

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Knowledgeable Teacher Doesn't Need Textbook

To the editor:  
I would like to challenge the points made by Julie Strickland of Leland in her letter to the editor (Jan. 24).  
My qualifications are: I started teaching in Illinois in 1960. In 1966 when the reading program began (Title I), I was put in that program in Peoria, Illinois, teaching poor readers in the second, third and fourth grades.  
I moved to Southport in 1962 where I was assigned to teach fourth grade. In 1977 I was transferred to the Title I program under P. R. Hankins. I well know his policies. I believe it is the state which determines the textbooks.  
When I started teaching, I used the standard forms of teaching spelling. I had never heard of phonics, but I was given a phonics workbook, along with each class member, which taught phonics and its rules. I discovered that even though I had never heard of it, I had automatically been applying phonics all of my life. As far as spelling was concerned, I found that the standard practice of having a child practice

each missed spelling word 25 times did not work.  
By 1966 when I was placed in the Title I program, children with learning disabilities, except in retarded classes, were first beginning to become generally known. I tested the children in grades two, three and four, to whom I was assigned, in visual learning disabilities and found many had problems. I began to use physical methods to develop those skills along with regular phonics and the usual reading skills.  
When I came to Southport, I had the opportunity to put into practice my own creative way of teaching reading, writing and spelling. Naturally, I also used the "prescribed methods." But my method was to take many field trips. This area is so rich in places to go. Almost everything in the world is just a short trip away to see: government, historical sites, the ferry, beach, aquarium and nature.  
My classes were divided into small groups of not more than six, depending on the number of volunteer mothers. Each group had a list of things to observe, take notices

on, discuss in small groups in the classroom, then write about individually.  
(Incidentally, lesson preparation referred to by Julie Strickland should take place at home in the evening, not in the classroom.)  
By using each child's writing and spelling to teach correct usage, each child learned to read, write and spell by much doing.  
About a year ago one of my fourth grade students saw me in the super market and told me he is now an architect, that he had the highest score in his class on the S.A.T. in language, and he learned it all in my fourth grade.  
When I came to Brunswick County I was shocked to discover that many teachers did not speak correct English. Children learn from the sounds they hear used by adults.  
One doesn't need a textbook to learn reading, writing and spelling. One needs a teacher who uses the language correctly, who encourages much outside reading and book reports which are used to develop language skills through writing and discussing, using the child's own

language to guide in using it correctly.  
I have no way of knowing how the rest of "my" children did later in language skills, but I ran into one boy who said I taught him in the fourth grade in the Title I class in Shallotte and he later he won four state scholastic awards.  
The two young people who saw me and told me how well they did, seem to indicate that the methods I used, in supplement to prescribed methods, worked outstandingly well.  
I'd love to read whether any other teachers who used similar methods have heard the results from former students.  
In a nutshell, use the reading each child prefers to teach. Use their most correct language usage to build on; making them feel good about what they are doing whether it is in writing or telling about what they read and the same with their experiences.  
A teacher who knows what she's doing doesn't need a textbook.  
Teddi Neal  
Bolivia

