

# THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Page 4-A

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## Growth Requires Change

Governing bodies should operate efficiently, just like businesses that watch the bottom line.

The bottom line on proceeding with county precinct changes before the 1988 elections is that it makes good sense, financially and otherwise. It should help to relieve overcrowding and backlogs at the county polling places.

The Brunswick County Board of Elections has been knocked around by feuding political parties for wanting to make the changes. Even county commissioners jumped on the bandwagon by passing a resolution urging the elections board to reconsider its precinct revisions.

Commissioners failed to see why the changes are economically sound for the county. They forgot that Brunswick County is growing very fast with its population expected to double by the year 2,000.

To keep up with that growth, a few precinct changes are necessary if the county wishes to provide residents with their right to vote. Otherwise, voting machines will face overloads at some precincts and will hardly receive a workout at others.

Preventing problems before they occur is what the board of elections has in mind. The State Board of Elections thinks the precinct changes are a good idea.

The elections board is dividing two coastal precincts, Oak Island and Secession (Holden Beach area), into two smaller precincts to make voting next year more convenient. It is also merging Waccamaw and Exum precincts into one named the Freeland precinct.

Growth in the coastal areas, and the lack of growth in the rural communities, makes it practical to place voting machines and personnel where they are most needed.

Some residents will be forced to change their voting habits. In the rural areas, families have been going to the same polling places for 50 years or more.

But there is nothing sentimental about problems the county will face if it doesn't keep up with the demands of growth. If people want to have their votes counted in 1988, then they should leave the management of precincts to the people who know the business.

## Why Is Ollie A Hero?

A sign erected on U.S. 17 by a local businessman, applauded by his neighbors, expresses sentiments echoed around the country.

"Thanks, Ollie!" it says to Col. Oliver North, who testified before congressional hearings into what has been labeled the "Iran-Contra affair."

According to recent polls, some 80 percent of Americans regard Col. North as a hero, and "Ollie For President" buttons are selling briskly.

How strange! How does this hero-worship square with results from the same pollsters showing Americans decidedly did not want: 1) arms traded for hostages, and 2) money given to the Contras (a group fighting to overthrow the Nicaraguan government)?

North's relentless pursuit of exactly what the public and Congress deplored should make Americans hopping mad.

Instead, he held an adoring public in the palm of his hand from the moment he appeared on the tube, darkly handsome in his military uniform, a chest blazing medals.

Admitting to lies, deception, destruction of evidence, and an uncertainty of presidential approval, North spun his tale of selling weapons to Khomeini's minions in exchange for Americans held hostage; he relayed with dramatic flair his story of the circumvention of profits from that sale to help the Contras.

And in the telling he became larger than life, yes, heroic.

Why do most Americans love this soldier? It can't be his goals, can it? One, an arms exchange for hostages, has been denounced by the President and the public, while the other, aid to Contras, although a fanatical goal of the President's, has also been vetoed by Congress and the people.

Is it Ollie's character, the way in which he's done his job in cahoots with the National Security Council? Do we now admire duplicity and believe the end justifies any means?

Or is it simply his charisma before the cameras? Military regalia has always captivated sentimentalists, and Ollie was magnificent in his medal-bedecked uniform. Also, his testimony had the fire and flair of a zealot. He truly believed his battle against Communism and for the hostages was a calling above the law.

And Americans adore a kick in the pants to established authority. "Try spineless Congress," Robert Sellers' sign further declares. There's a bit of the fun of rooting for a scrapper in the current Ollie worship.

Whatever the reason, in the wave of cheers for Ollie North, one hard, cold, inescapable fact remains. This man so acclaimed has struck at the roots of our democracy, lying to constituted authorities, implementing foreign policy known to be unsavory to Congress and the people, and destroying evidence of his activities.

If this kind of morality is praiseworthy, or if morals have been forgotten as we embrace another TV idol, the American dream has gone sour and become a nightmare.

## I'd Rather Have My Own, Thank You



Susan Usher

One of my next investments is going to be a set of jumper cables.

Have you ever noticed how certain kinds of problems seem to come in waves, now you have them, now you don't?

Once upon a time, when the lights on my Tempest used to come on by themselves, I owned jumper cables. I used them frequently while one mechanic after another took my money without fixing the problem. Four months and \$200 later, a friend replaced a \$5 gizmo and what do ya know, the lights then only came on when I wanted them to.

The need for jumper cables gone, I

gave them to a friend, who never returned them. That was fine; I didn't need them.

But now I do and don't have any, which figures.

It's a different kind of mechanical

problem this time having to do with the driver's functioning, not the car's: I'm getting absent-minded as can be. Talk about bad days; I've adopted Wednesdays. For the past two in a row, I've left my lights on and had to beg for help. It's humiliating.

