

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Second Chance For Parking At Sunset

It's not often you get a second chance to do the right thing, but that's what has happened at Sunset Beach.

Developer and Mayor Pro Tem Ed Gore has offered the town—as an outright gift, not through a long-term lease—more than 30 acres of oceanfront property for public parking and access at the west end of the beach. While it won't solve all the town's parking and access problems, the area can be developed to accommodate 200-plus vehicles, as well as other amenities.

When a similar offer was tendered last year, several members of the town board viewed the gift as a Trojan horse; as a result the board did not vote to accept the property.

Yet Gore says the only string that might be attached is one the town should like—a condition that the land always be used for the purpose it was given.

The beach community and its residents and visitors alike stand to lose if the Sunset Beach Council doesn't unite and provide some positive leadership in the development of some permanent parking facilities for beach visitors.

Only a lack of community vision will limit the potential for development of the 30-plus acres, which will provide the largest oceanfront access area owned by any town in North Carolina.

Zen And The Art Of Being In College

At my university, business majors were a dime a dozen.

It was a common sight to see them in the library struggling over their accounting and business law books. The books were so thick and full of little numbers and barbed-wire letters that I didn't envy them a bit.

I wondered if my feelings would change when they would be making \$50,000 a year, and I would be at the halfway mark towards earning my Ph.D.

After much thought, I decided probably not. There was one problem with the majority of business students, at least at my school. They weren't able to converse on a wide range of topics. In a business class they were fine. Require them to take a literature class, a philosophy seminar or a chemistry lab, and you wouldn't hear from them all semester.

Most of these students were quite honest about their aims. They didn't want an education; they wanted a four-year degree which would be the key to unlock a job in some company. So much the worse for them.

Maybe having a job, money and a sports car is the ultimate goal for some college students, but where does an intellectual life fit in?

Having all the "goodies" but nothing to think about would be like someone giving you a piece of cake but forbidding you to eat the icing.

I was rather fond of the icing. I was the only person in my graduating class of almost 2,000 to be awarded a degree in Religious Studies.

In what other major could one discuss the characters in "The Brothers Karamazov," argue the meanings of a Hindu myth, hear a Zen story, and listen to a lecture on the history of death in a single day?

Throughout history people have



Dawn Ellen Boyd

defined themselves by what they believed and what they did not believe. Literature and art for many centuries were, and the majority of the time still are, shaped by the forces of religion. More people have been killed in the name of religion than for any other reason. And religion isn't just organized sects and churches—the study of religion covers all faiths and all forms of belief and nonbelief.

My major in Religious Studies led me into studies in science, art, history, philosophy and literature. It even inspired me to complete a second major in English. Maybe the "Help Wanted" columns weren't begging for Religious Studies majors, but my varied studies had given me a strong educational background that gave me more choices than spending the rest of my life as an accountant.

There seems to be a real trend towards kids going to college to major in computer science or business administration so they can get out and make money. If a young person wants to study computer science because programming is the thing that gives him or her the most pleasure and intellectual challenge, I think that is wonderful. If someone is pursuing the course of study to get out and turn a buck and join the yuppie generation, I'm not so sure.

It is frightening to think one's post-college responsibilities—making a living, perhaps even supporting a family. Still, I wonder if it is the place of the university to try to quell these fears by packaging ready-made careers.

College should be a place for asking questions and exploring. The liberal arts gives a person that chance. Just because one is a liberal arts major doesn't mean you can't prepare for the future too; anyone on campus has a shot at job internships, editorships and research opportunities.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said "Great men are they that see that spiritual is stronger than any material force; that thoughts rule the world."

If students don't soon begin realizing that receiving an education is just as important as planning a career, the number of "thinkers" will grow small indeed.

Oysters: The Keening Edge Has Gone



Susan Usher

There was a time, not too long ago, when you couldn't fill me up with oysters. There was no such thing as one too many—just the need for a little more time to squeeze it in. Just lead me to the fireside was all I asked.

However, four years back in Shallotte has rubbed the edge off that sharp, seasonally-tuned hungering for oysters. When cool weather comes, I still want oysters, preferably slightly salty, fat ones from the Lockwood Folly River cooked to perfection. That means juicy and not cooked anywhere near dry unless they're smoked and in the can.

But I realized the edge was gone Thursday night at my grandmother's house. We were sitting around the dining room table, discussing plans for a oyster roast. We always try to have a family roast while my Aunt Dale is here from California. Well, she got in to Wilmington Tuesday, so it's time.

Aunt Dale loves oysters as much as I do and at one time could really pack them away at the roasts we held in my mom's and dad's backyard. She still handles an oyster knife like the Brunswick County native she is.

We would stand around giant wire spoons from Brunswick Electric, hot oyster juice dripping down our chins to mingle with the ketchup, pickle juice and for some, hot pepper vinegar. We'd slurp down colas and coffee, nibble on homemade sweet cucumber pickles and moist crackling cornbread.

Back inside the house my sister

Jean would be by her lonesome, as we called it, eating a hotdog or a hamburger as we feasted. I never knew if she much minded being left out or not.

