

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Page 4-A

Thursday, May 9, 1985

Boat Owners Are Such A Strange Breed

You can tell it's spring when all the neighborhood boat owners hop into their vessels, start up the engine five or six times, test the steering, seats and fishing gear. If there are sails to check, they are unraveled and tested against the wind and examined upclose for faded spots or mildew.

All of this activity occurs in the backyard, before the boat even sees the water. In fact, boats are practically lived in for three weeks before they are declared ready for the water.

I've been wanting a boat for years, but I've almost decided against getting one after studying what they can do to a person. There must be something about owning a boat that affects the soul and transforms ordinary lawyers, businessmen, doctors and salesmen into weekend boat junkies.

Have you ever noticed how men act when there's a boat resting on a trailer in the yard or tied to the dock out back? They can't seem to keep their hands off the thing. There are



Terry Pope

plenty of junkies in the South Brunswick Islands that can't face life without a spotless boat around the house.

Spotting a boat junkie is not hard to do, just ride down the main beach strand at any local beach and spot the boats that are parked in front of the cottages. Or drive along the canal lots and look for backyard vessels.

Chances are, even if you don't see anyone around, there is someone either underneath the boat or inside with a can of Blue Max polish or bottle of Armor All in their hand. They have probably been there since sunrise, testing the shine at different angles in the sunlight.

They scrub, they mop and polish for hours at a time while sipping drinks and showing off the boat to all of the neighbors. When night falls, they turn on their spotlights that either shine directly on the dock out back or the side of the driveway out front, where the boats are always parked.

That way, the vessels can gleam all night while a party takes place upstairs. They are the topic of conversation all night as other boat owners compare the shine to their own polishing jobs. If the boats are small enough, they are parked in the garage at night and are pulled back out in the morning for another round of polishing.

After three weeks of polishing and grooming, the boat is finally ready for its first spin—a 30-minute cruise down the waterway and back to the dock she goes, to get ready for another three weeks' of polishing and buffing.

It's enough to drive a nosy, non-boater insane, or to go off on

speeches that begin with, "If I had a boat like that, I'd..." Or how about the famous warning, "He's going to rub a hole clean through that boat one of these days."

Polishing, buffing and all the other normal delays that can keep a brand new boat from seeing the water for its first time actually paid off in one case recently. Jack Ziefel of the Shalotte Coast Guard Auxiliary received a certified letter recently warning him that his new Starliner was being recalled by the factory due to a defect in the steering.

Jack had taken some kidding from his neighbors for weeks about not taking his new boat out for a cruise. Ironic enough, weeks of preparations had perhaps prevented a boating accident by someone who preaches boating safety.

I knew all that polishing and buffing must be good for something. Perhaps it's a form of therapy, nautical-therapy or something like that. I wonder how the wives put up with it all?

County Should Disarm All Roadside Hunters

Hunting along roadsides has become one of the most overlooked dangers for both motorists and residents in Brunswick County. It's time for county commissioners to disarm roadside hunters by adopting a countywide ordinance against the unsafe, unsportsmanlike activity.

Residents of the Goodman Road community should be commended for pointing out the dangers of roadside hunting in their neighborhood to the county commissioners, who heard all arguments in the matter at a well-attended public hearing last week. It is not just a problem that needs to be settled in one community, but for the entire county.

The commissioners can either adopt a county ordinance against roadside hunting that would be enforced by the sheriff's department, or seek special legislation that would apply to Brunswick County and fall under the jurisdiction of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission for enforcement. A third option would be to do nothing and to ignore the residents' complaints.

Commissioners should take the initiative now, while the matter is under review, to adopt a countywide ordinance against roadside hunting. Deputies patrolling the roads would be able to keep an eye out for roadside hunters in the communities while performing their regular duties.

There are no reasonable arguments why hunters should be allowed to roam the roads with guns. One poor argument mentioned at last week's public hearing was that hunting from the road is safer than hunting from 200 yards within the woods because of improved visibility.

Hunting from the road is also a cheap way to wipe out a deer in an unsportsmanlike manner as possible. True hunters should have no problems with sticking to the woods or Green Swamp while hunting and using the roads only for transportation and rounding up dogs.

