

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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PAGE 4-A, THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 1994

They Don't Want ABC, Shouldn't Be Forced

They don't need a liquor store. They don't want a liquor store. They will do whatever they can to see that a liquor store does not get built in the rural Ash community.

That ought to be enough to convince the Brunswick County Alcoholic Beverage Control board to table its proposal, at least for now, regardless of its potential as a revenue-producer.

Sure, it's easy to refute the argument that having a liquor store in Ash would weaken the community's moral fabric. If "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" applied to booze, Prohibition would still be in effect and working.

Surely there are alcoholics living in Ash now, and we'd be willing to bet there were even back in the days when you couldn't buy legal liquor anywhere in Brunswick or Columbus. But that's not the point.

Ash area residents have consistently and overwhelmingly turned thumbs-down on alcohol sales proposals in the past, and it's their community. The opponents of the latest proposal are justifiably miffed that the plan has nothing to do with serving the Ash community, but is all about snagging the beaches' booze trade before the tourists get closer to the shoreline.

If, as one speaker told the ABC board recently, there's a silent majority of folks out in Ash who favor a liquor store, there's no evidence to prove it. For now, the vocal opponents deserve to prevail.

If Ever A System Needed Overhaul, It's Restitution

If you're a criminal ordered to pay restitution, the state can garnishee your wages or use your tax refunds to repay your victims, right? Wrong.

When criminals pay fines and court costs, the money goes first to pay victim restitution and then to the county, city or school system, right? Wrong again.

In fact, as outrageous as it may seem, a killer ordered to reimburse his victim's family for funeral costs can be freed on parole without having paid a cent.

A recent study by the N.C. Sentencing Commission found that, on average, offenders pay only 30.8 percent of the amounts they've been ordered to pay. Forty-six percent of 561 offenders paid nothing.

If ever a system deserved repair, this is it. A bill that would fix some of these inequities finished the General Assembly's session this summer in committee. It also would have given judges the power to extend probation for up to five years to make sure that offenders pay restitution.

Analysts say the measure would take away \$6.5 million a year that cities and counties now receive. The House version sponsor, Rep. Mickey Michaux of Durham, says he "tends to go in favor of the victim." One would hope so.

Who can argue with victims who say their inability to collect restitution victimizes them a second time?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sunny Point Zoning Illogical, Writers Say

To the editor:

Why has Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point been zoned for heavy manufacturing on our county zoning maps? Could it be yet another ploy by some of our county officials to establish this area as an industrial corridor?

Sunny Point is a transshipment depot and is operated by the U.S. Department of the Army. Brunswick County has no authority or control over anything within its perimeter. So what purpose could possibly be served by zoning it anything other than what it is in actuality is—a federal installation?

On our county zoning maps, this 8,573-acre facility has been labeled H-M. It gives anyone who views these maps a false impression as to what truly exists in this part of the county. As residents of this area, let us assure you that with the exception of Carolina Power and Light, everything existing from Boiling Spring Lakes along both N.C. 87 and 133 to Southport are homes, schools and numerous "mom-and-pop" businesses. None of these structures suggest that this is an industrial corridor. It would appear to be quite the contrary, as the general character of this area points toward a residential neighborhood.

On Aug. 17 at 7 p.m. in the Public Assembly Building at the Brunswick County Government Complex, persons interested in removing the

H-M zone from Sunny Point can meet with the Brunswick County Planning Board and request that this change be made.

Let's remove this false label from our county zoning maps in order that a true picture can be established of this area and continuity for this residential corridor can be maintained.

Basil and Greta Watts
 Southport

'Is It Ethical?'

To the editor:

Is it ethical for our county officials to use a military installation that falls under the jurisdiction of the U.S. government as a means for deciding county zoning issues?

Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point has been zoned for heavy manufacturing. Not only does the county not have any jurisdiction over the development or land use of Sunny Point, there is no manufacturing, processing, assembling or warehousing on the property.

I can't believe Brunswick County did not give this area more thought when they were developing this "wonderful thing" they call county zoning. I find it interesting that there is no other county in the state of North Carolina that has zoned a military reservation.

Norman Puckett
 Southport
 (More Letters, Following Page)

Rest Insured—It Makes Perfect Sense

"How do you know when they're well enough to leave?" I asked my friend who works in recreational therapy at a large psychiatric hospital.

"Oh, it's easy," she said. "When their insurance runs out."

"Gimme the good news," I joked to the auto insurance agent when he came back on the line with the answer to my question—how much it would cost to add a 16-year-old brand-new driver to my policy.

"There is no good news," he replied cheerfully.

