



The NEW BERN MIRROR

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As viewed by the general public, newspapermen are supposed to be case hardened and somewhat on the cynical side. Reporters unintentionally add to this illusion at times by hiding their emotions pretty effectively under stress.

You can't cover a tragic or violent event with any degree of accuracy, unless you concentrate on the job at hand. Let the excitement of the moment grip you, and your brain fails to function as it should. When that happens, you're apt to come up with a distorted story.

The truth of the matter is that even veteran scribes are, down deep, hopelessly sentimental. That certain something we refer to as "human interest" is our stock in trade. You can neither evaluate nor chronicle it effectively until you feel it in your heart.

Just as a musician has to lose himself in the composition he is playing, in order to reach the heights, no newspaperman reaches his full potential unless there is honest to goodness compassion riding on his phrases. Show us a great newspaper story, and we'll show you a story tinged with sentiment.

Unlike other writers and would-be writers, a reporter can't wait for inspiration. Big news breaks quickly, and unexpectedly. It can catch you with a bad cold, or a toothache, or despondent over some personal problem, but there's no putting it off until tomorrow.

Sick or well, a newspaperman worthy of the label recognizes drama and pathos in an instant. What's more, he will go to almost ridiculous lengths and disregard his own safety to make a deadline. It isn't a case of being noble or heroic. Getting the story, and moving it with all possible speed, is a phobia, and can no more resist it than the hapless moth can avoid a candle's fatal flame.

Additional proof of the average newspaperman's sentimental nature was furnished at Cape Canaveral a week ago, when Astronaut Alan B. Shepard made his successful flight into outer space.

Writing of the epic event, Neal Stanford said, "Hundreds of hardened newsmen gathered at the press site on the Cape, and not a little disgruntled at the 'scrub' of the original flight Tuesday, choked up visibly as they recorded minute-by-minute Navy Commander Shepard's great adventure." Stanford added that "there wasn't a dry eye" at the scene.

Quite frankly the editor of The Mirror considered the advance publicity given the planned launching as very ill advised. It appeared to us that Uncle Sam and the press were jointly setting the stage for a crushing blow to our prestige if the flight failed in its objective.

What failure would have done to us, propaganda wise, after all the ballyhoo spread around the world, is little short of terrifying. The gamble wasn't worth it, considering what we had at stake, and we're sure the press would have cooperated had the government indicated a desire to withhold publicity until success could be achieved.

Fortunately, the blunder was a monumental blessing in disguise. The sharp contrast between the secrecy and evasive hedging that Russia resorted to, and this nation's wide-open policy, had great impact upon all the peoples of the world.

Every news medium on the face of the earth, including Communist reporters representing the Kremlin, was afforded an opportunity to witness the spectacle at Cape Canaveral, and the privilege of writing about it without restriction. That, the world knows, was a far cry from the way the Soviets handled their own man-flight into

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UP AND AWAY Pictured here is the Air-Sea Rescue Demonstration that will be a highlight of Sunday's Water Safety-O-Rama at the Trent Pines Club. Marine helicopters

can be rather important, at times, as Astronaut Alan Shepard would heartily agree after his speedy pick-up this week.—Official Cherry Point Photo.

You Can Learn a Great Deal At Your Water Safety-Rama

If you're one of the many who enjoy boating, fishing, swimming and water skiing, you owe it to yourself to be at Trent Pines Sunday afternoon at 1 p.m.

On tap, all for free, is an entertaining and educational Water Safety-O-Rama sponsored jointly by the New Bern Civic Council and the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service.

What you learn, along the shores of the rippling Trent, may save your life this summer or next. Or perhaps it will save the life of someone else who might fall victim to tragedy because you failed to recognize the hazards that lurk in every body of water.

Cooperating to make the program a success are the United States Coast Guard, the United States Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point, the American Red Cross, the Trent Pines Club, and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

Bring the kids along, and they'll get a bang out of the Air-Sea Rescue by Marine Corps Helicopters, the U. S. Coast Guard in Action, Boating Safety Demonstrations, Skin Diving, and the American Red Cross Rescue Team.

