

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Edward M. Sweatt and Carolyn H. Sweatt.....Publishers
 Lynn Sweatt Carlson.....Editor
 Susan Usher.....News Editor
 Doug Rutter.....Sports Editor
 Eric Carlson.....Staff Writer
 Mary Potts & Peggy Earwood.....Office Managers
 Carolyn H. Sweatt.....Advertising Director
 Timberley Adams & Linda Cheers.....Advertising Representatives
 Dorothy Brennan & Brenda Clemmons Moore.....Graphic Artists
 William Manning.....Pressman
 Lonnie Sprinkle.....Assistant Pressman

PAGE 4-A, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1994

Get On Your Gloves And Help Sweep Brunswick Beaches

Get your gloves on and hit the beach. Saturday is Big Sweep day in eight Brunswick County towns, and when it comes to picking up litter, there's no such thing as a surplus of volunteers.

After a summer of heavy tourism, the beaches are in dire need of a good spring cleaning, even if it happens in September. But Big Sweep is about more than just garbage disposal. It heightens public awareness of the need for appropriate waste management—not just for aesthetic reasons but for the health and safety of residents, visitors, birds, fish and turtles. It involves businesses, citizens and governments in a joint effort to accomplish something positive and to instill in the community's children better habits than their elders have.

Thanks in part to Big Sweep, North Carolina school children are being taught about the peril plastic six-pack rings pose to marine life, how every cigarette filter tossed on the sand takes decades to break down, and how a bleach bottle discarded off a boat can kill something the size of a whale.

We've heard lots of permanent residents complain this year that beach litter was a worse problem this summer than they've seen in years. That may be true. The possibility is all the more reason to get out there and make a difference on Saturday.

A Lesson In Commitment

Commitment and tenacity. We could all take a lesson in those qualities from the life of Warren D. "Bud" Knapp of Calabash and Sunset Beach.

Bud passed away Friday after a battle against diabetes fought longer and harder than a weaker man could have or would have. Until his very final days, he continued working for what he believed best for his community.

There was no ambivalence about what Bud wanted—better schools in Brunswick County and strict limits on growth in Sunset Beach and Calabash. Many, ourselves included, disagreed strongly with some of his ideology and many of his methods, but it was impossible not to admire his passion.

After decades of corporate life, it's tempting for a retiree to relax into martinis-and-tee-times mode. Bud Knapp didn't. He worked hard, spoke up and left his mark on a community he truly loved.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shallotte's Peddlers An Eyesore, Danger

To the editor:
 Our town has started to have a new facelift with new businesses and new storefronts. It is a great improvement for Shallotte. I always felt Main Street was pretty tacky when driving through.

All this summer we have had vendors peddling fish, vegetables, rabbits, clothes and furniture. Not only has this become an eyesore, but (it is dangerous driving down Main Street. I have seen several accidents almost happen when people stop suddenly in front of the vendors.

We have a nice flea market set up on Al Street. It would be nice if we had a farmer's market there. Maybe a big increase is needed (in permit fees) to discourage this peddling on Main Street.

Let's clean up our town and make Shallotte a place to be proud of.

Ruth E. Hierman
 Shallotte

Help Animal Lover

To the editor:
 This is to inform all people who read *The Brunswick Beacon* about a real animal lover—Jeannine Friday, who lives at 3376 St. Charles Place, Southport.

Three years ago she became affiliated with the N.C. Wildlife Association, taking care of injured pelicans, seagulls, raccoons, etc., which then led to her caring for domesticated dogs and cats that owners did not want to keep.

Jeannine took upon herself the responsibility of caring for these animals without asking for help; but the population has increased so much she now needs volunteer help in caring for them. None of the animals are ever put to sleep; thus, the increasing numbers she has.

Jeannine's life work has now come to a stop. She became disabled with a very bad back and is now bedridden. Her sister and a few others have started to care for the birds and animals.

Donations of money, food and volunteers are now needed to help. By word of mouth, a few dogs and cats have been adopted, but many, many more—especially cats and kittens—need loving homes.