"I need what?" I asked a dentist on my fourth or fifth visit, after two root canals (\$350 each) and two crowns (\$500 apiece).

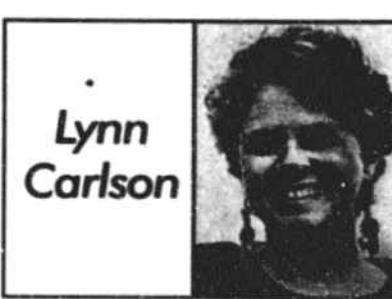
"A filling and some periodontal work," he said.

"What's gonna be the price tag on that?" I asked.

"Oh, it'll run you \$1,500 or so," he said.

At the time I lived elsewhere in the state and had dental insurance. Now I don't, and both the dentists I've visited since agree that I have neither a cavity nor gum disease.

My sister, my husband, my son and I took an overnight trip to the Isle of Palms. The college kids in the third-floor condo next door to us had a rowdy party that lasted all night. Next morning when we went down to put our suitcases in the car,



Lynn Carlson

we noticed that my sister's black Mazda MX6 had dents and scratches all over the trunk lid, no doubt caused by beer cans having been dropped on it from the breezeway above.

When my sister called her insurance agent about having it fixed, he told her the company would cut her off if she filed a claim on the Mazda because it was considered to be a "sports car."

A co-worker had a rough year—her marriage broke up, her mother died and her house caught on fire all in the space of six months. She started having panic attacks, brief spasms of paralyzing fear as she drove down the highway or stood in the grocery line. Her family doctor assured her she wasn't going crazy, that panic attacks are a common manifestation of major stress and are usually easily vanquished with relaxation exercises or antidepressant medicine.

She was referred to a psychologist who treated her for three or four

months with no drugs, only progressive relaxation techniques. She finally felt good again. Then she filed an insurance claim and they revoked her coverage—punishment for seeking help.

It was 1984 and our friend Ollie was absolutely drooling over the new Pontiac Fiero. He had to have one. Ollie's the son and brother of master mechanics, and all three guys can fix anything with a motor.

Ollie, even when he was single, was the kind of guy whose apartment was always spotless and everything he owned was maintained by the book—the result, no doubt, of growing up in a military family where he learned the meaning of "ship-shape" in the cradle. In his early 30's, he'd never had a ticket or accident, never filed an auto insurance claim.

When he called his agent of many years, he learned that the company wouldn't write a policy on the Fiero. They suggested he call Lloyds of London.

A relative was experiencing excruciating migraine headaches which got worse month after month until he was no longer able to function at his job, a top-level management position with a chain of retail stores. He'd been to several doctors and had been prescribed a dozen kinds of medicines from antihista-

mines to narcotics. Nothing was working, so he went to a neurosurgeon who told him the first step would be to stop taking all the drugs he'd been prescribed and warned him there might be some withdrawal symptoms. Coming down off the medicines was worse than they'd anticipated. He didn't sleep for days and became severely dehydrated from vomiting.

The neurosurgeon wasn't allowed to admit the relative to the hospital until he could talk the insurance company's registered nurse into allowing it.

Common expensive procedures insurance companies frequently pay for: mastectomy, hysterectomy, prostate cancer therapy, cardiac bypass. What most health insurance policies don't cover: mammograms, pap smears, routine examinations and other preventive services.

Betty Ford and Rosalyn Carter argue that if you're going to have a national health reform plan that does some real good, you've got to cover drug and alcohol rehab and mental health services—not as an alternative to justice but as a correlary. Couldn't do that, Hillary Clinton's group says. Too expensive, even if America's worst social problems are rooted in substance abuse and lunacy.

It all makes perfect sense to me.



Carpe Diem: Generation X Needs Woodstock, Too

For this is all
 A dream we dreamed
 One afternoon
 Long ago...

—The Grateful Dead

No, I didn't make it to Woodstock. Although not for lack of trying.

Six of us had our knapsacks packed and ready to go. But only one had his own car. A klunker of course. Sacrificed its water pump to the August heat. No money to fix it. We stayed home. So it goes.

If we had imagined what was about to transpire, we probably would have done anything—hitched, "borrowed" a parents car, anything—to reach Max Yasgur's farm. But no one knew.

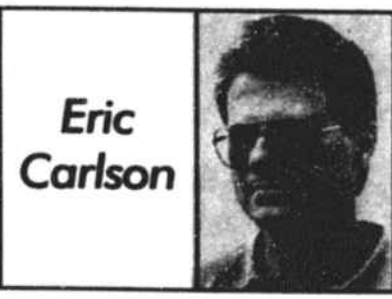
Luckily for the promoters, by the time the event's magnitude became apparent to the throngs of young people (like us) who would have tried to reach the festival, the New York Thruway was already closed and Sullivan County was about to be declared a disaster area.

