

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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POPEYE—FOR NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK



Education Is More Than Statistics

Reading, language and math scores by 4th, 5th, and 7th graders in Brunswick County have been largely a success story, the county average rising above that of the nation in more than half the cases.

It is particularly heartening to see what large leaps two schools, Bolivia and Southport Elementary, took over their national counterparts. Although test scores don't tell everything, these unusually high ones say that some teachers, principals and students are on the right track.

More significant than statistics, however, in the county education picture, is individual programs and efforts like the Closeup event recently held at the county government complex.

This in-depth, practical view of the working of their county government was an invaluable lesson for ninth graders who participated.

Not only was the concept a good one, the representatives of government, politics, business and the legal system involved made exceptionally relevant presentations.

The idea of Closeup was to inform on a level that would have meaning in the lives of the young people. Speakers like Acting County Manager David Clegg, Social Services Director Jamie Orrock and Alan Holden, who talked about growth, human services and tourism, were right on target in making their subjects meaningful.

"What do tourists spend their money on?" "Who is affected by a teenage pregnancy?" and "How is water a cause and effect of growth?" were the kinds of questions kids could understand and get their teeth into.

The students may not remember facts and figures, but they are sure to retain the substance of Closeup, because they participated and were challenged to think every step of the way. The 12 who served on a mock jury, for instance, should have a lifelong interest in the judicial system.

Brunswick County schools helped sponsor that program, and they're responsible for a good many such creative efforts that make education a living, thrilling activity.

Just off the press, for instance, is a book of stories and poems, written and illustrated by students in grades K through 8th with more verve and imagination than you could find in any bookstore.

The funny, sensitive, poetic expressions, including an incredible short story about a witch cat, are testimonials to the creativity of young people. Linden Mathews-Boone and Diane Pacquin, supervisors in the central office who spearheaded the project, deserve bouquets for encouraging this creativity.

Bouquets, too, to the Arts Council's grassroots grant for financial assistance.

These are only two examples of good education that's going on all over the county. Often, individual teachers provide the initiative, as in Patricia Foy's oral history project at South Brunswick, and the pen pal exchanges between Christine Brummett's third graders at Waccamaw and Hilda Smith's high school students at West Brunswick.

It is, in the long run, these personal, authentic contacts with other people and with the nuts and bolts of society that will teach children unforgettable lessons.

Should Brunswick County schools be graded on this kind of achievement, scores would go through the ceiling, no matter what CAT statistics may say.

Make Your Boat As Safe As Your Car

Do you routinely have your car inspected? Do you take care to keep tires, brakes and lights in working order? Are there always tools on hand to make small but critical repairs on the road?

You answer yes, undoubtedly, to all of this. Driving is hazardous at best, and the least you can do is set out in a safe vehicle, prepared for most emergencies.

But how does your safe boating test score stack up? Do you give the same attention to inspections and good boating equipment?

If not, why not? Isn't a fishing trip or joyride on the water also a demonstrated hazard? Doesn't ordinary prudence require your making that water vehicle as safe in every way as the highway vehicle?

It's no hassle, you know, to ensure that your boat meets minimum Coast Guard standards. A free check of equipment is available through the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and it covers federal and state requirements, as well as those standards recommended by the Coast Guard.

Called a CME, the Courtesy Marine Examination includes inspection of personal flotation devices, fire extinguishers, engine ventilation, navigation lights, fuel systems and others.

Each of these items could save inconvenience or even a life. Their maintenance is up to you.

There are six auxiliary members in Brunswick County who will perform this CME, and as pleasure boaters themselves, will explain the safe use of equipment.

If you intend even one boating excursion this season, take time to look up the phone number of one of these persons: Price Thomas, Anne and Jim Hesser, Jack Ziefel, Al See, and J.R. Athey. They are your friends, because they're giving of their time and expertise to help you avoid disaster.

Safe boating week, June 7-13, reminds us of this important, but often disregarded concern. If you are, on the other hand, unconcerned about the safety of boats and their equipment, then at least take this advice: please don't go near the water!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Plan For Beach Parking Is Blueprint For Disaster

To the editor:

In your editorial of May 28, you list four sample locations from which tourists on becoming selectively seduced by sun and sea advertising have, seemingly on impulse, jumped into their family car for a cruise to a Brunswick beach only to find no parking place. Hogwash!

I doubt that Brunswick County's advertising dollar has had any effect on the traveling public's decisions. I also doubt that the mercantile gentry of Bolivia have seen their cash registers overflowing with visitor's dollars, ad induced or otherwise. I strongly suspect that the taxpayers of Brunswick County would rather have a tax rate reduction than a line item for advertising of dubious value.

The four sample locations cited by you from which frustrated futility visitors are arriving to find no place to park are: New York, Ohio, Winston-Salem and Whiteville.

The traveling time from the first three locations to the Brunswick beaches would require overnight (or longer) accommodations. There are plenty of beach accommodations to rent, lease or even buy. All of them have ample parking within easy walking distance to the ocean. A car connected to beach accommodations is not in want of a parking place.

That leaves only the Whiteville location—the day people. Those who live within the environs of the South Brunswick Islands who on a day visit can not find a free parking place, or if found, not necessarily where they

want it.

No resort area of any description can accommodate all of the potential day visitors on major holidays, or should it try. There is some free parking available now at the South Brunswick Islands, though how much free parking, if any, is warranted is a prerogative of the beach municipality involved, not The Brunswick Beacon. User fees could help maintain and police public parking lots. At Sunset there is pier parking for \$3 a day per car. Not exactly an excessive or exorbitant fee, certainly not when you consider that there are usually several people per car. I know of no municipality that provides all of the free parking that anybody could conceivably want, when they want it, and where they want it.

