

# Endangered Species On 5th Street By JONATHAN PHILLIPS

When you ride to Greenville for a night on the town, if you're not going to the movies or a sporting event, chances are you're going to sample the fabled Green City nightlife.

Depending on your age and inclinations, you may join herds of secretaries on the prowl at the Sheraton, clutches of clogging clod-kickers at the Carolina Opry House, droves of drug-crazed rockers at the Attic, or hang out with the college kids at the Elbo Room or Pantana Bob's.

But there are—or at least, were—other watering holes in Greenville that are far less well-known to the Saturday night reveler cruising in from Vanceboro or Tarboro or Farmville.

These are the joints where hard-core, long-time Greenville-ites hang out, and are the home of that most venerable of Pitt County institutions: The Old Greenville Hippie.

They come from Raleigh and Richmond and Robersonville and Red Springs and thereabouts. Usually they come to East Carolina University.

There they flunk out, or graduate, or find jobs around Greenville. For whatever reason, they stay.

Some stay because they like the quiet, laid-back, small-town life, with just enough city-style excitement. Some stay because they don't have anywhere better to go. Some were born close by, will die close by, and figure they might as well not wander too far off in the mean time.

Some are like the folks you find in any college town in the U.S.A.—they never quite know what to do when they finish school, so they just hang out.

In Greenville, this has been happening on a fairly large scale for 15 or 20 years. A significant number of these hangers-on lived through or at least were greatly influenced by, the hippie era. Since they typically disdain regimented suit-and-tie jobs and like to wear blue jeans and t-shirts and are older than the late-teens mobbing downtown Greenville, this subset of the hanging-on population has been dubbed the Old Greenville Hippies.

During my days in G-town, OGH's were principally found at two places: JJ's Music Hall, and The Rathskellar. Lesser concentrations could be, and still are, found at The Tree House and the New Deli.

JJ's, the only joint in town which would get a decent R & B band

in every now and again, went under two years or so ago. The OGH's regrouped at the Rathskellar, commonly called The Rat.

The Rat held the largest collection of beers in town, and actually featured pinball machines, instead of the newfangled video games taking over everyplace else. The small stage was the last refuge of the guitar-and-harmonica set; though now electric music would still surface occasionally at the Tree House and the Deli.

Another distinction of the Rat is that while other Greenville watering holes came and went—even the Attic changed locations—The Rat has been there on 5th St. for 20 years.

Now I'm told the Rat is due to be sold. It may be reopened under another name, but the real Rat will die.

The OGH's may be able to regroup and make a final stand at the Tree House and the New Deli.

The survival of the species, however, is clearly threatened. The Rat represents the last pure patch of Old Greenville Hippie habitat.

We have made great strides in recent years toward preserving endangered species. We go to great lengths to protect whooping cranes, tree frogs, and red-cockaded woodpeckers. If we can do that for birds and amphibians, why not for OGH's?

The state, or the EPA, should move immediately to purchase the Rat and keep it open, as is. Since it represents critical habitat for a threatened and endangered life form, the expense will be justified.

For those of you who may object to using tax funds to keep a bar open, consider the societal benefits provided by Old Greenville Hippies.

OGH business people and merchants are about the only thing keeping much of downtown Greenville alive as business and industry flee to the edge of town. OGH musicians have given us songs such as the "Green City Shuffle" and "Gundy's Gone." OGH artists and craftsmen are a cultural treasure for all of eastern N.C.

I suggest you write to your elected officials on this matter. And just in case, next time you're in Greenville, drop by the New Deli or the Tree House, and take your camera.

You'll want to treasure the memory of the Old Greenville Hippies, before they're all gone.

## Fix Problems

Taking care of small home fix-ups before they become big trouble can be a real money-saver.

Doing them in the spring, before the thermometer and humidity rise, will make them seem a lot easier too.

Begin indoors by getting your summer clothes out of mothballs.

Unstick those windows you want to have open during the summer by running a putty knife along the frame and lubricating the track with silicone spray.

Clean or change your air conditioner's filters and vacuum its coils. Clean the blades of your window or floor fans and oil their motors.

Outside check your garden hoses for leaky connections and worn washers.

Sharpen your lawn mower blades, making sure the spark plug wire is disconnected before touching blades on power motors.

Repair your window screens; small holes can be replaced with patches you buy at a hardware store.

Inspect your roof gutters and drains for ice damage or rust holes; reattach any loose supports and patch any holes.

## Complaining By LELA BARROW

Is life worth living? Yes, so long as there is wrong to right, or tyranny to fight, or tears to dry, or one sorrowing face that smiles as we draw nigh. Live for something, write your name in kindness, love and mercy on the people you meet. Your name, your deeds will be remembered by the people you leave behind. Let your life be remembered.

Complaining people water their miseries by fault-finding and grumble if you visit them—they grumble if you don't. When you are in this mood, "feeling down and out", read Romans 8:31-39. God says, "Be still". It is not easy to be still when you feel in a complaining mood. Yet God says, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." Romans 9:2 Paul admits "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart"—he was not complaining of himself, he was sorry for his people, the Jews.

When you first wake up in the morning are your thoughts, or words ones of complaint? Listen to the first person you meet and see how many things he or she is grumbling over. "It's going to be hot, or cold today" we hear most often. This is a complaining generation we live in, critical even whining, and perpetually dissatisfied. People are asking me, "Where does money go? Why does it take so much? My check is gone before you know it." The more you have the more you spend.

I lived in a time when old people didn't get a government check. My mother didn't get one and she went through the Hoover depression days. She lost money in three banks. She didn't go to a Rest Home, she didn't complain or "cry over spilt money"—neither did she go hungry, or lack for clothes or medicine. She received very little rent from her two farms—maybe \$100.00 per

year. She felt the Lord had given us so much to be thankful for; many reasons to start and end the day with a song in our hearts, and thanks on our lips, instead of complaints.

If we could only live each day with this promise—"Lord, I will not complain about one thing today."

Complaining goes back to Moses and the Israelites. He led them out of slavery in Egypt where they grumbled of the hard labor they had to do under hard task masters. They complained of the manna God furnished them to eat in the wilderness—they had no money. We pay taxes for everything we have. Jesus had no money—he had to pay tax. He sent Peter fishing to get money out of the fish's mouth to pay tax for himself and Peter. He didn't complain with the Tax Collector. Do we? Yes, we do—Is he the one to blame—or are we—the voters to blame?

The duty of man is not a wilderness. It is plain and simple and consists of two points—his duty to God. Which every man should feel: and respect to his neighbor. This is an idea: I'm going your way, so let us go hand in hand. You help me and I'll help you. Let us help one another while we may.

In these disquieting times don't worry about the future, don't be impatient. Be calm—then realize there is nothing to worry about, Don't fritter away your life worrying about the past. Live in the present a peaceful serene life.

Dr. Frederick Loomis; Best cure for complaining: "Stop thinking about yourself—lighten your own load by doing something for someone else—it will keep you from morbid worry and fears—it's the best medicine."

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