

# THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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PAGE 4-A, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1993

## Safety Project Deserves All The Help We Can Give It

It's a shame that public schools are in a position to need to teach children how to get along with others in a nonviolent fashion, but it's an unfortunate reality of our current world.

For that reason, we wish the Brunswick County schools great success with a \$100,000 grant from the State Board of Education for five school safety-related projects involving about half the schools in our district.

Some may argue that Brunswick County schools, with academic statistics that are nothing to brag about, should concentrate all their efforts on traditional classroom subjects. To do so would be to overlook the fact that poor communication skills, fear and anger create an environment where learning—much less nurturing a love for learning—becomes impossible.

The projects will emphasize ways to teach students how to resolve conflicts verbally rather than by resorting to violence; expanding a peer mediation program into all middle schools and high schools; holding workshops on coping and conflict resolution for parents; starting a bus safety program; and taking steps to promote understanding of cultural differences. If you doubt any one of those issues to be a problem in Brunswick County, you haven't been reading the crime reports and court dispositions reported every week in this newspaper.

Conflicts that begin in school erupt into the community at large, and the number of school-age Brunswick Countians in grown-up-size trouble continues to rise. For that reason, it is heartening that the proposal received endorsement from, and calls for participation by, numerous community agencies such as the sheriff's department and Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE). The program's only chance is if it supported not just by educators but by parents and other authority figures in the community.

Also encouraging is the fact that there's more to the plan than just "touchy-feely" talk sessions. Part of the money will go toward a camera and camera boxes for school bus monitoring of passenger behavior to help get the goods on habitual troublemakers and make them take responsibility for their actions.

As long as parents continue to abdicate their responsibility, educators have no choice but to do the best they can as surrogates, if for no other reason than to protect responsible students so they may get the education they need and deserve. The program deserves all the support and help the community can give.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Quarry No Public Works Project For Area Citizens

To the editor:

Pat Newton's plaintive letter to the editor would have us believe that the proposed Martin Marietta quarry is a public works project to alleviate the suffering of the gravel-starved citizens of Brunswick County. All we have to do is sacrifice a few lizards and a woodpecker or two.

In reality, the ill-conceived quarry plans are an assault upon our quality of life. The sacrifices will be 3.6 billion gallons of groundwater per year, 1,300 acres of downstream estuary, and the freshwater wetlands in and around the site. In addition, local residents and tourists will have to pick their way through a gauntlet of gravel trucks every day.

Martin Marietta obviously doesn't have a clue about possible effects on the nearby munitions depot and two nuclear reactors. CP&L apparently has a clue since it has now requested the Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources to deny the permit and recognize the company as an "affected person" in Martin Marietta's application.

Some people may choose to believe the condescending propaganda that Martin Marietta publishes in expensive two-page ads in the newspaper, but some of us retain a very healthy skepticism.

Carey D. (Dick) Aldridge  
 Southport

### Brierwood Helps

To the editor:  
 Again, for the eighth straight year, members of Brierwood Golf Club

and residents of Brierwood Estates participated in their annual "Help for the Needy" drive on Saturday, Dec. 11.

Brierwood volunteers Morris Hall, Straud Maerker, Jack Causer, Neal McCall, Gene Loflin, Bob Tompkins, Hugh McCullough, Burley Athan and yours truly collected and delivered five packed truckloads of clothes, food, toys and cash (\$225) to the Volunteer and Information Center at the Brunswick County Complex in Bolivia for distribution to the needy families at Christmas time.

As always, the happy ending to an undertaking such as this is that it will be a more wonderful holiday season for both—not only for those that received, but for those that gave as well.

Jimmy Simpson  
 Brierwood  
 (More Letters, Following Page)

### Write Us

We welcome your letters to the editor. Letters must include your address and telephone number. (This information is for verification purposes only; we will not publish your street/mailling address or phone number.) Letters must be typed or written legibly. Address letters to:  
**The Brunswick Beacon**  
 P.O. Box 2558  
 Shallotte NC 28459  
 Anonymous letters will not be published.