The first time was in the parking lot of a Southport restaurant after our Toastmasters meeting. I made a spectacle of myself jumping up and down, whistling and hollering to catch my husband's attention as he drove away toward Bolivia. He didn't see or hear me, but the driver of another car did. Grinning broadly, he

flagged Don down.

Then last Wednesday, it happened again after that nasty thunderstorm. I left the office late and nobody else was around. You guessed it, he had to bail me out again.

I'm married, you see, to one of those people who has jumper cables and never needs them—except when helping out women in distress like me.

He's offered them to me, but just as sure as I took them, he'd probably start needing them himself.

So I'm casting my vote for a two jumper-cable family.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Finally A Leader Who Understands Foreign Policy?

To the editor:

I admire, agree and salute Colonel North and Admiral Poindexter for their efforts in carrying out a perceived policy. But what a waste of effort, resources and probably reputations. Over the years I have accused and still accuse Congress and the administration for not having come up with such a radical idea. The senator's background in academia may have helped for such deep thought and contemplation. Or—could it have been a case of good common sense?

Foreign aid, as "we" perceive it, is the heaviest burden that "we" carry. We send money and materials to everyone and expect everyone to become a mirror image. In my travels I have never found or heard of another State of North Carolina or any other part or ideal of this country.

Senator Terry Sanford of North Carolina may be changing my attitude concerning the approach to foreign aid—specifically in Central America. I excuse Congress and the administration for not having come up with such a radical idea. The senator's background in academia may have helped for such deep thought and contemplation. Or—could it have been a case of good common sense?

His idea and recommendations are "to provide economic aid to countries that have made real progress toward peace and democracy." What a startling thought! Mini-Marshall Plans—if you will. What a way to isolate regimes which do not respect human rights and dignity. What a

way to save taxpayer money by not supporting, in any form, the isolated regimes.

Do we finally have a government leader who understands foreign affairs? I think so. Senator, when you are put in stocks for offering such strange, unproven, radical solutions—I will visit.

Jess Parker  
Supply

## Hire Local, From Within

To the editor:

It seems that Brunswick County has a system of training personnel for higher ground. Surely, I don't believe that this is the intent of our system; yet it still seems to happen.

This time around I truly believe the next school superintendent and the next county manager should be selected on the same merits that the Democratic candidates were elected on in 1984.

Here's once chance for the county commissioners and county board of education to prove to those who supported them that those were true statements when they advocated: "Hire local and from within."

P.R. Hankins and John Harvey, if they are interested, with their experience and time with the county, would make very good choices. Others echo this same feeling.

Joseph Stevenson  
Supply

## Despite Long Walk, Parade Perked Up

To the editor:

Now that the sound of marching feet and music has left our town streets, it is time to thank the many participants of Southport's grand 4th of July parade.

Ocean Trail Convalescent Center is at the very end of what could be an exhausting precision walk through 90-degree heat.

As the parade groups saw the end was near and, rightfully so, the step

slowed, flags drooped, and queens' smiles were not as sparkling. When they were informed 110 elderly folks were waiting for them to walk through their "front yard," how things changed; bands played, cloggers clogged, flags waved, queens smiled and it was a sparkling display of what America is all about.

Thank you to so many who helped make it a very special treat.

Perhaps next year your photographer could visit Ocean Trail and catch on film forever the very essence of freedom and caring that personifies the American dream of 200 years come true.

Cathy Holt, LPN  
Activity Director  
Ocean Trail Convalescent Center  
Southport

### Brief Notes From Subscribers

To the editor:

Please find enclosed a check for another year of the Beacon. We don't get our local paper every week but sure do look for yours in the box.

Jackie and Brenda Redwine  
Vilas

We are renewing the Brunswick Beacon. We enjoy reading and learning what is happening at the beach. We own a place at Holiday Pines and reading the paper helps us to know what is going on.

John and Thena Goss  
Lexington

### 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.

## Flattened Fur

A recent feature on public radio told about a news guide book for identifying animals along the roadside that had been killed on the road. It seems a professor at a midwestern university was serious about providing a tool for identifying the silhouettes of animals flattened by vehicles. Some folks mistook this as an attempt at sick humor, but the professor claims he is wanting to educate the motoring public about the "habitat of the road." He calls his new field guide *Flattened Fur*.

One of the non-furry animals he features is the many frogs that don't make it across the road on a busy highway. He tells how most of them have one foreleg reaching out beyond the body as if to give some signal or a wave. Many of us have seen frogs on a rainy night as they are jumping along the road and we know it is almost impossible to keep from running over them.

The public radio feature did not discuss opossums, but they are one of the animals we see along the roadside most often. I was at a meeting of youth science leaders once and we were discussing the 90 million year



Bill Faver

old species and how it had survived for so long. We were speculating on how long the opossum would survive, for its slow habits in crossing the highway make it a natural for road kills. Only the abundance of this species give it a chance for continuing to live in the natural world.

