



West Craven Highlights

News From Along The Banks Of The Neuse



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The Proper Pursuit Of Fish

Most recreational fishermen are entirely too vigorous in their pursuit of fish. They seem to miss the point, rushing hither and yon in overpowered bath tubs, bracing their heads against the hurricane wind. Not for me. These fellows have the idea. Find a

quiet spot and soak up a little sun. If the fish bite, great. If they don't, that's why you were careful when you picked your company.

(Ric Carter photo)

Registration Set May 11 At Farm Life First Grade, Kindergarten Students Need Paperwork

By TERRI JAMIESON
Staff Writer

Ready, Set, Go!

Soon it will be time for pre-school registration at Vanceboro Farm Life Elementary School. The registration will be held Thursday, May 11, from 9 a.m. until noon.

The school is asking that the procedures and requirements listed below be read and followed carefully.

— Register pre-school children at the time and date indicated.

— Bring a certified copy of the child's birth certificate. To be enrolled in the first grade, a student must be 6-years-old on or before Oct. 16. To be enrolled in kindergarten, the student must be 5-years-old on or before Oct. 16 and must be enrolled during the first month of the school year.

— The child must have had the proper immunizations. The immunizations needed include five doses of DTP vaccine (booster after the fourth birthday), four doses of polio vaccine (booster after the fourth birthday), one dose of rubella vaccine, one dose of rubeola vaccine (after first birthday) and one dose of mumps vaccine.

— A health assessment is required for all students entering school for the first time. Forms can be obtained from the school office.

Children needing immunizations and/or health assessments should be taken to their physicians or the Craven County Health Department. Clinics at the health department are held

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Several Factors Threaten Area's Fishing Tradition

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the oldest profession in the Albemarle-Pamlico sounds region is fishing. Long before Europeans arrived and the land became widely cultivated, aboriginal peoples plied the waters of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuary for the great variety and abundance of fish that lived in these waters.

That effort has continued uninterrupted for thousands of years, and today only the Chesapeake Bay estuary supports a larger fishery on the East Coast than the Albemarle-Pamlico. Through the years the methods and gear of fishing have changed markedly, as has the land use of the region, but the importance of commercial fishing here has remained constant.

Analysis

With recent increases in land-based activities, though, there has come an increase in the human effects on the fisheries resource. Exactly how much of an effect such human activities as pollution and overfishing have had is open to debate, but a look at landings of principal seafood species in the 1980s shows some interesting trends.

(Principal seafood species include 14 types of finfish and shellfish. They include flounder, herring, striped bass, shrimp,

blue crab and oysters. Menhaden, which are not eaten directly by humans and so are not counted in "seafood" landings, make up by far the largest single fishery in North Carolina waters.)

The decade of the '80s began with a harvest of 89 million pounds of seafood in 1980 — the highest annual landing ever for the Albemarle-Pamlico-Core sound region. That was followed with takes of 71 million pounds in 1981 and 79 million pounds in 1982. Those figures dwarf the annual landings of the early- and mid-1970s, when hauls were usually 34 million to 45 million pounds.

Several factors apparently en-

ter into this era of record harvests. Most fisheries biologists feel that steadily increasing landings in the late 1970s probably spurred a sharp growth in commercial fishing operations, and that this coincided with strong populations in many species to produce the heavy catches.

Since 1982, however, the take of seafood species in the Albemarle-Pamlico estuary has exceeded 70 million pounds only once, when 75 million pounds were taken in 1985. All other years to 1988 have had catches of 59 million to 67 million pounds except for 1986 when only 56 million pounds were caught, the lowest total since 1977.

This trend for the Albemarle-

Pamlico is mirrored by a statewide decline in seafood fisheries from 138 million pounds in 1980 to 93 million in 1986 and 97 million in 1987 (no figures available for 1988).

If these numbers are broken down into individual species we can gain perhaps a better understanding of the decline. For example, while the steady loss of striped bass stocks since 1970 is well documented, other finfish have had dramatic drops as well; the catches of croaker, grey trout and spot for 1986-88 are each less than half the totals for their catches of 1979-81. Biologists consider it significant that each of these species is an "anadromous" fish, meaning they live in

saltwater but migrate to freshwater rivers for spawning, so apparently are being affected by similar stresses.

