the food chain is true also with little fish that are eaten by bigger fish that are eaten by still bigger fish.

In The Wild Edge, Phillip Kopper writes, "So in one respect the living is easy for small creatures that patronize the generous tidal caterer. Because the ocean is an endless source of small meals, many slightly larger animals learned to put up with the oceanic headaches of constant pounding. They'd grow complacently fat if they didn't spend their lives evading the larger animals that learned to feed on them. Each animal lives and dies, eats and is eaten."

The soup nutrients is served to many creatures in the water and on the land. We humans even partake of it when we savor crab meat and shrimp and oysters and fish. We should be thankful for the opportunity and appreciative of the complex food webs that transfer the soup into the things we have learned to enjoy.



THESE SHELLS are left over from small coquinas who live on the soup of nutrients found in ocean waters.

Living Along The Canal Is Adventurous

Some folks might comment, "You never know what you might find in those canals at Holden Beach." That may be true covering both the good and the bad, but it also depends on what you are looking for.

Life along the canal is worth writing about. If I was a writer, of the novelist kind, it'd be the perfect environment for staring across the water and letting one's imagination run wild. (Like the author who packs his bags each winter and heads for the Rockies and bangs out a 500-page manuscript in just days.)

How they do it I'll never know. It seems they would all come back to their publishers with a handful of insane, wintry thrillers like Stephen King's "The Shining," in which Jack Nicholson plays a deranged innkeeper who finally freezes to death while lost in a lovely, outdoor maze.

However, writing while overlooking the canals would be different. While stationed in front of the sliding-glass doors, one could glance out at



Terry Pope

the morning sunrise bouncing off the ripples and maybe even catch a small popeye mullet practicing aerobics along the surface.

If you look close enough, you could see the oysters clinging to the sides of the cement walls as they spit back at the falling tide in disgust. A clam may even let out a rude burp, sending bubbles to the surface.

But they must all be very careful about their actions, because perched across the canal on the neighbor's A-framed roof are dozens of seagulls. If the scavengers are lucky, they will pounce on an unsuspecting, brave

minnow sunning himself along the shallow edge or else grab handfuls of stale bread from a woman still dressed in curlers and nightgown who is standing on the porch, throwing the moldy crust into the breeze.

The scene also changes every six hours, giving the writer a variety of different tidal settings, water levels and positioning of floating dock steps that provide shade for all the crabs.

And after the beautiful sunset, when night finally falls, you could feel good about yourself for having put in a hard day's work of writing and forget about the dark canal, right? Wrong.

Being a reporter, which is similar to being a writer I guess, I began to notice all of these things recently. Paco, my cocker spaniel, is even more alert than I when it comes to checking out the canal life.

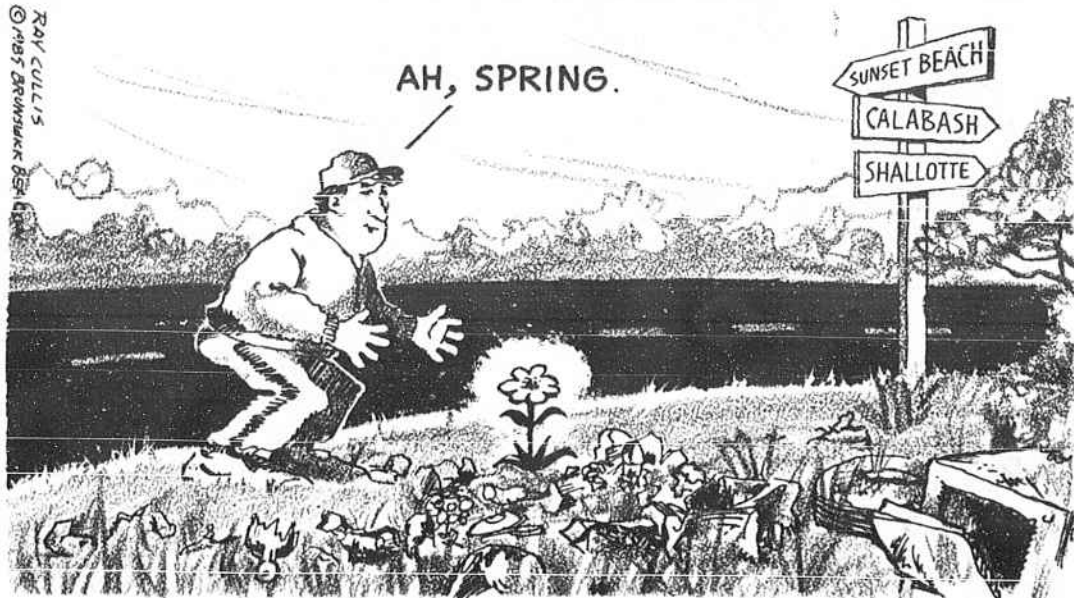
It is he who awakes in the middle of the night, wrinkles his forehead, perks up his ears and goes bouncing down the hall at midnight at the top

of his lungs screaming something about a big bird. Actually, it's more of a common house dog bark he lets out, but I've become so used to hearing it that it is easily interpreted by now.