With the help of the Brunswick Animal League, there will be an open house at Jeannine's on Saturday, Sept. 24, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., 3376 St. Charles Place, Southport. Light refreshments will be served.

Hopefully, all animal lovers who wish to adopt dogs, cats and kittens will show up and take one home.

Money, food and volunteer help will be needed for those animals left behind.

Kathleen Thorn
 Calabash

Politics As Usual

To the editor:

Oiled by more deficit spending on more social/welfare programs in the name of a crime bill, the "big political machine" is once again operating in full gear. Its product for our congressional district is the same as before: Congressman Charlie Rose—ready to smile, shake your hand and spend your money as he marches to the drum-beat of President Clinton's liberal/socialist agenda.

It's time to bring politics-as-usual to a grinding halt. For the past 30 to 40 years the U.S. Congress has taken more and more money from hard-working Americans and given less and less representation. Now, Congressmen, along with the president, are exploiting our fears and frustrations with high crime rates and the need for affordable health-care in order to create new spending bills.

I am weary of the tyranny of a Congress that imposes heavy burdens on U.S. citizens, then exempts itself from the same.

Thomas J. Lee
 Shallotte

(More Letters, Following Page)

The Oldest Living Periodical Tells All

Watch for a hurricane in the Carolinas the first week of September 1995. That forecast is from the 203rd edition of the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, the country's oldest continuously published periodical.

This year's edition hit bookstores and newsstands on Tuesday, recognizable as ever by its yellow cover with nail hole in the upper left corner. And, as always, it is chock-a-block with advice, trivia, predictions, humor and rarities.

A few pearls of almanac wisdom:
 ■ "Not only is it nice to listen to, but Mozart can make you smarter, too. Researchers in California found that students taking tests after listening to Mozart's Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major scored eight or nine IQ points higher than after two other 'listening conditions' (a relaxation tape and only silence). Unfortunately, the effects lasted only about ten minutes."

■ It costs \$250,000 for a regular citizen to be mummified in Moscow at the lab in charge of preserving Lenin's body.

■ To get rid of fleas in your home, "place on the floor of the infested room a shallow pan filled with water and a little dishwashing liquid. At night, turn on a lamp and focus it right over the pan. Turn off all the other lights in the room. The fleas will jump at the light and fall into the dish. You'll be amazed at the number of fleas you'll catch the first night. Change the solution as needed. Continue the treatment for



Lynn Carlson

at least two weeks to get the next generation of fleas after the hatch."

■ Book retailers report that not only does the Bible continue as the world's best-selling book, with some 2.5 billion copies currently in circulation, but it is also the most commonly shoplifted book in America.

The new almanac reveals the identity of the world's most nutritious vegetable. You may think that would be brussels sprouts or spinach. I learned that it is indeed the humble but delicious sweet potato, loaded with beta-carotene, vitamins A, C, B6, potassium and even dietary fiber!

If you're interested in cooking, there's an article on the Brunswick Stew Wars with a recipe for Virginia Brunswick Stew to feed 600. Another details "How to Appreciate, Prepare, Cook and Eat a Mess of Turnip Greens." Published are the first-, second-, third-place and honorable - mention - winning recipes from its 1994 contest. They are, respectively, Cheesy - Chive Eggs, Creamy Smoked Salmon Tart, East

Texas-Pennsylvania Ranch Eggs and French Toast Strata.

Readers are invited to enter the almanac's 1995 essay contest. Topic: The Best Tried-and-True Way to Cure a Headache."

If it's ailment lore you want, turn to page 106 and read "For Good Luck and Good Teeth," wherein is dental folklore from around the world as collected by Dr. Joseph G. Carter, a dentist's son and professor of geology at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

These relate to the shedding of baby teeth:

■ "Put the tooth in a mouse hole for the mouse to chew it. The child will then have strong, straight teeth like mice. (Ohio)"

■ "Run with a shed tooth around the house, repeating four times, 'Beaver, put a new tooth into my jaw.' Throw the tooth onto the roof. (Cherokee Indians)"

There are feature articles on:

■ The Sinister Truth About Left-Handedness ("Women's clothing, with buttons on the left, is most efficiently buttoned by a left-handed wearer or by a right-handed lady's maid, the origin of the convention.")

