

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Calabash Commissioner Explains Opposition To Sewer Authority Vote

To the editor:
At the Jan. 3 meeting of the Town of Calabash, I addressed my fellow commissioners on what I felt were the four major issues/flaws in the proposed South West Brunswick Water and Sewer Authority.

Since immediately after I voiced these concerns, the board voted 5-2 to fund, with Calabash town tax money, another \$150,000 toward the authority planning. I ask that your newspaper allow me to reiterate my remarks in hope that the public hearing on the sewer authority revenue bond financing on Thursday, Feb. 17, will be attended by many in-

formed and involved citizens of Calabash.

There are four major flaws in the S. B. Water and Sewer Authority Plans. They are finance, environment, time and politics:

Financially, the cost of the entire project has increased from \$29 million to \$33 million. To date our planning cost, using Calabash town tax money, has been \$53,270.7. (Note: with the vote of Jan. 3, this figure is now \$203,270).

The expected planning costs are presently estimated to go to \$500,000.

With the recent turn-down by

Farmers Home Administration of the hoped-for \$4 million in grants (money which does not have to be repaid), and the further turn-down of \$5 million in very low-interest, long-term FmHA loans, the cost of borrowing has increased greatly.

There is a further possible loss of state-government-assisted loans after a thorough review of the state-mandated environmental impact statement is done by at least nine agencies of the state and federal government concerned with the environment. Which brings me to the second flaw.

The complete denial of any finan-

cial assistance by FmHA, on grounds that this plan is environmentally unsound, raises serious doubt about two important things:

■ Can any of the other state and federal agencies ultimately approve this plan?

■ Who is this plan really designed to assist, large landholding developers who get a sewer system cheap and can then build condos, hotels and motels ala Myrtle Beach up and down our fragile waterways, or small landowners, especially those who already live here and, for the most part, have working septic systems?

The answer here may be in the fact that FmHA offered an \$18 million low-interest, long-term loan instead of the original \$9 million if the town would be modified to fit their environmental criteria.

The well-informed, efficient and active Sunset Beach Taxpayers Association intends to pursue appeals for any and all permitting processes by any of the aforementioned agencies. Their odds are good, and the delays these appeals will cause may be very long—months certainly, years possibly.

Which brings me to my next point, which is time. Chasing government loans with short timelines has encouraged the town's officials to press on without perhaps deliberating carefully enough on alternative solutions.

Which brings me to my next point, which is politics. Distrust on the part of Calabash District I people, who believe that District II people are not interested or concerned about their problems, has led to the rejection of the very viable option of the town buying the sewer and water utility which already serves 80 percent of the town.

The immediate goal would be expansion of the plant and serving the downtown. In this way, our town works together to help all of us and the town benefits by owning a profitable, excellent utility.

This proposal, to buy Carolina Blythe Water and Sewer Company, is being studied and weighed by a dedicated, generous group of very knowledgeable people who will present their findings at the town board hearing on Tuesday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m. We hope many of our town's citizens will be there to hear them. In any event, we urge our citizens to attend the sewer authority revenue bond public hearing on Thursday, Feb. 17.

Commissioner Teddy Altreuter
Town of Calabash

After all, according to these parents, there is no reason to punish these children. They should be allowed to get on with their lives.

Butch Davis was not allowed to get on with his life. He never again will know the love of his family, feel the sun, laugh, cry or watch his son grow to become a man. We that loved him will never see him in this life again.

When we think of him, the fact that he suffered and died a horrible death distorts other memories. Our world stopped and a painful void in our lives began when Butch was found murdered.

When the day comes, let it be said, loud and clear that in crimes such as this, watching and saying nothing is just as guilty as participating. If not the children, then maybe the parents should be held responsible.

Is it going to be said that human life does not matter? Butch Davis did matter, to everyone that loved and knew him.

Lynwood R. Davis Sr.
Linda Stevenson-Davis
Bolivia

deed real, then, as Commissioner Jerry Jones reasons, the other governmental entities Martin Marietta must deal with will act accordingly and the council's rash action was unnecessary.

