



PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

DAFFODILS are a welcome sign of spring and bring back memories for many of us.

'Dances With The Daffodils'

BY BILL FAVER

One of my fondest childhood memories is that of early spring when the daffodils covered the hillside behind our house.



FAVER

Ordinarily the slope leading down to the stream was covered in grass and assorted weeds and required regular mowings. But in springtime before the grass started growing we had these beautiful yellow flowers to welcome the new season.

Daffodils have always been one of my favorites and each time I read William Wordsworth's poem I think of that hillside:

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils.*

Daffodils are one group of the narcissus, one of the oldest known plants which grew wild in areas of southern Spain and Portugal. They have been developed into many different varieties and colors, but most

daffodils have the distinctive trumpet, which gives them the name of "trumpet narcissus" in some parts of the world.

Daffodils are early flowering bulbs and can be planted in rose beds, lawns, or other areas where early flowering will not interfere with other plants. They should be planted in late summer and fall and placed about six inches deep and 6 to 9 inches apart. Since they are less formal looking than hyacinths and tulips, they can be randomly planted and made to look like they have come up spontaneously.

These flowers can be planted in shady areas, around trees, along borders and anywhere you like some spring color. With little care they will flower for many years, though you can separate the "offsets" from the "mother bulb" to share with friends or plant elsewhere. After flowering, the tops should be left to die back on their own before they are cut.

Perhaps you have some memories of daffodils and each spring they bring back those memories as you see them. If so, you can share the joy of Wordsworth:

*And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Blame Irresponsible Pet Owners

To the editor:

I have just read the article in the March 17 *Brunswick Beacon* about (Brunswick County) Animal Control selling cat carcasses to a research center. I will agree that it is better than carrying them to the landfill.

My point is this: Who is to blame for the death of these animals? It surely isn't the ones at Animal Control. It is the unconcerned pet owners.

They get kittens to amuse their kids, to play with, to keep rats away from their homes and to eat the scraps from the table. Yet when the cat is grown and starts to multiply, they are ready to carry it to the pound to get someone else to do their murdering.

It's that "old cat" having kittens three times a year, and the owners don't know that to do with the kittens. Animals do not understand birth control; they only follow nature. Therefore, it is the pet owner's fault. There are low-cost spay and neuter programs that could eliminate this problem.

I have lost my pets by illness, but I give them a decent burial and plant flowers on their grave to enjoy the loving memory of the love and pleasure they gave to me while they lived.

I know the image of the pound is bad to all animal lovers, but the ones who work there have a job to do.

They try to adopt pets to keep from putting them to death. That is all they can do. It is the unconcerned pet owners who should get all the blame.

Wake up, pet owners. Stop this murdering innocent animals. How would you like to be killed just because you get old?

Have your animals neutered or spayed to cut the pet population. Some 5,575 cats and dogs were carried to the pound last year, and only 10 percent were adopted. This is a disgrace to this county.

Pet owners, are you guilty? Think about it.

I would like to add that due to the leash law, the demand for large dogs is very low, and puppies will be hard to place in homes. Spaying is the answer; if they are never born, they don't go to the pound.

Alma Tolson
Shallotte

Faculty, Students Excited About Plans

To the editor:

The building, grounds, climate and safety committee of Union Elementary School is grateful to the parents who responded to the surveys sent out by the PTO.

We are excited about the positive support of our school improvement plan and making it a priority for the

fund-raiser. I understand the fund-raiser is going well, thanks to friends and family members who took time out of their busy lives to sell candy.

The faculty and students are excited about the plan. Upon completion, the courtyard will not only be beautiful our school grounds, but will provide three outdoor instructional areas.

The stage area will be used for musical productions, plays, class presentations and guest speakers. The meteorological area will be used for weather units, class observation of the sundial and time units, and for other whole language activities.

The mini-forest area lends itself to a variety of instructional themes. It will be used as a realistic setting for literature selections, science instruction, art instruction, foreign language instruction and, again, the thematic units involving whole language.

The building, grounds, climate and safety committee is busy gathering materials list, estimates and making contacts for volunteer help. We hope to have everything in place so that construction will begin soon after Easter vacation.

Sylvia H. Pullen, Chair
Building, Grounds,
Climate and Safety
Union Elementary

Time To 'Strike A Balance'

Striking a balance.