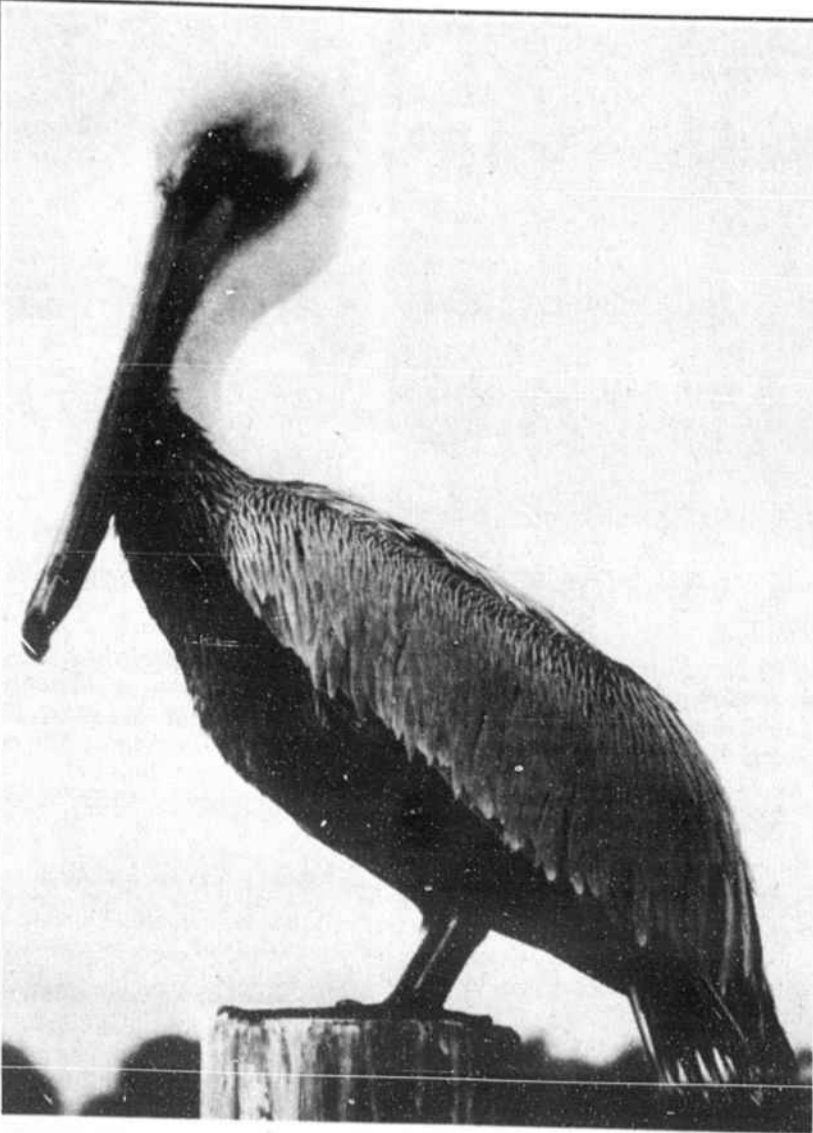


PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

BROWN PELICANS have been saved as a species because there were no troubling words like, "I don't know why we need two species of pelicans—a brown one and a white one!"

Troubling Words

BY BILL FAVER

It is not unusual to hear some of our bureaucrats make statements that are troubling to us. Some of those charged with protecting the environment have been leaders in uttering troubling words. Many times we are led to wonder whether they have little real knowledge of the problems they are addressing or whether they have been put there by an administration whose sympathies lie elsewhere.

One good example was the recent statement by the Secretary of the Interior. You know, he is the one charged with overseeing the vast natural resource treasure of our country. He administers the laws and regulations dealing with endangered species. He runs the national parks and monuments and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He is supposed to be understanding and sympathetic to environmental matters and a person who can inspire and lead us in conserving and protecting our natural resources.

Like many of his predecessors he is often caught in the conflicts between development and conservation or preservation. His latest wise comment was something like this: "I don't know why we need to save three species of squirrels - a red one, a brown one, and a white one." It was like saying, "I don't know why we need to worry about the diversity of life on this planet." Or, like saying, "Why do we need more than one breed of dogs, or cats, or cows, or hogs, or anything."

Sometimes we wonder about the need to save the snail darters or the spotted owl or the special squirrels. We could probably get along without them. And when saving them increases costs or costs jobs, we raise even more questions. But, we're dealing with diversity of life on our small planet where we still don't understand all the complex interdependencies and relationships involved. What seems insignificant today may turn out to be highly significant later. If they are gone the way of the Carolina Parakeet, the Passenger Pigeon, and others, we will never see them. We need to care about life and variety and the rights of species to exist in a world that is not just ours to do with as we please. And comments like the Secretary's don't do much to help.



FAVER

To the editor:

At a time when the men and women in our armed forces are facing their greatest test, we at home are facing a test as well. Our test is to maintain our unity and resolve, as our troops are doing in the Persian Gulf.

We don't want Saddam Hussein to take this country's tolerance for anti-war demonstrators as a signal he should wait out our resolve in a long and bloody war.