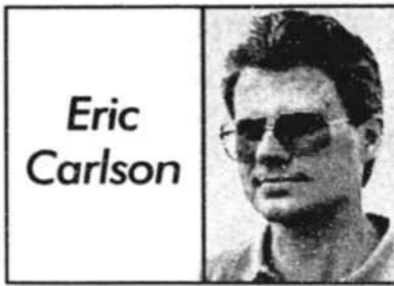
## Worth Repeating...

■ Violence does not and cannot exist by itself; is invariably intertwined with the lie.  
 —Alexander Solzhenitsyn

■ Do not go gentle into that good night,  
 Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.  
 —Dylan Thomas

# New Laws Won't Control The Lawless

Wayne LaPierre, CEO  
 The National Rifle Association  
 1600 Rhode Island Avenue N.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20036



Eric Carlson

Dear Mr. LaPierre:

Enclosed you will find a \$25 check for a one-year membership in the National Rifle Association. I realize I could have signed up by calling your "instant member hotline" (1-800-231-4NRA), but I wanted to contact you personally and let you know why I made this decision.

I've been a gun owner since age 12, when I purchased a single-shot .22 rifle with money I earned delivering newspapers. My dad was an avid hunter, a gun collector and an NRA member who taught me how to shoot and how to handle guns safely. He also bought me a junior membership in the NRA.

As a teenager I advanced through the NRA rifle program—from marksman to expert—under the supervision of our local Police Benevolent Association. I also competed on their rifle team and earned my NRA "Safe Hunter" certification.

My NRA membership went un-renewed when I went away to college. Since I graduated and embarked on a journalism career, I haven't paid much attention to the battle over Second Amendment rights. Until now.

Yesterday afternoon, a sociopath bent on mass murder killed five people and injured 20 others on a crowded Long Island, N.Y., commuter train. The early news accounts were unable to identify the killer or to explain his motive. So instead, they placed the blame on his weapon.

The TV news anchor, using proper broadcasting style, "punched out" all the right buzzwords for the audi-

ence to remember: "The killer used a 9mm SEMI-AUTOMATIC handgun with a HIGH-CAPACITY CLIP loaded with HOLLOW-POINT BULLETS."

Then, almost in the same breath, the announcer comforted viewers by noting that legislation has been introduced in Congress to LICENSE handgun owners, to BAN high-capacity magazines and to RESTRICT the sale of hollow-point ammunition.

I was not comforted. I was alarmed: By the ignorance (I hope), the laziness (I assume) and the intent (I suspect) of fellow journalists who consistently distort the issue of violence in America as it relates to gun ownership.

The murderer in this case had no criminal record. He could have purchased a weapon anywhere. There is every indication he would have qualified for a handgun license. As it is, he bought a gun in California after complying with the state's 15-day waiting period.

This man was determined to kill and would have carried as many clips as necessary—regardless of capacity—to complete his insane mission. Or he could have blown up the train and killed everyone aboard. (Did anyone suggest tighter controls on explosives after the World Trade Center bombing?)

The killer used hollow-point bullets designed to provide maximum

stopping power by expanding to remain inside the body. If he had fired 30 to 50 rounds of fully-jacketed ammunition into that crowd, some of those bullets would have passed through his intended victims and maimed or killed even more people.

Opponents of gun ownership choose not to be confused by such facts. Like all law-abiding firearms owners, they are justifiably shocked and frightened by the level of violence in America. And they are likewise frustrated with government's inability to stop the carnage.

Both sides have the same goal—to prevent the violent use of firearms. Anti-crime advocates want to give police and prosecutors the means to strictly enforce laws against those who use guns to commit crimes. They want to imprison the criminal while allowing the rest of us to remain free.

Gun opponents want to control the lawless by passing more laws. But if we can't enforce existing laws, new legislation will only restrict the law-abiding while allowing criminals to operate freely.

This point was driven home with sparkling clarity when I accompanied Brunswick County narcotics officers on a round-up of indicted drug dealers. During one of the arrests, detectives found a loaded SKS-56 semi-automatic rifle in a car that reeked of marijuana smoke.

