

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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New Museum Is Well Worth Visiting

The new Museum of Coastal Carolina opened Saturday at Ocean Isle Beach. Some of you may have checked it out.

For those of you who haven't seen it, I'm here to tell you it's well worth visiting.

If I were you, I would drop the newspaper right away and drive to Ocean Isle Beach. Don't forget to grab two bucks and cut off the oven!

Seriously, you've got to see this place. It's got everything from a case of Civil War rifles and shark jaws to a dolphin skull and stuffed alligator.

For you shell collectors, the museum has cabinets full of shells. They come in all sizes, shapes and colors.

It's even got a wave machine that shows how the profile of the beach changes during the four seasons.

Doug Rutter



This is something everyone should see.

In my opinion, though, the best part of the museum is the reef room. It gave me the feeling of being underwater and surrounded by fish, sea turtles and other sorts of marine life that live off the Carolina coast.

The reef room is so lifelike, I actually had to come up for air a few times. You might want to bring your own snorkel when you visit.

An 11-member museum foundation board of directors helped raise

funds and bring the museum together. But a lot of the credit for this facility has to go to Ocean Isle Beach homeowner Stuart Ingram.

Ingram, a part-time resident of the beach, came up with the idea for the museum in 1988 and pushed hard until it was done. I've never met a more determined man than Stuart Ingram.

When I first talked with Stuart about his idea nearly three years ago, I had no doubt that he would get this museum built and it would be something the area could look at with pride.

Over the past year, I have seen the museum at several different stages of completion. I had seen it taking shape, and fully expected it to be something special. They just don't do many second-rate jobs at Ocean Isle Beach.

But I honestly never expected it to turn out as good as it did. I was

fortunate enough to get a sneak preview at the museum dedication ceremony two weeks ago. I was very impressed.

Ingram and the museum board members have to be pleased with what has been accomplished so far. But even as the building was being dedicated, Ingram was looking forward. His thoughts were on expansion.

He already wants it bigger and better. He wants to set up more displays and offer an even better look at the coastal environment. If anyone can get it done, Stuart Ingram can.

This museum certainly will please the folks who visit our beaches and give them yet another reason to return year after year.

And if you're a Brunswick County resident, a museum visit might just give you a better appreciation of your surroundings.

Precinct Move Smells Like Rotten Politics

Some politicians are playing ridiculous games with voters at one Brunswick County precinct.

There must be a reason why the Leland Town Council wants to move the Woodburn precinct polling place. The foolish plan is to snatch the polls from Navassa's town hall and move it to Leland's town hall.

It's unlikely you'll find a very good reason for the move. Instead, you'll hear petty arguments that Leland's building is a more central location for the Woodburn precinct voters than Navassa's town hall.

As the saying goes, there's a rat in the woodshed and it's stinking up the place. Maybe someone will find it and throw the rascal out, for the whole deal smells like rotten politics.

So far, the Brunswick County Board of Elections has entertained Leland's little joke and has played along with the game. It held a public hearing on the proposed move last week.

Something to keep in mind is that Republicans hold a majority on the elections board, 2-1. Whatever the Republicans want is what the voters of Woodburn precinct will get.

In preparing for the vote, it appears some political maneuvering has already taken place. Last month, the Republican executive committee axed Pat Ramsey from the elections board. She is to be replaced as soon as the committee's nominations are approved by the state.

The elections board toured Leland's town hall before it decided to hold a public hearing on the requested move. Ms. Ramsey was reportedly against moving the precinct to Leland.

Apparently, a lack of parking spaces and storage security at Leland's town hall doesn't concern too many people. Neither does Village Road's notorious traffic problem.

Navassa's town hall is a nice brick building with a paved parking lot. It offers security and can be spotted simply by looking for the town's water tower. Right next door, voters can find the town hall. However, Navassa is a predominantly black town, or should that matter? A majority of its voters are also registered as Democrats.

Leland's town hall is a renovated house located on a typical, tree-lined lot with the same kind of narrow dirt driveway as any home would have in the predominantly white neighborhood.

It's unlikely that what's motivating the big switch is indeed a matter of convenience for all of the voters in the Woodburn precinct.

Local Support Adds Up

Several local groups, such as the Shallotte Junior Woman's Club and Ocean View Association Sunday School, have long-standing traditions of presenting scholarships to West Brunswick High School seniors. Others, like the South Brunswick Isles Civitan Club and Shallotte Lions Club, are just establishing such awards.

In any case, these groups are to be commended and other civic and profession groups, churches and businesses should look to them as examples.

Why? Because local scholarship awards are making a difference. Just look at the Class of 1991: Eleven local organizations and businesses, ranging from a garden club to an insurance agency, presented approximately \$8,000 in scholarships, accounting for a significant portion of the \$22,800 in scholarship money received so far by the class for the 1991-92 college year.

Two school organizations, the Student Government Association and National Honor Society, presented another \$1,100 in scholarships.

These local awards represent hours committed by club members to selling candy, fish, homebaked cookies, raffle tickets and other items.

As the cost of a college education continues to rise, scholarships from the local community are going to become more and more important in bridging the gap between what families can afford to pay and what colleges and universities offer in the way of financial aid packages.

They may also provide the incentive, the vote of confidence and support, a student needs to continue pursuing a college education in the face of sometimes great obstacles.

If yours is one of the organizations providing this kind of support, give yourself a pat on the back. If not, start planning now to offer a scholarship next May, even if for only \$100. Every dollar makes a difference.



Early Bird Gets The Worm, So I'm Told

Every now and then I wake up early, but only when I have to.

Some people are early risers. While I admire them, I can't quite figure out how they do it.