I'm outraged at the brutal treatment of our POWs. And I'm saddened to see the media give so

Delightfully Indignant Rebuttal

To the editor:

Finally there comes along one Bev Moser whose very delightfully indignant rebuttal of what she thought was the brunt of my criticism of the feminist influence in the Girl Scouts actually makes the point clear.

If the Girl Scouts are as she describes and as we hope is the case, then, obviously, the mothers (the homemakers) are going to have to reclaim leadership from the feminists.

Which is exactly the point I was trying to make with my hyperbolic extension of the language used by the two previous Girl Scout representatives in print here.

Of course the cookie sale is a time-honored and worthy fund-raising device, but it is not a credible intellectual stimulus to career aspirations or any substantial training thereof. Such representation is feminist fluff.

Mrs. Moser is guilty only of misreading my lines, not of her aims and purposes.

Hopefully Vicki Poole and Whitney Walters will find ways to make their language conform to the view of the Girl Scout effort Mrs. Moser presents, and then we shall be free of the misrepresentations implied.

Karl Brandt  
Shallotte

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much attention to the small number of anti-war protesters who have sprung into action. It seems that every time a few protesters pick up their signs, the cameras swarm around them, and they end up on the news.

Our soldiers have said that they have a job to do and are going to get

it done. I feel I have a job to do, too. And that's to stand up in strong support of our troops.

I want them to know that I and the American people are very proud of them. We are all inspired by their bravery.

I hope that you'll print my letter, and others like it, in the days ahead.

Thousands of local American newspapers are reaching our men and women in uniform every day. Your newspaper may be one of them. I want the troops to know that we hold them in our thoughts and prayers every day.

John F. Ziefel  
Sunset Beach

Letters To The Editor

(Continued From Preceding Page)

not attend public hearings.

Rick Bryan on Monday night used a similar example to that of Planning Board Chairman Charlotte Nolte in 1989. She said, "The minute it (referring to the light) goes off your property, it's like a dog. It's a nuisance." Rick Bryan said, "If I had a pit bull and he went over into your property, you'd be mad." I don't recall my security light ever making regular "deposits" of feces in a neighbor's yard. To compare the two is ridiculous.

Of course, all of this is now redundant. But when I look out on the dark neighborhood, it makes me feel better to know that someone is happy about it.

Thank you for allowing me to express my frustrations.

Alice E. Tew  
Holden Beach

Security Lights: Time To Stand And Be Counted

To the editor:

At a meeting of the Holden Beach Town Board Feb. 4, Rick Bryan, in an open hearing on outside security lights made this statement, as printed in the *Beacon*: "If I had a Pit Bull and it went on your property you would be mad." I hope the Bryans remember this the next time they rent their house located at 263 west Brunswick Avenue.

The people who rented this property have a nice dog. It will stand four-five hands tall and will weigh 50-60 pounds. This dog used the neighborhood for a place to dig a hole, do his thing, and scratch to make an effort to cover his thing up.

I live across the street at 258 W.

Brunswick Ave. and I have a security light. This light was in place long before the Bryan house was constructed and it was put in place after the approval of all the property owners in the neighborhood. My security light casts an almost invisible shadow on the Bryan property. It shines in no windows, it doesn't do its thing and it digs no holes.

I find it hard to believe that three board members, the wife of one, husband of another, a hasty signed petition with 87 signatures, which is less than 5% of the 1764 property owners of Holden Beach, can tell Jim Fournier or anyone else to take it down within 24 hours or pay a fine of \$25 and \$25 each day thereafter.

It's time to stand up and be counted, if such a minute group can do this, you may very well wake up one morning come summer time and find the beach has been closed. He said it, and I agree: let there be light.

George Bradshaw  
Holden Beach

Hospital, Personnel Are Applauded

To the editor:

The purpose of this letter is to give a round of applause to our medical facility, The Brunswick Hospital. We had no reason to use the facilities until recently and, to our great delight, found that every person connected with the hospital seemed to try to make us feel as if our well-being was the most important job they had to do.

We found each person we encountered to be helpful, polite and well trained in their job.

William E. Robertson  
Route 1, Supply

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