On several occasions, Paco has become amazed by a big blue heron that wades in the canal at night, directly across from the house along the edge of the canal. When Paco first discovered the creature, I thought he would break the door down to get to the fellow, but the heron only stretched his long neck for a view of Paco in return.

The heron simply stood his ground, or water, as though asking, "What's wrong? A bird can't take a midnight stroll down the canal if he wants to?"

It took some time, but I finally convinced Paco that finding a big bird in the canal at midnight was nothing out of the ordinary. It's just another form of life you might see while living along the adventurous canal.



Hooked On A Love/Hate Relationship

I don't know about you, but I never know whether to love or hate 24-hour teller machines. Banking machines are convenient, but you can't ever count on one to work when you need it most—as



Susan Usher

when heading out of town in an emergency with an empty gas tank and no credit card.

I mostly hate them, but still keep going back for more punishment. Why I don't know.

It doesn't matter where you bank

or where you live—I've had unbelievable experiences in Morganton, Raleigh, Chapel Hill and Shallotte with teller machines.

Something that happened the other night illustrates my point. Two of us were heading off to the show and our schedule was kind of tight. The banks had closed by the time I left the office. After running home to fix a bite of supper, on the way to the show (or so went the plan) we were going to stop at the bank so I could withdraw money. Sound familiar?

We drove up and wondered why there were two vehicles waiting yet no one standing at the machine.

As we watched—it was 7 p.m. by now—the little sign on the machine switched from "closed" to "open" just as the first vehicle gave up and started away. It circled back, though, as the man in the car ahead of us jumped out and headed for the machine.

He transacted his business quickly and grinning in relief, I hopped out with my trusty card and headed toward the machine. Just as I extended the hand attached to the card, the consarned sign switched from "open" to "closed" again and a notice flashed up that the machine was temporarily out of order. So was my temper.

By now we were running late; I still had no money. The van circled back around and as we pulled out the parking lot, was patiently waiting—again. Trusting soul.

And it's not just a problem getting money out of the machine. I've had the tellers also refuse to work when I needed to transfer money from savings to checking or to make a deposit before 8 a.m.

One time in Morganton the machine literally ate my card—and not because I'd forgotten my number. The little bugger had malfunctioned.

Off from work a little late and bound for a BPW conference in Winston-Salem, I had to have cash. All I had was a two-week paycheck. When the machine first began acting up, I simply thought, "That figures," and didn't lose my cool. I was counting on using a machine in Statesville or Winston. But no—the confounded machine ate my card.

On Monday tellers returned not only mine, but those of about a dozen other people snookered by the machine over the weekend. It never did "close," just kept taking cards. I got a feature out of it.

Meanwhile I'd driven to every convenience store in Morganton looking for someone who would and could cash my check. Finally, a friend who ran a mom 'n' pop store near my old apartment took pity on me after hearing the tale.

Friends you can count on; banking machines you can't.

Mail Contributions To Cancer Society

Doris Strutski, chairman of the Brunswick County Chapter of the American Cancer Society, is handling contributions to the organization's efforts in the fight against cancer.

Mrs. Strutski has urged supporters of the Cancer Society to mail contributions to her at Rt. 3, Box 330, Supply, NC 28462.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Address Parking Problem

To the editor:

I live in a community close to Sunset Beach. I chose to move here seven years ago because of its proximity to the ocean.

At first we were able to freely enjoy the beautiful oceanfront at Sunset Beach. Gradual changes have taken place and Sunset Beach is no longer a public beach. There are no facilities for public parking other than the private area around the pier, for which a season parking permit is required. Inasmuch as the number of parking permits are limited, many of us were denied beach privileges last year.

I have no quarrel with the owner of the lot charging for the use of his lot or with property owners objecting to cars parked on their streets.

I do feel, however, this is a problem that should be addressed by the county. A public parking area should be created and made available to Brunswick County taxpayers, either for a nominal fee or even free. The present daily parking fee at the private lot is \$3.00. I consider this an exorbitant fee for an unprotected swimming area.

How can we get our legislators to do something about this?

Mrs. Martin Quinlan
 Calabash

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