Music for the occasion will be provided by the 2nd Marine Air Wing Band from Cherry Point, and this feature in addition to all the other things in store is well worth the time and effort you'll put forth to attend the event.

Among the water-safety experts on hand will be William J. McDonald, a Red Cross specialist and Duane Raver, who does a column regularly for Wildlife in North Carolina, the official magazine of the Wildlife Resources Commission.

Since water sports are heavily indulged in by thousands in this coastal region, Sunday's Water Safety-O-Rama holds real significance. The chances are you'll pick up a lot of new information. Even if you're already well informed, it won't hurt to be reminded of the mishaps that might involve you and your loved ones during the summer season.

As Duane Raver says, "A frequent companion of the accident-prone skipper is an insidious character named Complacency. He will ride with just about anyone who will let him aboard, and often is almost a stowaway in his stealthy approach.

"The key to dealing with this problem of IT CAN'T HAPPEN TO ME attitude is first of all the recognition that none of us is exempt from difficulties afloat. Now at first glance that doesn't seem to be much of a problem; but this very fact of either ignoring or hiding from our minds the possibility of accidents makes it doubly difficult to deal with.

"The two obvious approaches to boating accidents are one, the prevention of such mishaps, and two, preparedness for dealing with accidents if they do occur. If the first, prevention, were completely effective, there would be no need for the second, cure.

"At our present stage, both must be emphasized for best results. The ousting of complacency from your boat is good starting place for boating accident prevention.

"No one likes to be saddled with an extra load of do's and don'ts while having fun. But it is your responsibility as skipper to bring your passengers home safely, and

this takes constant alertness on your part. Prepare for what can possibly happen, and you will help keep trouble away.

"It seems that we are almost constantly searching for rules to do things by. In this pursuit it soon becomes apparent that there are many situations that simply can't be handled by a set of rules. The fact remains that there is no substitute for sharp thinking in tight situations.

"For example, if you forgot all the boating safety rules now on hand and stuck to one capsule recommendation, it might be this—be a water sportsman. The more you think about this and all its implications the more effective it becomes. Are you a water sportsman, all the time?

"What would you do if your outboard motor suddenly burst into flames while you were out a mile or so from the nearest shore? Even if you were thoughtful enough to have an effective fire extinguisher aboard, would you know how to use it properly? While flaming gasoline is spilling out into the floor of your boat is no time to read directions (if there are any to read).

"The point is that all emergency equipment and procedures should be thoroughly checked out in advance of any boat trip. It may seem like a routine thing to use a fire extinguisher, but actually various types of fires call for quite specific procedures. Make sure that you and all your passengers know where the safety equipment is kept and exactly how it is to be used in an emergency.

"Drownings have occurred when the victims were within arm's

length of a life-saving device. In a case or two, life jackets or buoyant cushions were locked in a compartment when the craft capsized or swamped. One situation found the life-saving device floating beneath the overturned boat.

"Even where no approved life-saving devices were aboard, boaters have gone down thrashing wildly with some sort of a flotation object bobbing nearby. A minnow bucket, paddle, partially filled gas can, thermos jug, any of these will keep you afloat for hours.

"Your greatest help in cases of emergency is confidence that you can handle the situation. Your greatest enemy when trouble starts is panic and wondering "What do I do now?"

William J. McDonald, the Red Cross specialist who will be here Sunday, says, "The last choice for anyone not actually trained in swimming rescue should be the decision to jump into the water with a drowning person. Throwing a buoy, pushing out a floating board, standing in shallow water and flipping one end of an article of clothing or towel to pull him in are much safer methods of rescue and just as effective.

"In considering self-rescue, one must face the possibility of finding himself overboard fully clad in heavy clothing. Should a person be placed in this position, he has but to swim as one would normally, except that he must USE A STROKE WHICH KEEPS HIS ARMS UNDER WATER.

"Careful study of the whole business of drownings indicates that the vast majority of these deaths occur within 15 feet of

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