■ The Revolution That Began on Tuesday, October 23, 1945 (the day Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier);

■ The Most Prayed-For Man in World War II (Ernie Pyle).

A story about cicadas says sometime next spring, North Caro-

linians—along with residents of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia—will begin hearing an "incredible and constant racket the likes of which they will not have heard since 1978..."

The adult cicada, I learned, "needs very little food, so it can concentrate on the really important things in life—singing and sex." In what must be the most bizarre entry in the new almanac, the cicada debuts as snack food:

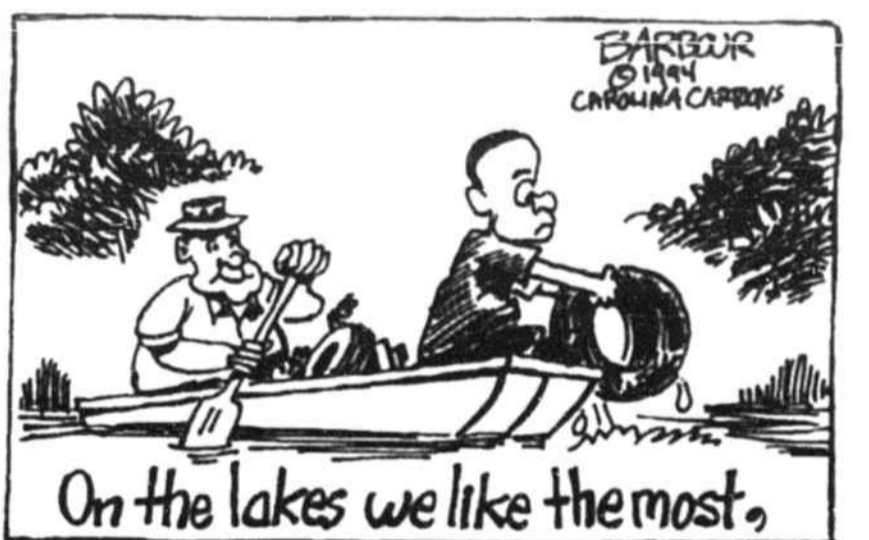
"Just the right size for popping into your mouth, with a satisfying crunch and a flavor that has been compared to a cross between a potato and an avocado, cicadas would seem to be the perfect snack food. The Native Americans were quite fond of the crispy critters, but the settlers could never be persuaded to munch along, and few people today appreciate this rare taste treat. Cicadas are easily prepared: Just dip in batter and fry in butter until golden brown. Serve with cocktail sauce."

On that taste-tempting note, I'll leave it to you to discover the rest of the almanac's trove of treasure. Throw in astrological timetables, a list of church holy days, some classified ads, frosts and growing seasons, phases of the moon, a tidal glossary and a windchill table, and you get abundant amusement and a font of facts for less than the cost of renting a videotape.

Let me know how the cicadas were...



On the beaches at the coast,



On the lakes we like the most,



River banks and streams galore,



It's time for BIG SWEEP '94 !!

Look Past Surface Of School Funds Appeal

I have a question for anyone who believes the Brunswick County Commissioners were wrong to appeal a jury's decision awarding \$14 million of our tax money to the Brunswick County Board of Education:

Imagine you are the CEO of a large corporation. Your stockholders vote to replace two of your five managers. Another manager resigns, saying he's frustrated because his colleagues won't set measurable goals for the company's workforce. Your head manager also quits after admitting she has lost the confidence of shareholders.

The company owners demand improvements. They agree to give you another \$4.8 million and they expect results.

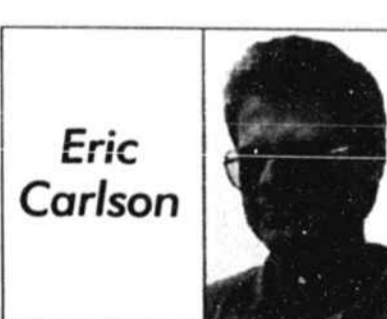
Now for the question: Do you immediately write a check to your outgoing managers and let them decide how to spend it? Or do you wait a few months until the company is taken over by new leaders selected by a vote of the stockholders?