I asked the officer if he planned to run a records check on the gun owner, assuming that they could hold him for prosecution if he turned out to be a convicted felon. After all, there's a federal law against that.

The detective just chuckled and said it wasn't worth the trouble, because the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms doesn't have time to bother with such "minor" of-

fenses. So, under the proposed new gun laws, an agency that won't enforce existing laws against a felon armed with a so-called "assault rifle" in an open-air drug market will be in charge of testing and licensing all handgun owners while trying to control the illegal bullets and ammunition clips.

(All this from the bureau that proved so effective against the Branch Davidian cult in Waco, Texas.)

How many violent criminals are likely to apply for a gun license? Are they going to hand over their high-capacity clips and hollow-point bullets? Or will these new black-market products be smuggled and sold and fought over just like crack cocaine?

There are many places in America where police cannot guarantee the public safety. Are we really going to pass laws to prohibit the public from protecting themselves with the weapons that criminals already have?

Gun opponents want legislators to believe passage of the much-bally-hooded Brady Bill indicates a majority of Americans are prepared to give up their Constitutional right "to keep and bear arms."

I don't believe it. And for that reason, after 20 years, I am renewing my membership in the NRA. I hope a flood of similar requests will send a message resounding through the halls of Congress.

Sincerely,  
 Eric Carlson

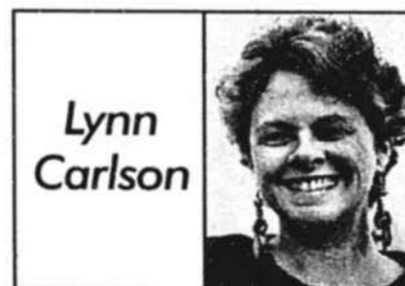
P.S. How about sending me some information about the voting record of our local Congressman Charlie Rose (D-7th District) on crime and gun control issues. I'd like to pass it on to our readers.



BARBARA  
 ©1993  
 CAROLINA  
 CARTOONS

## Letters From Kitty Hawk—The Wright Stuff

KITTY HAWK DEC 17 1903  
 SUCCESS FOUR FLIGHTS  
 THURSDAY MORNING ALL  
 AGAINST TWENTY-ONE-MILE  
 WIND STARTED FROM LEVEL  
 WITH ENGINE POWER ALONE  
 AVERAGE SPEED THROUGH  
 AIR THIRTY-ONE MILES  
 LONGEST FIFTY-SEVEN SEC-  
 ONDS INFORM PRESS HOME  
 CHRISTMAS



Lynn Carlson

Ninety years ago this Friday, Orville Wright telegraphed those words to his father from the Kitty Hawk Weather Station, more than three years after he and Wilbur began their glider experiments on the then-desolate dunes of the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

It was around 10:35 a.m. when Orville first lifted the brothers' flying machine off the track under its own power, a scene captured in the famous photograph by John T. Daniels of Manteo.

Orville flew 100 feet in 12 seconds. Wilbur went next, then Orville, then Wilbur again, covering 862 feet in 57 seconds on the last try.

As soon as the brothers and their helpers had called it a day, a gust of wind flipped the flying machine and slammed it into the sand, causing considerable damage to the history-making craft.

It didn't matter; the Wrights, neither of whom held a high school diploma, had proved what Wilbur boasted three days earlier: "There is now no question of final success."

This year's commemoration at the Wright Brothers National Memorial will surely be a gala, it being the kickoff of the 10-year countdown to the centennial. But I can't honestly say I'll miss being there.

I covered commemorations number 75, 77, 78, 79 and 80 for two Dare County newspapers. The ceremonies could have been truly moving except for one thing, Dec. 17 is inevitably the coldest day of the year out there on the windswept grounds of the Wright Memorial.

If the heavens are clear and you

know just where to squint, you can see the ghosts of Orville and Wilbur howling with laughter as thousands of commemorators' legs turn blue and noses burn crimson in the slicing 20-knot north wind.