The conversation around Grandmother's table wavered back and forth Thursday night as we worked out logistics. Carol's family would be giving the roast at Winnabow; this year planning to pick up their own oysters rather than several of us chipping in to buy them. That meant a schedule suited to Carol's husband Thorborne was guaranteed, regardless of who else might or might not be able to make it—including me.

Thorborne and I, it seems, are working on counter schedules. If he's available, I'm not. And vice versa.

Even a year ago, the thought of holding a family oyster roast without me and with Aunt Dale would have been awfully upsetting.

But this year it doesn't seem to

matter as much, partly because I'm hoping to take a few days off while Aunt Dale's here and do some visiting.

The other reason is less obvious, but kind of scary: there's no deep-seated fear now of missing an oyster roast. I know I'll get my fill.

That wasn't the case four years ago upon returning home after an absence of 10 years.

During those 10 long years away I'd hogged on oysters at every opportunity. Immediately after moving back, I managed "impromptu" encounters with oysters two or three times a week October through February.

Since then my hungering for oysters has been sated, I guess. So I've taken the ever-ready oyster knife from its secret hiding place in my camera bag for the first time in four oyster seasons.

From now on, I'm predicting, my oyster encounters will be planned.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What Does It Mean To Be A Member Of ATMC?

To the editor:

Friday night there was a meeting of the Atlantic Telephone Membership Corp. I did not feel from past experience that my attendance at the meeting would accomplish anything.

I wrote a quite lengthy letter about our cable TV service programming, especially about the Channel 3 disaster. But, lo and behold, Saturday morning Channel 3 had become a weather channel so I tore up what I had written and started over again. The weather channel is an improvement but certainly leaves a lot to be desired.

But I still have to unburden myself of the shortcomings of ATMC cable TV.

What does it mean to be a member of ATMC?

Now I understand Mr. Bellamy is retiring with a superb record of service to the community and ATMC, and many other organizations. At this time I wish Mr. Bellamy the absolute best in his retirement.

Now for the flip side.

In the last months I personally went to the ATMC office to seek an interview with Mr. Bellamy five times. Each time I have been told, "Mr. Bellamy has just stepped out and we don't know when he will be back."

Meanwhile I tried many times to reach the ATMC business office which we all know is impossible. Busy, busy, busy.

Finally I also wrote a letter to Mr. Bellamy saying that several residents of our development and myself would like an appointment with him. I also listed what we wanted to discuss with him.

We did not get the courtesy of an answer by letter or phone. We do assume he has a phone at his disposal.

Now, to Mr. Price: please let us know what we subscribers really are as members of ATMC.

I am 70 years old and me with 46 years of a beautiful marriage. Our last two September wedding anniversaries have been celebrated in Helen, Ga. This is a fun place and a replica of a Bavarian Village that celebrates Oktoberfest six weeks of September and October.

We stayed at the motel and watched CNN Cable News while Hurricane Diana was milling around the North Carolina coast. CNN had a reporter at Wrightsville Beach giving us on-the-scene live reports every 20 minutes.

Also each October we spend a week

in the mountains at Cherokee, N.C., a small Indian tourist village. CNN cable is available at all motels.

A week ago last Thursday we took a side trip to Grandfather Mountain and stayed at Blowing Rock and watched CNN news.

Last week I read in the Sun News that Cox Cable TV will add five new channels at Myrtle Beach. Several months ago Whiteville Cable sent a cable survey to its customers.

What does it mean to me to be a member of ATMC?

I am certainly only speaking for myself but I am sure many others would pay more for cable service that includes CNN Cable News and/or WOR and WGN and less "whistle ball." I am sure it is not required to carry two Florence CBS stations.

Last winter a couple of Sundays we were blessed with having the same "whistle ball" game on four or five different channels. That's an insult to the mentality of your subscribers, especially us Northern transplants of which you have many.

Analyze what "whistle ball" really is. It is a so-called athletic contest consisting of a bunch of 6½ to 7½ foot freaks running back and forth trying to drop a ball through a hoop. If one

player touches another one the whistle blows.

Please, not over 200 games again. We are happy to see a few (lots of action) NHL games. We know whistle ball is a native game, but please, a little more variety.

Herbert A. Haseley
Shalotte

Think More About Signs

To the editor:

As property owners in the Seaside-Sunset Beach area, we are very upset about all the no parking signs that have been put up on Sunset Beach.

We have been coming here for over 30 years and about eight years ago we bought property so we could spend much more time here when we retire in about five more years.

We spend several weekends a month all year (except January and February). In the summer we spend from two to three weeks at a time in June and July.

We love this area and many of our family and friends have bought property here because they have seen the way we enjoy it.

We hope the mayor and city council will give further consideration on this matter because, after all, it will hurt the realtors and merchants if no one buys property because they can't use the beach.

James and Billie Allred
Lexington

Ocean Is For Everybody

To the editor:

This is to thank the public for a terrific response to our yard and attic sale. I knew in my heart the people in this area are with us.

The donations I received were overwhelming. When people come up to you and say, "This is my donation for such a great cause," you know what you are doing is right and worth your time.