If it's reasonably unsafe to hunt within 500 yards of a house, it should also be unsafe to hunt within 500 yards of a road. Highways are not built to provide clear areas for target practice, but for traffic such as cars or bikes.

Hunters using the roadways for anything other than travel are ignoring important rules about safety and sportsmanship.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Vote No, No, No May 14 In Beer, Wine Referendum

To the editor:
I was very shocked to read your editorial, "Voting Yes, Yes, Yes Will Allow Free Choice" (May 2 issue). You say Shallotte is missing a lot of money by not selling beer and wine in restaurants and motels.

First of all, let me say, money is not everything. There are still a lot of people who like to eat in a family restaurant without a loudmouth drunk sitting beside them and their children. As for people passing by Shallotte's restaurants to eat elsewhere, I can't believe that

Munchies is always full, a Pizza Hut and Kentucky Fried Chicken place have been built, and more on the way. Does this sound like a town that everyone is passing by? Hardly is almost impossible to get into.

There are plenty of places to buy beer and wine and whisky in Shallotte. You say voting yes is a vote for freedom of choice. But you forgot to say voting no comes with that same freedom.

You say Ocean Isle, Calabash and N. Myrtle Beach are getting most of the business. But you forgot to tell about what kind of business. I have been to these places, so let me share this with your readers.

First of all, you will have people to bring whisky inside in their coat or other ways. They are almost always drinking before they get there. They are loud, they talk filthy and at least once or twice a week the law is called because of fights.

Now, Shallotte voters, is this what you want for your town? I don't think you do. I hope and pray you don't vote yes, yes, yes on May 14, but No,

No, No for a town where you can take your family to a safe and clean place to eat and live.

Lloyd Ward
Rt. 1, Shallotte

Headline Heralds The Impossible

To the editor:
This is one letter you will probably not wish to publish. I offer it only as insight into journalism's responsibility to keep the public well informed.

Aside from the fact that there are many unreported events ongoing, in Brunswick County, you can find time to inform us of the impossible (ie: I had heard of schools of fish, but, in last week's Beacon I was told that they form committees).

The headline I am referring to is "Menhaden committee coming." I think this is a very newsworthy event as most readers would be anxious to vacate the location where this committee of inedible fish will meet.

I would offer this to Reader's Digest, but fear it would fall on deaf ears, as the majority of the population are not aware that menhaden are a species of only Atlantic and Gulf waters.

All things considered, I guess I'd rather be watched over by a committee of menhaden than the "Big Brother" of George Orwell's 1984.

Carol Hemlein
Carolina Shores

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.

"YES, I THINK I SEE A NURSING HOME IN THE NEAR FUTURE...
 OH... NOW IT'S FADING, FADING... HERE IT COMES
 AGAIN, I SEE IT BRIGHTER! OH, RATS. IT'S EITHER
 A NURSING HOME OR HALLEY'S COMET!"



Vacation This Year Can Be A Time For Renewal

One of the interesting art prints by Steve Jordan is a poster depicting old rocking chairs on a beach cottage porch. Empty and inviting, the chairs call us to come, sit and relax. Most of us dream of it; so few of us find the time—or take the time—to do it!

In times past, in town and in the country, every house had its front or side porch with rocking chairs, a glider or swing, and maybe even a joggling board. Family and friends sat together on spring and summer evenings and talked of crops and cousins, rain and religion, pigs and politics. On Sunday afternoons families would gather at Grandpa's and Granny's and maybe even so-



Bill Faver

meone would churn ice cream or slice up a watermelon. Children learned to get along together in the yard as they experienced all kinds of games—certainly with hide and seek mixed in at least once. Grown-ups would man the rocking chairs and the porch steps. Families cared and

shared, created and solved problems, and knew each other. Not many of us have porches anymore and few of us have rockers.

Vacations at the beach offer us porches and rocking chairs and a chance to recapture some of the joys of family togetherness we may have lost. We need to view vacation as a retreat—a time to view life differently, to relax, to recharge our energies, to grapple with some ultimate questions. Most of us don't attempt it! We fill our days at the beach with so much activity we are more tired when it's over than we were before. We want to "do it all" in one week.

Perhaps this is the year to try

something different—to plan to sit in a rocking chair for a few hours a day pondering the beauty around us and some of the basic questions of life and living. What am I doing with my life? Am I in control or do I feel pushed here and there by others? What do I like to do most? Who am I? How do I feel about my involvements and responsibilities? What can I do to make life more joyful for me and my family and my friends?