You see, the brothers got their own taste of just how bitter it could be out there. They first heard from Capt. Bill Tate, Kitty Hawk postmaster and county commissioner, on Aug. 18, 1900:

*I would say that you would find here nearly any type of ground you could wish; you could, for instance, get a stretch of sandy land one mile by five with a bare hill in the center 80 feet high, not a tree or bush anywhere to break the evenness of the wind current. This in my opinion would be a fine place; our winds are always steady, generally from 10 to 20 miles velocity per hour.*

And later in the letter, a warning: *Don't wait until November. The autumn generally gets a little rough by November.*

Just days later, Wilbur arrived on the Tate doorstep. Orville followed with their gear and the parts of a glider. They set up a tent camp on a high ridge between the sound and ocean just south of Kitty Hawk Village, an area I believe is now a golf course. Wilbur wrote his father:

*The ground here is a very fine sand with no admixture of loam that the eye can detect, yet they attempt to raise beans, corn, turnips, etc., on it. Their success is not great, but it is a wonder that they can raise anything at all.*

Wilbur was an aviation pioneer; there was no reason to have expect-

ed him to foresee the land's potential to grow golf course grasses...

Orville to his sister: *You never saw such poor pitiable looking creatures as the horses, hogs and cows are down here. The only things that thrive and grow fat are the bedbugs, mosquitoes and wood ticks.*

(Later, of course, joined by real estate developers and tourists.)

Wilbur again: *But the sand. The sand is the greatest thing in Kitty Hawk, and soon will be the only thing. The site of our tent was formerly a fertile valley, cultivated by some ancient Kitty Hawker. The sea has washed and the wind blown millions and millions of loads of sand up in heaps along the coast, completely covering houses and forest. Mr. Tate is now tearing down the nearest house to our camp to save it from the sand.*

Oct. 18, 1900, from Orville: *When one of these 45-mile nor'easters strikes us, you can depend on it, there is little sleep in our camp for the night. Expect another tonight. We have just passed through one which took up two or three wagonloads of sand from the northeast end of our tent and piled it up eight inches deep on the flying machine, which we had anchored about 50 feet southwest....*

*When we crawl out of the tent to fix things outside, the sand fairly blinds us. It blows across the ground in clouds. We certainly can't complain of the place. We came down here for wind and sand, and we have got them.*

That autumn, and the next three, the Wrights would tough it out on the Outer Banks, leaving in winter to return to Dayton to attend to their bicycle business.

In 1901, they built a second glider, larger and with many improvements. In 1902, there was still a bigger and better craft than the one before; with it they made more than 1,000 gliding flights in two months,

some more than 600 feet.

Aviation enthusiasts from all over the world visited their camp, now relocated in sheds a few miles south at Kill Devil Hill, to take part in experiments and argue flight theory late into the night.

Back in Dayton, the Wrights began experimenting with gas-powered motors for their glider. By the time those trials began, the brothers, both in their 30s, had broken all world gliding records, compiled the first accurate charts of wind resistance, built the first wind tunnel in which types of aircraft wings had been tested, and built the most efficient glider in history.

When they returned to the Outer Banks in September 1903, everything went wrong. They faced snow, screaming winds, equipment breakdowns and experiment failures.

Orville had to leave in late November to take a broken propeller shaft back to Dayton to be fixed. He returned just six days before he and his brother would preside over one of the most profound turning points in human history.

I used to live just north of the Wright Monument. I rocked my baby in the wee hours of many mornings while gazing out the window over the floodlit granite obelisk atop Kill Devil Hill.

I used to go there and climb the hill to look eastward to the Atlantic, west to Kitty Hawk Bay and north over flat, sandy subdivisions where at the turn of the century stood the shifting dunes that threatened Capt. Tate's house.

I'd stand inside the replica of the windowless shed where the brothers bunked, where Orville prepared their meager meals and the two shivered under blankets and wrote their letters by lantern light.

In there, it seemed perfectly appropriate to wish for a little magic—for a molecule or two of Wilbur and Orville's brilliance, tenacity and vision to rub off on me in that wonderful spartan place.