Fear is all Mr. Quinn's organization peddled. Why be such a hypocrite?

Karl E. Brandt
Shallotte

Use Engineers

To the editor:
On Jan. 4, 1994, Brunswick County Commissioners put an ordinance in place to protect us from the dangers posed by mining between the Brunswick Nuclear Power Plant and the Army ammunition depot at Sunny Point. This was the result of detailed studies by citizens' groups, individual citizens, Carolina Power and Light, the Army Corps of Engineers, and local geologists.

Everybody BUT the county engineer's office participated. Was this part of a bureaucratic bungle, or a deliberate turning of the head to allow unhindered processing of Martin Marietta's application? It looks like more of the same shortsightedness that left the health department stating it did not have qualified engineers to evaluate Martin Marietta's septic tank permit application.

On the one hand, the planning board and planning department take the position that any and all types of activity should be allowed in the county. On the other, we are embarrassed to find out that the county can't provide technical evaluations to protect our health and safety and welfare.

Our commissioners are not being supported or served well by this bureaucratic foolishness. We should prohibit activities that are dangerous and require extensive technical expertise beyond our capability to make evaluations. We should use our skilled and qualified engineers where their expertise would help the commissioners understand dangerous proposals. Most of all, we should find out why they were not used this time.

Chuck Roof
Southport

Peddling Fear

To the editor:
Bob Quinn, would-be intrepid protector of the public safety, commenting on Commissioner Donald Shaw's fear of a Martin Marietta lawsuit against Brunswick County, boomed, "The last thing we want in a leader is fear. Leaders don't get afraid. They act."

Perhaps Mr. Quinn would kindly tell us on what basis all the opposition to MM's proposed limestone quarry, and indeed the commissioners' vote approving a ban on mining, was based? Confidence?

The screaming of the mining opponents included all kinds of ploys to invoke fear, language treating Martin Marietta as an enemy not to be trusted, and the obvious (backstage, of course) political procurement of fearful potential damage assessments from the Brunswick Nuclear Plant and the military terminal.

The validity of those scary reports ought to be shaded by the rational assumption that if such dire dangers actually exist, the officials of both installations would have said so without equivocations many weeks before the opposition heated up its hysteria.

Nobody has explained why the rational assumption might be wrong.

The idea that ammunition hauled on pneumatic wheels might be detonated by earth or air tremors, but not prone to detonation from a road collision, mocks one's common sense.

And if the threats to safety are in-

Let's Hear From You

To the editor:
I just wanted to thank (cartoonist) David Barbour for his wonderful drawing showing one of the true meanings of Thanksgiving (Nov. 25).

In the past, I criticized some of his work that used the Lord's name in vain, but for now I feel I need to thank him for the picture "Let Us Give Thanks."

Olivia Ann Smith
Mullins, S.C.

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.