That's precisely what is happening in the much-publicized legal battle over school funding. This is not, as some would have you believe, a case of one side wanting to improve education, while the other side panders to voters.

It's a matter of trust. The citizens of Brunswick County have made it quite clear that they do not trust the elected officials who run our schools. Early this year, one of the school board's own members expressed his frustration with board policy by refusing to seek re-election.

In the May primary, two school board incumbents failed to muster the support of their own party. The chairman was nearly defeated by a candidate who had been dead for several months. (She had the foresight to withdraw from the race before the general election.)

With nothing to lose and everything to gain, this lame-duck board



Eric Carlson

presented the commissioners with a wish list demanding 34 percent more spending than the county felt was necessary. When the commissioners said no, the outgoing school board hauled them into court.

This beef has been going on for years. Commissioners continue to accuse the school board of spending too much on administration and not enough on teaching. Board of education members insist that student performance can't improve until the county spends more money on schools.

The commissioners initially welcomed the court trial as an opportunity for each side to present its case before a jury of Brunswick County citizens. But that's not what happened.

Judge Jack Thompson (admitting he had no legal basis for his ruling) decided that the only issue for the jury to consider was the amount of money the school board claimed it needed to run the schools.

The judge refused to let the county explain the process of creating a budget. He did not want the jurors to hear about the needs of all the other county departments. Nor could they be told that the commissioners must set priorities to balance county spending and tax revenue.

The jurors were not permitted to consider that if every department got everything it asked for (as the school board demanded), this year's Brunswick County tax rate would be 90.4 cents per \$100 valuation instead of 58.5 cents.

Nor was the jury told that its decision to award the schools a \$14 million budget would raise taxes by 10 cents. Judge Thompson went so far as to decree that the "T-word" could not even be uttered in the courtroom.

The county feels the judge was wrong and insists there was no reason to prohibit the jurors from hearing both sides of the argument. In taking the funding question out of the commissioners' hands, they felt the court should have given the jury the same information the commissioners used to make their decision.

That's why the jury verdict was appealed. Not because the mean old commissioners don't care about good schools. Chairman Don Warren and County Attorney Mike Ramos both have children in the Brunswick County school system. You can be sure they care just as much about their kids' education as any other parent.

But the commissioners don't seem to trust this school board any more than the voters of Brunswick County do. After hearing a lot of promises and watching test scores continue to fall, they apparently feel this board of education has not earned the right to administer the largest school funding increase in county history.

The commissioners don't have far to look to find evidence of poor financial management. Just consider the board of education's handling of the Supply Elementary School sewerage debacle.

Last March, health inspectors found the septic field at the county's newest school to be in "a total state of failure" with effluent spurting to the surface near the playground. During the next five months, no repairs were performed on the system while the school spent more than \$18,000 hauling sewage away for treatment.

It wasn't until the county health board threatened to close the school

that the administration began a serious effort to get the system fixed.

Needless to say, the jury wasn't allowed to hear about that either. Which is another reason why the commissioners acted in the county's best interest when they appealed the jury decision and the judge's handling of the case.

A woefully misinformed editorial writer recently called the county's appeal "just plain stupid" and insisted the commissioners are "throwing away dollars to save dimes."

In fact, the appeal is estimated to cost about \$5,000. Winning it would save county taxpayers \$5 million. That's a lot of dimes.

Or the commissioner might consider a third option.

While the case is on appeal, they could call for an immediate state audit of school needs and expenditures. Then, when a new board of education takes office, the commissioners could offer to drop their appeal in exchange for the school board's agreement to follow the audit recommendations.

I suspect county taxpayers might feel more inclined to support a tax increase for that.

Worth Repeating...

If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it, they are wrong. I do not say give them up, for they may be all you have, but conceal them like a vice lest they should spoil the lives of better and simpler people.

—Robert Louis Stevenson