These are not easy questions and you won't find easy answers. But some real thinking may help put life and pressures and values and priorities in perspective so that vacation this year can be a time of renewal—a retreat!

Who's That Waiting At The Door?

Who or what greets you at the door after a long day at work?

At my house, Sweetpea's the official greeter.

Every evening she's there, peeking out of the front window as I drive up. As the car door slams, she hops from the couch and scrambles for the front door. As the screen door swings open, she slips out—a fast-moving brown shadow edged in soft white. Coming up from behind then, she wriggles in ecstasy as she waits to be petted, front paws stretching up the length of my pants leg—or often as not—my newest pantyhose.

Normally life comes to a standstill at this point until Sweetpea's assured that I'm as glad to see her as she is to see me. Some days this takes longer than others for reasons still unknown to me. In any case, only then does this almost-dachshund head for a favorite corner to take care of necessary business.

Then she trots expectantly to the car, hoping for a field trip somewhere—anything to get out of the house. If I say "No," she turns in the opposite direction and sprints toward the field behind Aunt Myra's, looking back and pausing briefly for me to catch up.

However, there are exceptions to this rule—as on days when Sweetpea's gotten into mischief. These moments usually come after a week of neglect, when I've been busy



Susan Usher

and just haven't spent the time with her Sweetpea expects, even demands.

She takes it out on the floor, the furniture, my clothes, you name it. Revenge is sweet and apparently worth the punishment she knows comes next.

On those days her little black nose, shiny brown eyes and crooked left ear are conspicuously absent from the front window. She's usually lurking inside somewhere, tail between her legs, waiting to assess my reaction to her misdeeds. Sometime she retreats to the bed in the front room, her form a slight shadow-form behind the window blind.

Over the seven years we've shared a house together, those misdeeds of hers have added up to one expensive little dog—a bedspread in which she happened to entangle a bone, then energetically disentangle it; a taste for the corners of bottom-level wooden kitchen cabinets and molding, a genuine delight in wheeling rolls of toilet tissue off the rack in

the bathroom and down the hall—and a talent for chewing up window screens.

I've invested so much in her medical bills and my household repairs that I couldn't afford to do away with her.

Like it or not, though, Sweetpea's been getting a little slower. Her escapades don't have the zip and ingenuity that caused me to laugh as often as I've cried over the years.

Old age and a sedentary lifestyle apparently have caught up with her. The white around Sweetpea's muzzle steadily inches upward, causing her shiny black nose to stand out even more. But she's still predominantly a warm golden-brown in color, with that funny crooked left ear. Friends in Morganton tease her about looking like a miniature doe.

These days, all the pranks she's got energy for are simple—chewing up a piece of meat wrapper left on the floor or jumping through a screen window when a potential intruder passes by in the parking lot. It's a relief—I guess.

And like mine, her body's drooping in all the wrong places. But unlike me, it doesn't seem to bother her. She crosses the garden—one of the few places she's not allowed—and comes home with her front end covered in black, muddy dirt.

When even the veterinarian commented on her weight, it was time to

do something other than ask friends not to feed her scraps.

I put my foot down, with a little help from Bill Rabon and a bag of diet dogfood—that's right diet dogfood. It looks awful and is composed of 80 percent peanut hulls.

At first Sweetpea refused to have anything to do with the stuff—holding out as much as 30 or 36 hours before taking even a nibble. Finally convinced I wasn't going to give in, she gave a tentative bite, then dug in.

So far Sweetpea's lost about seven pounds and her collar hangs loose about the neck. Evenings, she's started grabbing the tennis ball and growling for a game. Suddenly she has more energy than I do. Suddenly I'm the old fogey, not the dog.

Recently she's started acting almost like a puppy again. That means I don't get much of a break after coming home. As soon as I sit down here she comes with the ball, shoving it between my shoes and teasing me to grab it and throw it. Or else she's at the front door, begging to go out for a run when I can barely walk.

It's amazing the change in my little greeter. If Sweetpea could be as strict with my diet as I am with hers, perhaps I could lose some weight and get some energy back, too.

In the meantime, lively or not, she's still a pleasure to come home to.