

Sharks are our problem

We have been hearing about shark attacks all summer. But they have always been in Florida or the Bahamas or more recently, in Virginia. And now our state has experienced its first of the year.

Not that we didn't heed the reports on the attacks when they happened elsewhere, but the recent report on the married couple who was attacked by a shark off the coast of North Carolina's Outer Banks hits a little closer to home.

Peter Dizikes of ABC-NEWS.com called the shark a "media cash register, a menace of the seas." Perhaps the media has blown the shark stories a little out of proportion--after all, the media cannot function without money.

But the numerous reports on

sharks are not undue.

They are our problem. And we must deal with the implications of their actions.

Why? For the same reason we deal with the ramifications of deers who run into our headlights and our cars on the highway.

We are encroaching on their land. For example, in New Providence Island, Bahamas, a shark biology class regularly participates in "feeding dives."

Yes, research is needed to advance our knowledge of the world. But for the hundreds of fisherman, swimmers and scuba divers who frequent those same waters, feeding time in that area is not the right time.

You cannot limit the reason for the frequency of shark

attacks to one reason.

But this goes beyond sharks being hungry. We need laws that keep the shark population from becoming overpopulated.

If we allow it, then we are just asking for it.

We need to look into electrical device fields such as the Shark POD tested off Catalina Island in Los Angeles. It's designed to repel our "menaces of the sea" and protect divers in a 12-volt field for up to 90 minutes.

As technology grows and the shark population does as well, we are all going to have to get more creative--because the shark is always going to bite. And no matter where you stand, that is our problem.

Opposing View: Sharks own the sea

JONI SMITH
Managing Editor

I can almost hear the ominous music of *Jaws*, the blockbuster hit of the 1980s, as an unlucky, not-so-intelligent swimmer swims out too far and suddenly starts to feel a nibble at her foot. Next, I can see the water around her turn to a crimson red from the blood gushing from the fatal wounds inflicted on the blonde in the cute bikini that was fluttering around the beach only a few moments ago. This is a classic case of shark attack that Hollywood concocts to make millions and scare a few kids.

Lately, this scenario has been a scary and vivid reality for a few unfortunate swimmers whose summer vacations turned tragic. The news has been overflowing with these recent shark attacks, telling the story behind each incident.

Here is another news flash: Mothers, don't condemn your kids to the sand just yet. Surfers, the surf is still up. Lifeguards, you still have a job.

You see, if you listen carefully to these stories you will understand that most of the swimmers who were attacked were off shore anywhere from forty to seventy feet. The latest incident occurred in the Outer Banks of North Carolina earli-

er this week where a Russian couple was mauled by a shark, the man being killed and the woman clinging to her life in critical but stable condition in a Norfolk hospital. The couple reportedly had swam out 55 feet when the attack happened.

The couple on the Outer Banks swam out a distance equal to two or three school buses, about a quarter of a football field, six apartment stories, and about 56 Shaquille O'Neals.

Why exactly do you need to swim out this far? Is the water more pure? Does it have miraculous healing power? Does it erase wrinkles or cellulite? Does it increase fertility? Does it somehow connect you with the dead? Well then why do it?

Some have been caught on the news saying that they are simply exercising their right to swim by going out that far. On the contrary, the shark is simply exercising his right to eat when you swim forty to seventy feet off shore.

I understand that in some of these cases, the victims of shark attacks have not been off shore very far. While this is an unfortunate incident and an incredibly grievous time for those who have lost loved ones because of these attacks, they are extremely rare. So rare, that you are 5% more likely to be

bitten by a lab rat, 12% more likely to be bitten by a sea lion, 23% more likely to be bitten by a squirrel, 61% more likely to be bitten by a wild cat, 500% more likely to be bitten by another human, and 620% more likely to be bitten by a dog according to *USA Today*.

The media enjoys immersing itself into any disaster, saga, scandal and trauma. The general public needs to realize this and be critical about what it believes. While it is tragic that swimmers have been seriously wounded and at times killed due to these killers of the sea, it is important to understand that the ocean is their territory that we invade when we visit the beach. Like humans, sharks must eat to stay alive, and as we can see they do not hesitate to take human life in order to satisfy their hunger.

Everyone loves a good story so we do not hear about all the times swimmers swim safely among the waters without being terrorized by a flesh eating predator. That just wouldn't sell any newspapers or boost any ratings.

Campus Forum

The *Meredith Herald* encourages letters to the editor. For your letter to be considered for publication, it must be typed and signed by the author. Also, include a contact name, address and telephone number.

All letters submitted become the property of the *Meredith Herald*, and the newspaper reserves the right to edit submissions or to choose not to print them.

The Real Cost of Your Soda

Did you know that the number of aluminum cans not recycled each year would circle the Earth more than 100 times? And yet it's hot and you want a cool drink. You reach for a cold soda. Soft drink cans are everywhere, but where does the aluminum come from? It takes four tons of bauxite ore to produce two tons of aluminum oxide, which is then refined into the aluminum that goes into 120,000 soft drink cans. This processing consumes a lot of energy, more than 28,000 kilocalories.

Recycled aluminum cans require 95% less energy to produce, which is why recycling aluminum is so important. About 75% of all aluminum cans are recycled, saving energy and preventing air pollution. So the next time you reach for a cool drink in a can, remember to recycle the can when the soda is gone.

One of a series of ads this semester from
Dr. Carol Hazard's Environmental Resources class

Meredith Herald

Editor in Chief..... Christina Holder

Managing Editor..... Joni Smith
Copy Chief..... Stephanie Jordan
Features Editor..... Leesha Austin
News Editor..... Jamie Tunnell
Music Columnist..... Lynda Marie Taurasi
Reporters..... Rebecca Barringer, Margaret Cooney,
Molly Huffstetter, Ava Leigh Jackson,
Christy Kimball, Kristen Thompson
Lindsey Wray

Editorial Board..... Chelsea DeSantis, Elizabeth Hutchinson,
Lora Tillman, Lisa Wilson

Copy Desk..... Lori Anderson, Hassie Hughes,
Julie Rasmussen, Amanda Warren

Photographers..... Sarah Jane Cox, Tanesha Williams

Business Manager..... Kelly Lewis

Faculty Adviser..... Dr. Rebecca Duncan

Editorial Policy:

The *Meredith Herald* is published by the College throughout the academic year. The paper is funded by the College and through independent advertising. The opinions expressed in the editorial columns do not necessarily reflect those of the college administration, faculty or student body.

To reach the Herald:

If you have an article idea, contact the office at 760-2824. You can also e-mail the paper at <holderc@meredith.edu>. All ideas will be considered but may not necessarily be used.

Submitting to the Herald:

Submissions, including letters to the editor, press releases and feature articles, must be received by 1 p.m. on the Monday before Wednesday's publication. Submissions can be brought to the Publications Office, 208 Cate Center.