Your inane proposal for large free parking facilities for the indigent is a blueprint for disaster, socially, economically and ecologically.

Some of the South Brunswick Islands are still relatively pristine clean. Hopefully the voters of these few remaining class islands will take control of their destiny and limit free beach parking to a minimum.

Gary F. Singleton
Sunset Beach

Would Appreciate Public Answer

To the editor:

I would appreciate it if some

knowledgeable person would write a public answer to my question:

What grounds does a governmental director have to have to fire an employee if insubordination and threats of political influence to have the director fired (which was later proven) isn't sufficient?

Teddi Neal
Bolivia

Story Is Boost For Heart Patients

To the editor:

Thought this might make a nice human interest story.



This is a photo of Joe Wilkins of Atlantic Beach. He was visiting at Long Beach Dec. 18 and suffered a heart attack. He was transported to Doshier Hospital by the Long Beach Rescue Squad and from Doshier to

New Hanover Hospital in Wilmington. He was airlifted the next day to Duke Hospital in Durham, where he had a triple bypass on the 23 and was discharged on the 31.

Some friends had this cover painted for his Bronco. It generates some conversation and certainly is interesting for heart patients who need a boost.

M. L. Coleman
Southport

Pleased With Our Choice

To the editor:

During the past two years, we have found many reasons to be pleased with our choice of Brunswick County in general and Holden Beach in particular as our home. Friday, May 29, we added another reason to the list—Brunswick County Hospital.

Our house guest, Ms. Pauline D. Jenkins of Hartsville, S.C., fell while bicycling and injured her foot. We took her to Brunswick County Hospital for examination and treatment. We found this hospital to be all the superlatives which should apply. The nurses, doctors, technicians and office workers were professional, knowledgeable, sympathetic, kind, interested and efficient. The hospital

(See PLEASED, Page 5-A)

Another Hurricane Season

BY BILL FAVER

June 1 marked the beginning of another hurricane season with its usual dire predictions of devastation along the beaches. Each year we seem to begin the great game of chance and because we haven't had a direct hit in some years, we know our number is coming up.

I do not intend to suggest we take the season lightly or that we not mobilize to full readiness for what might come. It is essential that we understand the potential threat and that we be prepared for an emergency.

It is interesting that since Hurricane Hazel most of our beach erosion and storm damage has been from regular, calmer winter storms and not from dreaded hurricanes. Without minimizing the potentials of storm surges with waves crashing through the dunes and high winds, what I have watched is medium-sized waves lapping at the dunes, taking a little sand this time and a little more the next. Not spectacular storms with on-the-spot TV coverage announcing the devastation. But this is where the damage has been done.

Names for the 1987 hurricanes have been announced by the National Weather Service and I've even been in a discussion about which ones will come toward our coastline. The excitement builds and will be with us until the end of November. What we can expect depends on all kinds of weather conditions, wind directions, pressures, water and air temperatures. Without doubt there appear to be cycles in where hurricanes move, just as there are cycles of warm and cold winters, wet and dry spells.

There is the story of the old man who was told of the major devastation caused by the 100-year storms and how we could expect a repeat. His reply: "Why, I'll just live here 98 years and then move!" Maybe that is a solution, but not very practical.

Perhaps this is our year for a major storm. Or perhaps we will have some near misses as we have in the past. Or perhaps we will have no storms even come close to us. The humbling thing about storm predictions is that nobody seems to know what they are going to do. We should appreciate the people at the National Hurricane Center and the warnings they give us. We should know what to do if we do have a storm.

And we should enjoy living in our "tropical" land where storms do occur.

Keep Those Calls And Letters Coming

This is one of those bits and pieces columns that sometimes seems necessary (and fun) after sorting through a month's worth of phone messages and notes.

For the record: Regina White, the clerk to the county board of commissioners, doesn't earn \$43,302. Like most of us, she just wishes she did.

A list of recommended budgets for county departments published last week included that figure under salaries, specifying clerk and board of commissioners. But, as usual, several folks didn't read to the end of the line and have been giving the lady a lot of grief.

They should have finished reading it, because if you subtract Regina's salary, which is slightly over half the listed sum, that leaves a hefty sum for the salaries of five commissioners. Especially, if you notice farther down the line, they also will earn an estimated \$33,000 in per diem (per day payments for meetings or other county business) during the coming year. If the coming year is anything like last year, they'll add up most of that pay behind closed doors,



Susan Usher

discussing business someone has decided we either don't need to know about, haven't a right to know about or whatever.

So lay off Regina, folks. At least we know what she's doing or not doing.

The other day a caller corrected a reference to "Fred" in my column, reminding me that the name of the protagonist in "It's A Wonderful Life" is named George. He's right, of course. I had stuck in Fred because I kept thinking of Fred McMurray of "My Three Sons," a similar genteel character.

Also, for the record, another caller recently advised us to clean up our spelling, referring to use of the word "judgement."

While the Associated Press stylebook does prefer "judgment" and it is the form we typically use even though we're not a wire service member, any good dictionary will tell you that either spelling is acceptable.

Several people have called asking how human hair helps rescue flower beds from foraging rabbits. I've gotten two answers from different folks. The first seems likeliest: the smell scares them off, at least until the next rain or watering. Also suggested: the hair gets caught up in the rabbit's feet and teeth.

Take your pick. Best of all recent calls, I liked the one from a "neighbor of your aunts that you don't know but who knows you." This one came after a column about Don's and my upcoming wedding. Said the caller, "Tell Susan she just needs one usher at her wedding."

I'm just hoping the caller meant me.

Keep those calls and postcards coming!