

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Spotlight Was On Alligator

To the editor:

Thanks to (former) Town Manager Blake Proctor of Holden Beach for taking no action on an ordinance to protect sea turtles from artificial light.

Had it not been for spotlights on the beach we might have had a great tragedy when three women saw an alligator coming out of the ocean.

Visitors and families are drawn to our area because they can walk the beach safely at night with their flashlights. Children go home with happy memories of Holden Beach and looking for ghost crabs at night. They look forward to coming back.

The sea turtles manage to come back every year but usually after midnight when young people are asleep.

Beryl Walker  
Holden Beach (in summer)

Make Everyone Do The Same About Lights

To the editor:

It is now one week since I had my security light taken down and I still see a great number still, according to our pontifical town board, creating a nuisance.

If I have to abide by a stupid ordinance that deprives citizens of their right to security, then everyone should do the same.

In the interim, I assume that the Town of Holden Beach plans to collect \$25 per day for each day the lights plague mankind.

J. A. Fournier  
Holden Beach



PHOTOGRAPHING BIRDS can be fun with even the simplest of camera equipment.

PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

Photographing Birds For Fun

BY BILL FAVER

Winter days can be good times to try photographing birds just for the fun of it. While long telephoto lenses and sophisticated cameras will help, you can get good pictures with just the simplest of equipment. Photographing birds can be a challenge to our creativity and an answer to our need for competition, exercise, and satisfaction of accomplishment.

Major problem in photographing birds is getting close enough to them. Birds can avoid us like few other creatures and just as we are about to get the picture, there goes the bird! We can get close to the birds in two ways: we get close to them or we bring them close to us. Blinds, camouflage suits, camera set-ups with remote controls, backyard feeders, and decoys are all

aimed at getting close to the bird or luring them in to us. Of course, telephoto lens, binoculars, and telescopes can be used to make them appear larger on the film.

With birds we often don't have time for much planning. We must do that before we see the bird. Check the lighting, the lens settings, film, etc., before we begin our stalking. Have the camera out of the case, ready to go! When a subject appears, take a picture, then move closer, take another, move in, etc. Get what you can when you can, then try to improve on it. At some point the bird will fly and you should remember when that happens. It could help you next time you encounter the same species.

Birds should be doing something, if possible. They can be bathing, scratching, dusting, flying, sleeping, stretching, nesting, feeding young, standing on one foot, or just posing. Try to capture an activity, or a feeling, or some dramatic moment. Often side-lighting or back-lighted

silhouettes can be helpful for the dramatic shots.

The pictures should be simple and uncluttered so the bird is the main subject and immediately draws attention. Use either a vertical or a horizontal format, depending on the bird or the background. Try to fill the frame with the bird, allowing space for a bird to look into, lean into, or move into the picture. This is more pleasing than having the bird centered in the picture. Curves, diagonals, and other forms can add interest. In groupings, odd numbers are better than even ones. Try to get sharp, bright eyes in your your photographs, even if some parts of the bird appear fuzzy.

Bird photographers warn us to be cautious about disturbing nesting birds and to forego the picture rather than to cause harm to the bird.

We photograph birds because of their beauty and because they are readily seen, frequent subjects. They can be easily attracted and they are a continuing challenge to our creativity. And we can have fun.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR  
Girl Scouts Changing As The World Changes

(The following letter, written as a reply to a letter last week by Karl Brandt of Shallotte, is printed here at the request of the writer. Editor's note.)

Mr. Brandt:  
In reply to your letter in the Jan. 17 issue of the *Beacon*, as the Service Unit Manager I was asked by leaders of Girl Scout troops throughout Brunswick County to try to clear up your misconceptions regarding the Girl Scout program and the Girl Scout cookie sales.

The Girl Scout cookie sales is a long honored tradition throughout the United States. Girl Scouts have been approaching the public asking "would you like to buy some Girl Scout cookies?" since 1936, long before the "feminist" movement began. Those girls were learning production, marketing, public relations, money management, values/morals and other skills useful to them in the '30s, just as our girls are learning today.

Our girls are the future women of the 1990s and the 21st Century. We, as leaders and parents, must prepare our children to face their futures. Economical unrest faces families in today's world and tomorrow's. Check around, Mr. Brandt, and you will find both partners working in more than 57% of today's families. (Compare those numbers to the 30% in 1960, 39% in 1970 and 50% in 1980.) A staggering 24% of our American families are single working parents and the majority of the single parents are mothers.

