

Smilin' Jack And The Amazon Woman

By JONATHAN PHILLIPS
Special Correspondent

She stood about six-foot-three, he said, and probably weighed in at about 220 pounds.

She had a temper like a junkyard dog and the disposition of a wounded grizzly bear. The combination, Smilin' Jack said, was devastating.

"I used to go with her, but I sure don't know why. I guess I could take the beatings better when I was a young man," Jack said, fingering his shot of whiskey on the kitchen table. An old friend, somewhere on the far side of 60 like Jack, grinned and nodded.

"She was a mean one," he said.

One occasion is perhaps embellished by years of retelling but apparently has some truth. This two-fisted broad was mad at Jack, and approached a carful of Jack and his friends.

One by one, the legend goes, her strong left arm entered the car, hamlike fist showed each what she thought of him at the moment.

The last occupant was a quick thinker. "I swear to ya, ma'am," he whined amidst the groans of his compatriots, "I didn't say nothin!" He was spared.

No more fightin'

Smilin' Jack, quite understandably, was getting to the point where he was just a bit dissatisfied with their relationship.

He had a reputation to consider, and couldn't just break up with the girl, 'cause folks would think he just couldn't handle her.

Smilin' Jack threw back the last of his shot, wiped his mouth with his shirtsleeve, and leaned back, throwing one arm over the back of the kitchen chair. His eyes sparkled as he recalled his solution to the problem.

One night he took the Amazon Woman to a sand quarry that served as one of the local lovers' lanes.

"I knew of a fresh hole they dug about six foot deep. I parked near there, and when I got the chance, I shoved her in it," Jack said. "I had cut me one o them four-foot-long dogwood switches. Ever' time she try to get out of that hole, I'd smack her with it."

Jack scratched the gray stubble on his chin, trying to remember those old details.

"I musta beat her for 30 minutes, I reckon. Then she said, 'honey, if you let me out of this hole, I swear we won't fight no more.'"

Natural born mean

That sounded good to Smilin' Jack. But as he bent to help her out of the sand hole, he braced his forward leg.

"I knowed she might try to pull me in there, and I might of never got out of that. But I pulled her out, and you know, she was as nice and sweet as you could want for three months."

Jacks wife, who has heard all this nonsense a time or two before, had a soft grin as she poured him another shot. But whatever happened to that old girlfriend?

"She turnt right mean again," Jack said. "She was just a natural born bad, mean, ill-tempered, tough woman."

"So why," somebody asked, "did you go with her so long?"

Jack sat forward in his chair, his legs spread wide, his foot tapping the floor as he held forth for the group. He cleaned out the second shot, and again wiped with his sleeve.

"Shucks, boys," he said with a grin. "I went with a lot of 'em and don't know why."

**Deadline for Articles and
Advertisements
Mondays 5:00 p.m.**

Governor Learns 'Federalism' Views

RALEIGH—"I am not here just to talk to you. I want to listen."

NCACC President Grover Lancaster presided at the meeting, pointing out in an initial statement that counties would be unable to raise property taxes to offset federal budget cuts. Lancaster urged the governor to work with the Association in examining the proper role of county and state governments in the performance and financing of essential governmental services.

He pointed out that with the current examination of the federal-State role in the delivery and financing of governmental services it was a very appropriate time to do the same type of examination as between State and county government. The governor agreed to work with the Association on this "sorting-out" process.

Dear Editor:

We have noticed many "Letters to the Editor" recently on the subject of potholes. Your own newspaper has probably printed some of these as well.

I'd like to take this opportunity to share with your readers some information about the condition of our highway system, how it got that way and what we're doing about it.

As your readers can tell, we are experiencing pavement failures (i.e., "potholes") across a large segment of our highway system.

The potholes of today were really "born" several winters ago as tiny cracks in the surface of the highway pavement. Over the years they have now reached "maturity" as full-blown potholes due to moisture seeping into those ever-growing cracks.

When this moisture freezes between layers of pavement, the ice expands and exerts heavy pressure on the pavement, causing it to break up. Traffic on top of this weakened pavement accelerates the damage to the roads.