So instead we watched on television and discovered for the first time that there were millions of us out there who henceforth would be collectively known as the "Woodstock Nation."

In an admirably frank and unsentimental Newsweek magazine essay recently, writer David Gates accurately observed, "In retrospect, Woodstock proved only that it takes nicely brought-up young people more than three days to revert to savagery..."

Which provides intelligent counterpoint to singer David Crosby's idiotic babbling to a television interviewer asserting that the crowd of a half-million at Woodstock represented the "largest human gathering in history" without a report of "violence, rape or murder."

Crosby's drug-toasted brain has obviously lost the capacity to con-



Eric Carlson

sider centuries of Hindu religious festivals, Islamic pilgrimages to Mecca and the annual 24-hour automobile race at Le Mans, France. But he was at Woodstock, man.

The festival must have been a watershed event in the personal lives of many who experienced it. But the broader social ramifications of Woodstock were far more significant than the simple fact of all those folks surviving three days of "peace and music" and mud and rain without turning on each other (violently, that is).

Idealists give Woodstockers way too much credit for their civility. Most were so stoned on psychedelic drugs that they couldn't think of any reason to get mad at each other. (This was a decade before high-amperage cocaine brought big money and street warfare to the drug trade.)

Much of the peace and love at Woodstock was chemically stimulated. Just ask the investigator in the trial of Dr. Jeffrey McDonald, who testified that drug-crazed hippies broke into his home and brutally murdered his wife and child.

"A bunch of kids high on LSD couldn't even organize a trip to the toilet," the detective said.

Like an undersea earthquake, the immediate effects of Woodstock were localized and hard to measure, but the resulting social impacts radiated around the world in tidal waves.

All across America, even in the

smallest towns and communities, there were young people who had come to consider themselves different and somehow detached from previous generations. They grew their hair long, wore funky clothes, listened to loud music, questioned authority and thus became outcasts, commonly derided as "freaks."

When Jimi Hendrix played the Star Spangled Banner at Woodstock, it was a generation's wake-up call. All those "freaks" in all those towns in all those states across America found out they were not alone.

Far from it. They soon proved to be a force to be reckoned with—politically, philosophically and economically.

Ninety days after Woodstock, another "half a million strong" marched on Washington to protest the Vietnam War (nearly equalling the number of troops stationed there). That was the month President Nixon announced his "Vietnamization" of the conflict and began regular withdrawal of U.S. troops.

The following spring, after four student demonstrators were fatally gunned down by Ohio National Guardsmen at Kent State University, colleges across the country were shut down in protest strikes. Some remained closed until fall.

Directing its energy toward the problems of pollution, the Woodstock Nation organized the first "Earth Day" commemoration, when millions across America celebrated the birth of the environmental movement. The car you drive, the parks you visit, the food you eat, the water you drink and the air you breathe were forever altered as a result.

The entertainment and fashion industries were transformed beyond recognition by the Woodstock generation. Executive "trend-setters" were forced to take a back seat to artists and performers, who demanded control over the way their work

was produced. They were right. The stuff sold. People got rich.

Lowly FM radio, once the forgotten stepchild of broadcasting, was taken over in the 1960s by "freak" disc jockeys who understood what the Woodstock Generation wanted to hear. Station owners had enough sense to cover their ears, hand over the keys and cart big profits to the bank.

Nowadays, there is a desire to blame all of society's ills—the alarming rate of illegitimacy, the drug problem, the loss of America's "moral compass"—on '60s "permissiveness." (Back then it was called tolerance.)

But that dog just won't hunt. As most of its immediate goals were met—ending the military draft, stopping the war, exposing the corruption of the Nixon administration—Woodstockers blended back into mainstream society. They started careers. They raised families.

It's not the children of unmarried Woodstock moms who are smoking crack and killing each other in the streets. They're too busy watching MTV and trying to keep up with the latest fashions. So it goes.

Now they are planning a much better organized "Woodstock '94" festival about 30 miles from Yasgur's farm. A nostalgia-oriented version of the original was canceled after failing to attract enough interest. Which is an encouraging sign.

Today's young people need a similar chance to get together in their own festival, with their own music and without a lot of "old hippie" baggage to see if they can find some common goals for what has unfortunately come to be derided as "Generation X."

They need their own opportunity to follow Walt Whitman's timeless advice:

"Seize the day!"