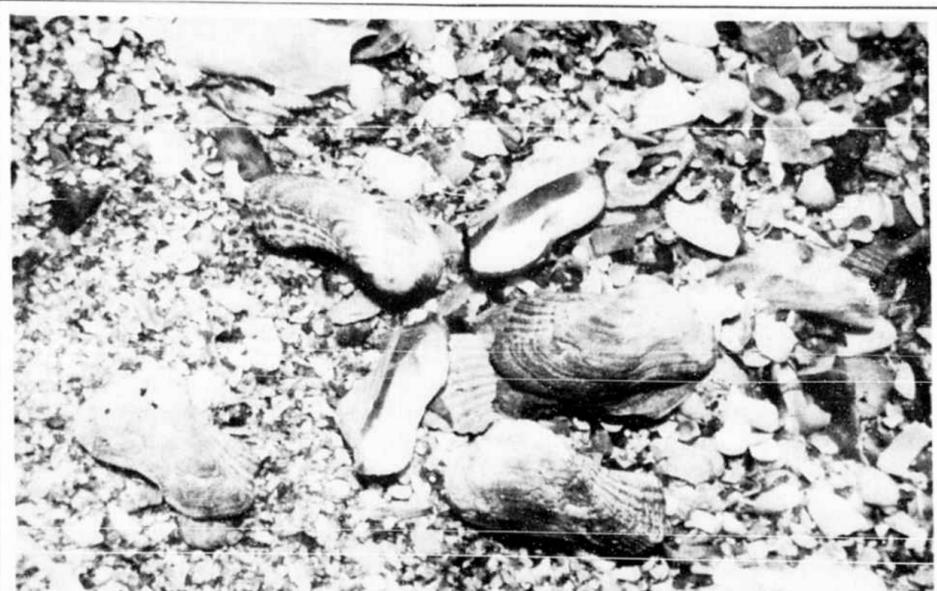


PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

TURKEY WINGS, found along our coast, are also known as zebra arks.

Turkey Wings Along The Shore

BY BILL FAVER

Turkey wings are one of our local representatives of the worldwide group of ark shells.

Sixteen of the 200 worldwide species appear on the Atlantic coast, and most of them are strong-box-like clams living in warm and shallow water. Turkey wings are also known as zebra arks and have the scientific name *Arca zebra Swainson*.

Turkey wings range from North Carolina to Brazil and Texas and are common in the Bahamas and West Indies.

Our turkey wings are smaller than the 3.5-inch maximum size and are sturdy, box-like bivalves that are yellowish-white, or cream, streaked with reddish-brown zebra-like stripes. A gape

appears at both ends of the valve for the siphon and the threads that tie it to rocks, shells or roots in shallow water.

The shell if twice as long as it is wide, and the hinge where it is connected consists of a long, even row of about 50 comb-like teeth. The shell interior is pale lavender and the exterior is covered with a thick brown periostracum when the shell is alive.

The foot, or body of the animal, is pointed and large and contains all the vital organs and two hearts. The animal has eyespots along the middle fold of the foot, but has poorly developed eyes. Like the other arks, turkey wings bring in water by their siphon and feed on plankton strained out by a mucous net.

Turkey wings are among our most common shells. A walk along the beaches at almost any time of year will lead to discovery of several specimens. Find some and then investigate their names: Do they look like turkey wings? Can you see the zebra stripes?



FAVER

A Duck May Be Somebody's Mother

Q: How do you make an elephant float?
A: Half a glass of soda, two scoops of ice cream and one elephant.

Q: Where does a 2,000-pound elephant sleep?
A: Anywhere it wants.

Q: What do you do when a herd of 50 elephants is stampeding straight for a city of 10 million people?

That's what folks in Calcutta, India, are trying to decide, according to a recent Associated Press article by Dilip Ganguly in New Delhi. (Which is to assure you that I am not making this up.)

Dilip reported that six people had been trampled to death in less than a week after a bush fire panicked the pugnacious pachyderms into fleeing the Jaldapara wildlife preserve. Since then, they have covered about 180 miles, flattened several villages and were last reported about 60 miles from the nation's largest city.

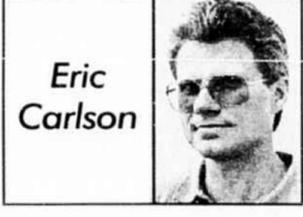
Calcuttans are understandably concerned. Photographs of the elephants appeared on the front page of Calcutta newspapers last week, along with handy tips on what to do if an elephant approaches. The state-run television station has been broadcasting updates on the herd's movement and urging viewers "not to be mean to the elephants."

It seems that on New Year's Eve, hundreds of people armed with iron rods, burning torches and rocks tried to stop the herd and ended up driving the elephants through several villages, with disastrous results. Since then, Indians have been trying other methods to halt the stampede.

Trucks have been lined up in close formation for miles on main highways to block the elephants. Hundreds of drummers were recruited to try to turn the herd back. Police with tranquilizer guns have followed "in case the elephants' nerves get so frayed they go on a rampage," the article said.

"We are trying everything to send the poor elephants back to their sanctuary," said Banamali Roy, the forest and environmental minister of the West Bengal state government.

Now imagine this happening in



Eric Carlson

America. What if those "poor elephants" were threatening to trample the citizenry of South Central Los Angeles or Northeast Washington, D.C., or even Cheyenne, Wyoming.