We are not alone in our fight to open the west end of Holden Beach. I know our cause isn't popular with some but I never realized the support we are getting. Thanks.

I'm a grandmother looking forward to once again taking my grandson to the west end. He loves to take his net, catch minnows and fish for flounder. We both at one time fished at the west end. That day isn't far away. Some things are worth fighting for and I've just begun to fight.

I didn't retire to sit back in my rocking chair. I refuse to let a very few dictate to me where I can walk on the beach and where I can fish.

There aren't too many things free, but the ocean is for everybody.

Betty Paroda
Supply

Keeping Up With No Parking Signs

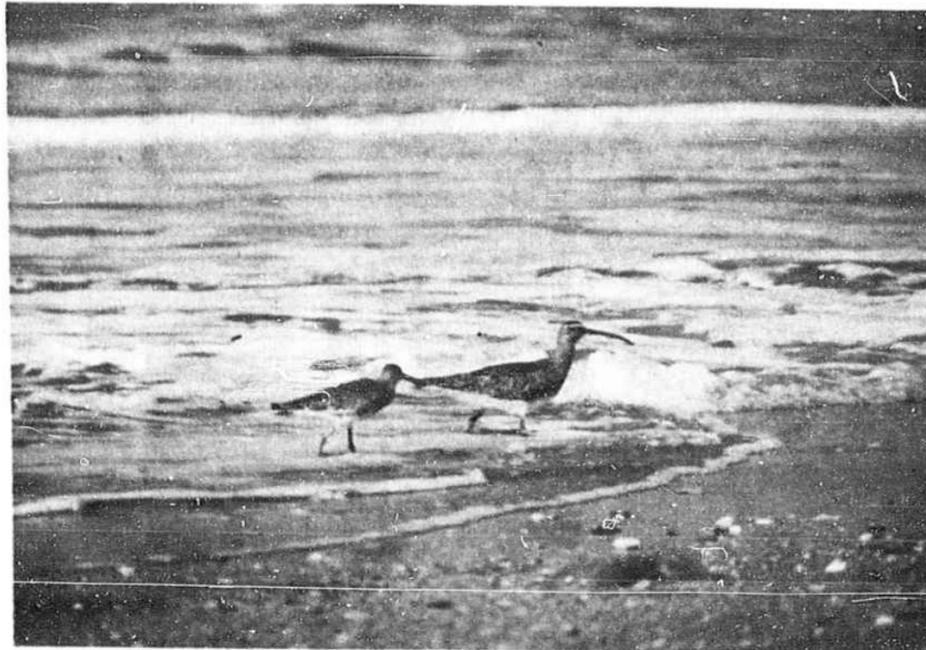
To the editor:

Enclosed is our subscription for the Beacon. As Brunswick County property owners, we are most interested in the happenings there, especially at this time because of the abundance of "no parking" signs on the beach.

We signed the petition against the signs.

We have bought your paper during our summer there and would like to continue reading it during the winter in Charlotte.

Eleanor B. White
Charlotte



THE SHORTER-BILLED WILLET is following a Whimbrell at the water's edge.

The Noisiest Of Shorebirds

At almost any time a walk along our beaches will scare up a willet who flies off screaming his name, "will, will, willet." This colorful bird is distinctive in flight with its large white patches in the dark wings. Both the wing patterns and the cry are best identifying marks.

A willet is pigeon-sized with a 24-29 inch wing spread. Its bill is dark bluish and about two inches long, slightly tipped downward at the end. This long slender bill is used to extract mole crabs and coquinas from the sand along the path of the waves. In spring the neck and breast are spotted and barred with brown, but in the winter plumage the bird is practically mouse-gray in color. Upper tail feathers are white almost like a rump patch of white. Willets live on the Atlantic coast from southern New Jersey to Florida and the Bahamas. They winter from North Carolina southward to Brazil and northern Peru.



Bill Faver

Nests of willets are usually placed on the ground near a clump of grass or debris. Sometimes nests are found on the open beach without any cover at all. A slight depression in the soil or sand is lined with dried grass, bits of debris and shell, and usually four eggs are laid. The eggs are buff-colored with chocolate-colored blotches and are large for the size of the bird. Eggs are placed in the nest so that the pointed ends come together in the center of the nest depression. Laying is done in late April to June. Birds are particularly noisy during nesting season and put up a constant chorus of crying when an intruder

comes near the nest. Birds often sweep within a few feet of a potential enemy. This habit gives away the location of the otherwise camouflaged nest area and is one reason for the near extinction of the birds when shot and eggs gathered. Since protection, willets have again become abundant in our area and all along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

Willets seem to prefer the open beaches and the marsh areas. The one we see is an "eastern race" and there is a "western race" that may also be found around lakes and along streams. Food along the beach are small mollusks, crustacea, etc. In the marshes, fiddler crabs are also taken. In Florida Bird Life, Alexander Sprunt, Jr. writes: "The willet is an attractive and interesting bird and lends a great deal of animation and colorful life to beach and marsh." We ought not to overlook the common willet along our beaches, for it is one of our most interesting birds along the edge of the sea.

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