But again, just as several factors played a role in the record highs of the early '80s, factors besides human activities may have influenced the declines of the late '80s. Cyclical changes in populations and adverse weather are just two ways nature itself can help depress yearly landings. Still, the shrinking numbers of these finfish appear indicative of a long-term, human-influenced population decline.

Even more disturbing is a downward trend of blue crab

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Broken Leg A Break For Big Top Owner

By MIKE VOSS
Editor

John Pugh may have gotten his biggest break in the circus business in 1964 when he broke a leg while practicing multiple-twisting somersaults for his trampoline act.

That break, literally and figuratively, eventually brought Pugh from performer to co-owner of the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus. He worked enough to get back on the trampoline but eventually Pugh quit performing and became the circus' manager. After years of ups and downs, he and partner Doug Holwadel bought the circus in 1982.

"It's a thrill every day to see the Big Top going up. I get up ... to watch the thing go up," said Pugh from his office in the ticket wagon. "A circus isn't a circus unless it's in that damn tent."

Although completely caught up in the day-to-day operations of the circus, Pugh recalls his performing days fondly. "It is one of my more enjoyable times in life. It didn't seem like a job," he said. Pugh and his trampoline partner had similar work ethics and enjoyed other similar interests, including "chasing the young ladies."

Pugh grew up in England during World War II and lived on a farm outside London. His father, "Digger," produced theatrical and variety shows and managed entertainers in Great Britain and Europe. Pugh trained as a gymnast and made his debut at age eight.

Would he perform again? "No," Pugh said he knew when to quit. After the injury he wanted to prove to himself he could regain his conditioning as a performer. Once he proved it, he gave up performing. "After Neal (the partner) and I split, I never really could get back into it.

since," he said.

But perhaps not all of the performer is gone. He will offer some advice to performers when he thinks he can make a positive change.

"In my day I was pretty good," he said. Being a former performer is an advantage now that he is an owner, but that advantage was not always there, he said.

Owners and managers were once a different breed and came from outside the performers. But that started to change when Art Conscello, a member of the Flying Conscellos, put Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Circus back on its feet when it went bankrupt in the 1950s and switched from performer to administrator.

The circus is big business, make no bones about that, said Pugh. He said \$650,000 was put back into the circus this year for a new tent and lighting system — not to mention the general upkeep. Pugh says three times the purchase price of the circus has been put back into it over the last seven years. The circus has been almost completely retooled in those seven years, he said.

Each season is "like starting a new business all over again," he said. Getting the season off to a good start costs money and the circus needs a good first three weeks on the road to set the tone for the rest of the season, he said. It needs to take in about \$21,000 a day to break even, he said. But those first weeks are important.

"It's good for the performers. There's nothing better for a show than to see crowds. It's not a money thing. It's the thrill of performing before the crowd that's important," he said.

"I've been with the show for

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Circus Time

Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages gaped and gawked recently as members of the Clyde Beatty-Cole Brothers Circus flung themselves through the air in death-defying leaps or

frolicked on the floor with exotic animals. The traveling show put up its big top in the area at several locations last week and over the weekend and hit the road again today. (Ric Carter photos)

Taylor Gets First Award For Sponsors

The Marketing Education program at West Craven High School has started an award program to recognize the training sponsors that have contributed outstanding service to the school's marketing education department's on-the-job training program.

Students who are getting on-the-job training can nominate their training sponsor and complete a point sheet for their nominee. The training sponsor that has the most points earned is presented the Training Sponsor Award to hang in their business for a month.

The first award was given to Gary Taylor, manager of Vanceboro's Cover Farm Supermarket. Taylor is a former marketing student and graduate of West Craven High School and employs to other former and two current marketing program students from the high school.

Miss Flynn Is Honored At Meeting

Lorinda Flynn of West Craven High School was honored at the N.C. Marketing Education Honors Brunch.

The brunch was held recently in Winston-Salem and is sponsored by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction to honor outstanding achievements of students in local high school marketing programs.

Students from throughout the state were honored for their excellence in class achievements, participation in Distributive Educations Clubs of America and their progression toward career goals through on-the-job training.

Allin Foulkrod, national DECA president, delivered the

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