The way to prevent the initial pavement cracks which result in potholes is to protect the road surface with a timely resurfacing or sealing program such that moisture can't get down through the pavement in the first place.

In the past, we have not had the funds to really do an adequate job of resurfacing. Last fiscal year (July 1, 1981 - June 30, 1982) we could only resurface about 380 miles of our 56,000-miles paved road system. We ought to be resurfacing about 2,600 miles a year to keep up with it.

Thanks to legislative approval of the "Governor's Good Roads Program", we'll have \$80 million to resurface about 2,900 miles this current fiscal year. By the end of this month, our Department will have let to contract approximately 2,875 miles of resurfacing at an estimated costs of \$78.3 million.

That resurfacing, over and above the 2,600 miles, will help us cut into the existing backlog of resurfacing needs and subsequently reduce future winter damage.

Right now our patch crews are making repairs to the roads as fast as possible. Because of the cold weather, some of these repairs are temporary and permanent repairs will be made as soon as the weather warms up.

Hot asphalt, required for making permanent repairs, is not available during the cold winter months. The permanent repair process also requires that damaged road surfaces be prepared by some excavation prior to the use of the hot asphalt. The temporary "cold patch" technique is being used now so we can quickly insure the safety of motorists.

Resurfacing work to protect our roads in the future will begin again in the spring as the temperatures permit this work to be done.

We in the Department of Transportation appreciate the concern, interest and patience by the motoring public regarding their highway system as we work to take care of existing damage as well as protect the system from future damage without resurfacing program.

Regards
Bill Roberson

From "North Carolina County Lines"

(Editor's Note: the following was taken from the text of Governor Jim Hunt's prepared remarks for his meeting with NCACC and League of Municipalities officers on Feb. 19. He spoke spontaneously from the text.)

The New Federalism - -

A State-Local Dialogue

I asked to meet with you today because there has never been a time when it was more important for leaders of State government and leaders of local government to enter into a dialogue.

I am not here just to talk to you. I want to listen.

So now I want to hear from you. What questions and concerns from local government do you want to have in mind as I talk with other governors and with administration officials and members of Congress in Washington?

What do you think of the swap the President has proposed?

What would be the outlook for your property taxes if we accepted that swap?

What do you think the various levels of government do best?

What do you think of the governor's position that income-security programs should be a federal responsibility?

What programs do you think local and State governments should run?

Letter To The Editor:

Usually when you read the "Letter to the Editor" it's a gripe about something or someone—well, not this one . . .

I just want to express my thanks to the Group Home for Mentally Handicapped Adults for letting the Vanceboro Junior Woman's Club be a part of their OPEN HOUSE on Saturday. This was the most rewarding experience I (personally) have had while serving my community thru the JWC. The ladies from the Vanceboro facility and the fellows from the Beaufort home (who came to visit) were just delightful - a real joy to visit with. The House Parents, Debbie and Daniel, are a dedicated young couple.

The Vanceboro Junior Woman's Club is proud to have had even a small part in welcoming them to our community.

Peggie M. Mills
President, VJWC

West Craven

HIGHLIGHTS

Craven County's Family Weekly Newspaper

R.L. Cannon, Jr. Publisher	Betty Daugherty News	Sharon Buck Production
Business Manager	Edith Hodges Mike Hodges Circulation	Glen Seamster Sports
Christine Hill Office Manager		

P.O. Box 404, Main Street, Across from the Post Office
Vanceboro, North Carolina 28586
Phone: (919) 244-0780, (919) 244-0508

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

Second Class Postage Paid at Vanceboro, N.C.
(Permit entered March 1, 1978)
SUBSCRIPTION PRICES

Single Copy	20¢
1 Year	\$6.24
2 Years	\$10.40
3 Years	\$14.56

(Includes N.C. Sales Tax)

(USPS 412-110)

(Payable in advance. Subscribers desiring their Highlights terminated at expiration should notify us of this intention, otherwise we will consider it their wish to continue to receive the paper and they will be charged for it.)

**Copies Made At the Highlights
20¢ a copy**