It's a hard thing to do sometimes. That was pretty clear last week as the Coastal Future Committee met in Southport to deliberate the past and future of North Carolina's coastal management program.

For us living here on the coast those words are going to be heard many more times over the next few years as we strive to hold on to the very thing that draws or keeps most of us here in the first place: the area's natural beauty and richness of resources.

We had it all—clean water, clean beaches, clean air, all the shrimp and oysters you could eat, a beautiful view of the marshes, oceans and hundreds of species of birds. Somehow we blew it. Our children and grandchildren won't enjoy those things unless we make some changes.

In our personal lives we're constantly called on to balance use of our resources. To budget our time, our energy, our money. Ideally we do that in a way that reflects our priorities in life and our values. We're told to plan ahead, to look to our future.

When we fudge on the equation there are always consequences. It may be as simple as coming into work tired, being ill-tempered with a spouse, or running short on money for something important. Other times the "fudging" is more critical and the consequences more serious, disrupting families, workplaces or communities.

Take the ideas of a resource budget and "fudging" on it and apply those on a larger scale and you'll have what the concern is when it comes to our state. Can you protect natural elements and have a healthy, diversified economy? If so, how? Can you have either one without the other? In our area, how do you expand tourism without destroying the natural beauty that created the industry in the first place?

When the economy isn't good most people consider concern for anything other than basic needs (food, shelter, etc.) as a trill, something to which they have neither



Susan Usher

by our past mistakes. For example, she'd like the state to work to restore the commercial fishery in North Carolina, rather than writing it off as history, as some have suggested.

During the Coastal Futures meeting last week, other parties asked the state to take into account the "cost" of protecting natural resources, saying that some environmental conservation measures are "luxuries" rather than necessities, with the implication we can't afford them. Maybe. Then again, maybe we can't afford not to take those measures.

What I think is needed most is a stewardship ethic, something laws and regulations can hint at but can't make happen.

What do I mean by stewardship ethic? A shared sense that the Earth isn't really ours, that we are bonded caretakers with a short-term lease. At the end of our tenure, we're expected to hand the place over to the owner and to stand accountable for its use and condition.

If we used a stewardship ethic as our plumb line, "striking a balance" wouldn't be nearly so difficult.

time, money nor energy to devote.

When the economy is good, we tend to give more attention to caring for the environment, but we also place a new set of demands on it.

And we still don't want it to "cost" us in terms of convenience or higher prices.

It's a polarizing subject. There are many who believe that fine line between economic development and natural resource conservation is impossible to establish; others who don't see the value of it.

Some, like marine biologist Mary Jo Burkholder of the Marine Fisheries Commission and Coastal Futures Committee, believe that compromise must fall on the side of fragile resources already endangered

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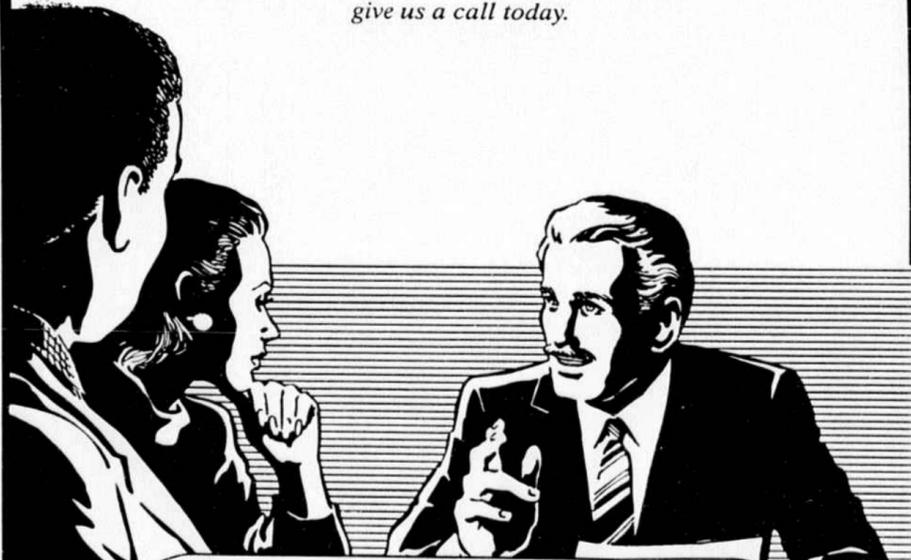
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