I haven't seen a copy of *Flattened Fur*, but it may have a place in helping us realize the presence of a variety of animals we may not see alive. We can at least become aware of what can be found in an area and we can become more cautious about animals that get caught in the road. The "habitat of the road" is a very interesting idea, but its "flattened fur" may not be the best way to learn to appreciate animals in our environment.

## How Piedmont Outdid The Pope



Marjorie Megivern

I have just returned from one of those "dream" trips and have to report that its highlight for me was the moment a Piedmont supervisor at New York's La Guardia airport said, "You're on the next flight to Wilmington."

This thrilling moment must be set in context. My husband and I had taken a charter flight to Rome, our first and last experience with this kind of transportation. Tempting low fares lured us into such unpredictable, casual scheduling I was a mass of anxiety by the time we stood at that Piedmont counter en route home.

The first sour note was struck when we were seven hours late leaving Kennedy on the first leg of our trip, then sat on the ground in London another two hours. We got supper around midnight and arrived in Rome the next morning to find searing heat and no place to change our money.

However, the week in Rome offered splendors one would imagine in such a historic city. We explored the catacombs, filled our eyes with magnificent statues and sculptures, heard "Aida" in an outdoor performance, and ate the best pasta and pastries the world can offer. Day trips to Pompeii and Florence were memorable, the ruins of a civilization and its matchless art expressed in Michelangelo's "David."

Also, we were awestruck by the Vatican Museums and St. Peter's Cathedral. A snapshot I'll treasure is of the huge Vatican apartments I where one tiny window on the top

floor was draped with a scarlet banner. That's where Pope John Paul appeared at the stroke of noon on Sunday and gave us his blessing . . . us and about 20,000 others jammed in St. Peter's Square.

The papal blessing did not, however, mitigate my pain in reaching that square, nor did it forestall the agonies of the visit and the return home.

I had, you see, undertaken the trip with some misgivings, because of an acute back problem. Let me urge anyone contemplating a jaunt to Rome, don't go unless you're in perfect health!

I walked at least five miles daily, up cathedral steps, over cobblestone streets, in the relentless heat of an immense city where air-conditioning was a rare luxury.

When I wasn't walking, I was standing on a bus or subway, or waiting for one, or waiting to get into some building where I'd stand and admire something. Every step, almost every moment was pain-filled.

As I limped my way around Rome, a haven of rest was the McDonald's restaurant in the Piazza di Spagna. I have in the past scorned traces of

Americana in foreign cities, wanting to savor the pure culture of another land. But in my pain and fatigue I blessed the fast-food industry that had brought its clean, cool, familiar presence to Rome. This popular eating place offered the ultimate: a place to sit down!

So it went for eight days. On the sixth day we learned that our return flight would not leave in time to make our Piedmont connection to Wilmington. This is the unpredictability of charters; they don't reveal departure times till about 48 hours in advance. We had therefore purchased special fare tickets on an 8 p.m. flight out of New York on the hope that the charter would get us to New York at an earlier hour. Our travel agent assured us that charters "always" arrive at Kennedy in the afternoon.

Despite the papal blessing, we did not have this good fortune, so on that sixth day, we frantically called the agent and asked her to reserve something for us the following morning. (Long distance calls from Rome, by the way, cost about \$6 per minute).

Going home time arrived Saturday, and I was delirious with joy, knowing I'd soon be off my feet and en route to English-speaking people and air-conditioned comfort.

The flight was only four hours late in leaving, as opposed to the eight hours we'd stood at Kennedy a week before. The baggage-handlers strike encountered in Milan kept us on the ground only an hour, compared with the London delay caused by an air controllers' strike. We were getting

used to hassles.

At 1 a.m. Sunday we were on American soil once more. My husband rustled up official documents showing the charter airline was responsible for our missed connection the night before . . . there was a slim chance we'd not lose the entire fare.

No buses were running, so we took an expensive cab to La Guardia and bedded down on the floor in front of the Piedmont counter.

When they opened at 6 a.m. we were first in line, exhausted but expectant about getting back to Wilmington.

The news fell on us like a boulder . . . there was no record of our reservations and the flight was full. The young man at the counter smiled in disdain when we asked about recompense for our special tickets.

Then my heroine appeared on the scene . . . Deborah Williams, a Piedmont supervisor, listened to my husband's story, saw our despondency, and, after unsuccessful attempts to reach her boss in Winston-Salem, took the plunge and moved mountains for us.

Miraculously two seats appeared on the flight, miraculously she said, "We'll just forget it," when we offered to pay. This fine human being bent the rules and went out of her way to relieve our pain.

That's why, when I rested once again in my own bed, I remembered, not the lyrical cadence of the Pope's blessing, but the heavenly voice of Ms. Williams sending me home.