They hit the garden early before the sun dries away the dew so the 5 percent sevin dust they sprinkle on the vegetable plants will cling to the leaves. That important bit of information once made quite an impression on me.

My father asked that I play gardener, and I asked why it couldn't wait until lunchtime. So there I was in my bedroom shoes, eyes half-closed, shaking a burlap sack full of white poison on the heads of tiny insects that were throwing a wild party on our butter beans.

That's one of the memories I have of getting up early.

It's not that I'm lazy. I get up in time for work. I once drove a school bus while in high school. I've had 8 a.m. college classes before, too, but not because I actually wanted them.

By the time I finally made it to drop-add sessions, hundreds of students were already ahead of me and had grabbed up all of the good time slots. They had gotten up early so they could be the first in line.

Still, 8 a.m. isn't what I mean by "early." By "early" I mean real early, like when it's still dark outside and the cat's asleep on the back porch. You open the door and she looks at you kind of funny, as if to say, "What are you doing up? Just shut the door and go back to bed. But before you go, how about throwing out a pouch of those Tender Somethings."

Terry Pope



Besides, I don't drink coffee, which seems to be a requirement for people who get up early. Just check your local breakfast houses, where those poor employees must get up at the crack of dawn just to bake biscuits, and count the number of coffee cups scattered across the tables.

When I was 10 years old, I caught the biggest fish I have ever caught—a flounder that must have weighed 10 pounds if it weighed an ounce—because I got up early. Even that didn't change my philosophy on sleep. I was using one of those tiny, Zebco reels that's just right for bringing in a spot about the size of your hand.

My father and two older brothers would leave early, now I'm talking early, on a Saturday morning and head to Fort Fisher. Such an all-day fishing trip was really more of a boyhood ritual, a test to see if it was time to flee the nest and become one of the "men."

The excitement of finally being old enough to go with the "men" still didn't settle my queasy stomach, upset from having to rise at such an early hour in the morning just to catch a fish. As the saying goes, the early bird gets the worm.

I knew then that I would never be one of those early to rise persons, for on that fishing trip, there were parts of me that were still back home in bed. I was sick. Physically.

And when it came time to get an early start on those long vacation trips with the family, I'd be in the front seat with my teddy bear, not feeling so well.

It became a standard joke with the family. My body cannot tolerate those early hours. I'd lay my head down and not wake up until I heard someone say, "I can see Chimney Rock," a good seven hours down

the road.

I would love to shake the hand of the man who invented snooze buttons on alarm clocks. The one on mine is about worn out. I always have good intentions of getting up early. I set the clock, but what happens in the morning is a different story.

My biological clock enjoys sunsets better than sunrises, and there's no changing it. I'm a nightowl. My mind's still quick at midnight, usually, long after the dew has started to settle, laying a trap for unsuspecting bugs that crawl around in the night.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Say No To 12-Months School

To the editor:

As a student of Brunswick County schools, I think it is a big mistake for us to go to school 12 months out of the year in the near future.

My reasons for this are student lack of interest, interference with school vacations, and the cost involved.

The first reason is I think students would lose interest in school over this long period of time. We would get tired of going to school over a period of 23 months. This could cause some students to drop out.

Secondly, it would interfere with summer vacations. We need this time to relax. Also, many students depend on their summer jobs. These would no longer be possible.

My final reason is the cost would

be hard to pay keeping the schools open for 12 months. It is hard getting what we need now.

These are my reasons for not wanting 12-month school years. Please, Superintendent of Education Hankins, consider these reasons when making a decision.

Jonathan Carlisle
 Rt. 1, Supply

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 2558, Shallotte, N. C. 28459.

And Here It Is At Last — The Bypass

Some people are taking the opening of the Shallotte bypass nonchalantly, but not me and not my husband, Don.

My first venture out was last Wednesday morning, right after the opening ceremony, a brisk run from the north end to West Brunswick High School for awards day.

Wednesday night Don and I were back on the bypass, cruising. It felt good.

Unless you live or work in Shallotte you can't believe how nice it is to look out the window of the *Beacon* office the Friday afternoon of the long Memorial Day weekend and not see traffic backed up bumper to bumper at the Wall

Susan Usher



Street light.

And I'm certain that getting home to Shallotte from work at the county complex in Bolivia is easier these days for Don, except when there's a highway accident between one place and the other as there was Friday afternoon.

Sure, there's still plenty of traffic on Main Street, but it appears to be moving more smoothly and quickly.

Out on the bypass, it's like drivers have discovered a whole new world. Twenty-four hours after the four-lane opened, you would have thought it was either I-40 or a new dragstrip, what with all the cars flying by in the left lane.

You could rake in the dough writing speeding tickets.

As for me, I'm still wondering if it's for real. Pinch me, quick.

For me and other natives a bypass was just another part of western Brunswick County mythology for years. We followed its trail as

key pieces of right-of-way were acquired and a route mapped.

Then we saw plans go on the back burner, not just for a season, but years and years and years. The dream seemed to have died; we were told because some key individuals thought a bypass might hurt business in Shallotte.

Getting the bypass was truly a bipartisan effort, mostly because politicians of any stripe try to do what pleases their constituency, and western Brunswick County residents wanted their bypass.

Shallotte leaders pooled their efforts for a massive lobbying effort in Raleigh and didn't let up the pressure.

During his tenure as state representative Tom Rabon worked with local officials to get the bypass back on the state's Transportation Improvement Plan. Rep. David Redwine helped keep it there, and finagled funding for a welcome center to boot. And a Republican governor, Jim Martin, promised publicly that it would be built. The South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce pushed hard for an opening before the summer 1991 season.

And so the Shallotte bypass of U.S. 17 has come about, on schedule.

Thanks, guys, for being persistent.