These numbers won't decrease, instead they are on a steady rise. Our daughters, unless they are lucky and born into a billionaire's family or marry into one, are going to become part of those numbers. We want them prepared to be able to earn a competitive salary if they have to work or choose to work at a career they enjoy. A salary they can live comfortably on, not just survive from one pay period to another as

most families today do. Today's Girl Scout programs are designed to teach our girls skills they will need whether they are homemakers, mothers or career women helping to support their families. We work very hard in our troops to help our girls learn life skills. We teach homemaking skills—providing good nutritious healthy meals and snacks, how to have a healthy lifestyle, childcare, how to deal with relationships, money management and organization skills, decision-making skills, self-assertion, and self-esteem. We teach arts, community involvement, environmental skills, communicating with others, and we introduce them to new experiences.

The traditional woman's role of the "little woman" in the kitchen cooking, cleaning and changing diapers is changing daily. Our troops around Brunswick County work hard learning how to cope with the

new role women in today and tomorrow's lifestyle must play. We're changing as the world changes. Guts? The women and men (and yes, Mr. Brandt, we have men throughout the Girl Scout program) who are leaders in our communities are the bravest people I've ever met. They volunteer their time to reach into the lives of millions of little girls to teach them morals and values and all the other skills they will need to survive in the world we'll be throwing them into. As role models, these people are untouchable! We have homemakers and mothers, career women and men within the ranks of our leaders, all unpaid volunteers. Mr. Brandt, we invite you to become a Girl Scout leader and teach those skills you feel are so necessary for our girls to know. Whitney Walters  
Service Manager of Brunswick Long Beach

Don't Forget Who Put Power In Their Hands

To the editor:  
I have been a Brunswick County resident all of my life. I have seen this county progress faster than I had ever imagined in such a short period; most of which I very proud of.

But with the current board of county commissioners, there are some very serious issues that have come to mind that I feel I must share with my fellow county residents.

The new county commissioners seem to be dwelling on the past. They seem to feel that there is a need to rehash decisions made by their predecessors. Is it their place to try and undo what the former commissioners (who were also elected by their constituency) have done in what they thought to be in the best interest of the county?

If that is so, then is it not conceivable that everything that has ever been done anywhere by anyone can be undone by those put in power to do those very things that we entrust them to uphold?

It is an age-old tradition to say what is wanted to be heard in order to get in the position to do what you want (that is in the political arena). But this is not the way things should be done. Whatever happened to truth, whatever happened to a man's word being his bond? Why must ev-

ery issue be black vs. white, Democrat vs. Republican, the northern end of the county vs. the southern end? Are we not all of the same county? Don't we all want to maintain the good qualities of this fair county of ours to remain ever available to our children and their children?

I feel the new board of commissioners should realize the vast growth of the county and come to terms with the needs of all its citizens. There are five departments in the county administration that are headed by black citizens of the county.

These department heads seem to have been singled out by the newly-elected board for reasons that have not been clearly defined. Instead of focusing on these departments, I think it would be a wise decision to include the 30-odd other departments along with the five mentioned earlier, and embrace them all with the supporting, helping hand that we look for from our county commissioners and all elected officials of the county, the state and the country.

The media seems to have placed a lot of faith in this new board and has already given them much praise. I only hope that they are correct and that the new board of county commissioners will give out their

leadership to all of its citizenry and not single out just those that don't seem to fit in with their personal/political ideologies.

The power is in their hands, but let us, nor them, not forget who put it there.

Andrew Hill, III  
Leland

Stop Playing Politics On School Board

(The following letter, written to Donna Baxter, chairperson of the Brunswick County Board of Education, is printed here at the request of the writer. Editor's note.)  
Dear Ms. Baxter:

As a taxpayer, concerned citizen and grandparent of a future student of the Brunswick County School system, I would like to voice my complaints, opinions and concerns.

The students do not care if members of the board of education are Republicans or Democrats, so please, for the sake of our students, stop playing politics and get down to the business for which you were elected—to help set policy, offer guidance, leadership and to set goals for our administrators, teachers and students. Remember, I said

"guidance," not interference.

While I can understand you may have a very rare case in which a sensitive, personal matter must be discussed in private in order to protect the person or their families from embarrassment, I cannot for the life of me understand why you would need to have a private meeting for a public school system.

I understand there will be time the members do not agree, and this is good. But when a vote is taken every member should support the majority decision, not try to undermine the board. It sends the wrong message to the teachers and students.

Brunswick County is a great place to live. We have great people, great climate, beautiful beaches, and, with the cooperation of you (board of education) and the county commissioners, we can have a "great" school system.

If you will let the administrators administrate, and let the teachers teach, then the students will learn.

Educating the youth of our county should be our number one priority, and should be supported by every citizen, not just parents.

Let us all support our teachers, administrators and students. It will make Brunswick County a better place to work, live and play.

Nick Newton  
Ocean Isle

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