I can assure you those folks would not be lighting torches and banging on drums. They'd be loading magnum revolvers with Black Talon ammo, shoving rifled slugs into shotguns and converting their AK-47s to full-automatic.

You can be bet that the first peanut munching, club-footed, hose-nosed, saber-toothed leatherbag that wandered onto those mean streets would be one dead Dumbo.

Because we Westerners have a different relationship with animals. For us, any critter that tastes good is fair game. If it can pull a plow or a wagon, we harness it. If it runs fast, we ride it. If it has nice fur or hide or feathers, we skin it.

We come by this attitude honestly, being the cultural descendants of pioneers who hunted game for survival and sometimes found themselves in kill-or-be-killed encounters with large, toothy beasts who had their own ideas about who was hunter and who was prey.

Unfortunately for the buffalo, the passenger pigeon, the prairie chicken, the red wolf, the bald eagle, the gray whale and other species, European settlers didn't relate to their new home place in the same way as the original hunters who had been living with those creatures for centuries.

European Americans treated their "new world" like an all-you-can-eat buffet, killing hundreds of animals in a day, just for sport, destroying habitats, eradicating natural predators and decimating whole species in the name of progress or merely to satisfy some whim of fashion.

American Indians were more like the India Indians. They saw the natural world as a nurturing mother, mysterious and deserving of respect and reverence. They lived by hunting, but only for food, clothing and other necessities of life. Animals were considered to be equal, and in many ways superior, to humans.

Likewise, those folks in India wouldn't think of killing an elephant any more than they would eat a cow. The more devout Hindus won't eat flesh of any sort, won't wear animal hides and wouldn't slap a mosquito in the act of drawing blood.

For them, animals may serve humans, but they are not subservient to us. They are beings exactly like ourselves, who have taken different forms this time around on a revolving wheel of births and deaths. So for a Hindu to hurt an animal would be the same as hurting an ancestor or a loved one or themselves.

American naturalist and author Henry Beston came to a similar realization during a winter he spent alone in a remote seaside cottage, making daily explorations of nearby beaches and salt marshes. As he wrote in his masterwork, *The Outermost House*:

"We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals.

"Remote from universal nature, and living by complicated artifice, man in civilization surveys the creature through the glass of his knowledge and sees thereby a feather magnified and the whole image in distortion.

"We patronize them for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate of having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein we err, and greatly err. For the animal shall not be measured by man.

"In a world older and more complete than ours, they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear.

"They are not brethren. They are not underlings. They are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time; fellow prisoners of the splendor and travail of earth."

The Wrong Paths

To the editor:
There is a conscious/subconscious fear in many of the "baby-boomer" generation—the fear of doing what constitutes a parent.

God forbid, according to them, should this younger generation, our so-called future, be taught respect, decency, righteousness and consideration. It seems to be the consensus to let them raise themselves, do what they please and to overall become other people's problem—to ensure these children are given everything, no matter who it hurts; to uphold them and help them find excuses for their wrongdoings.

These parents watched these children running, not walking, down the wrong paths of life, and they deliberately closed their eyes. After all, children will be children!

These same parents seem to be saying, "So what if one night in November 1993, these children allegedly participated in or witnessed a brutal murder. After all, they were only being noisy, in the wrong place at the wrong time, just joy-riding, or should have been in jail for previous reasons."

BOB JOHNSON THE FURNITURE DOCTOR

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The First Baby of 1994

He's here!

The first baby of 1994 made his appearance Tues., Jan. 4 at 1:01 p.m. Meet the son of James and Jane Buffkin of Grisseltown. He joins his 3-year-old brother, Jordan.

Name: Taylor Brett Buffkin
Weight: 8 lbs., 0 oz. • Length: 21 inches

The following merchants have graciously donated gifts for our first baby of the new year. Our entire hospital staff joins these sponsors in congratulating Mr. and Mrs. Buffkin on their new addition.

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Carson Cards & Gifts	Baby Rattle
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