

OPINION

Two-way street

Operation of Bald Head Island's transportation system is the proper concern of the village, not of the property owner association, and the sooner the village council takes over negotiation with the developer on transportation matters the better.

While an association committee has been "negotiating" with the developer on the question of whether a public subsidy is appropriate, they have nothing to negotiate with -- no weapon other than their strength of character, no tool besides common sense and moral persuasion -- and in reality they act as an advisory panel to the developer and nothing more.

The island, a corporate community, needs a firmer hand on the transportation wheel.

Now the ferry and on-island trams run when, where and at what price the developer chooses. The price of tickets goes up when that is deemed necessary by Bald Head Island Management, and stay there until the developer decides otherwise.

Transportation on the island is traditionally safe, reliable and courteous -- in a word, excellent. It is the jewel in the island's crown of amenities. It has heretofore been considered the developer's responsibility, and property owners and visitors have been pleased to accept the good, inexpensive service which the developer provided.

But when the developer earlier in the spring argued for a subsidy by property owners above his ticket price he shed the cloak of benefactor and became a contractor. With the village council directly involved in such discussions, talks could begin to center on what kind of transportation the people could get with the developer's tax money, rather than what kind of system he could run with theirs.

Way out of line

We are concerned about realignment plans now being devised by North Carolina High School Athletic Association officials, particularly as they apply to Brunswick County schools.

The problem arises from the fact that both South Brunswick and West Brunswick have enrollments which, numerically at least, qualify them for 3A competition. North Brunswick has enrollment which nearly qualifies it for 1A membership. That's two, maybe three, members of the existing Waccamaw 2A Conference which must be relocated.

One proposal for a new 3A conference would include one high school as far away as Craven County, a distance of well over 100 miles. That prospect would involve intolerable travel for these schools for all of their athletic teams, not just football and basketball.

There are plenty of 1A high schools in surrounding counties to provide North Brunswick with a less drastic change in conference membership.

With their consolidation programs now nearing completion, there are enough schools in Brunswick, Columbus and Bladen counties to form a combination 2A and 3A conference which would not impose unreasonable travel demands and which would continue an already healthy natural rivalry.

At no point in the new realignment proposals does there appear that any consideration has been given to the out-of-school time which will be required for travel. Three-hour trips, both ways, plus game time makes for a late bedtime, with no provision at all for preparing homework.

Our athletic programs are good for our educational system and the NCHSAA has done a splendid job of bringing order out of chaos with regard to eligibility and scheduling. But the controlling factor in our public school system must be the academic program, which is too important to be undermined by a game of numbers.

Guiding our guests

It pleases us to learn that the tour guide service aboard the ferries operating on the Southport-Fort Fisher run will be continued this year. Plans have been made to train the four young people who will serve in this role and they will be on duty as of June 1.

This is a joint venture by the Department of Cultural Resources and the Department of Transportation and its purpose is to provide information to the traveling public which will make a visit to the North Carolina coast more meaningful.

This is the most interesting ferry trip we know about, because not only do these vessels connect major points of interest on both sides of the Cape Fear River, they traverse the exact route following by the famous blockade runners during the Civil War.

There is little doubt that having these tour guides aboard last year, talking and answering questions during the half-hour trip, encouraged many passengers to stop for a visit in Southport. This year we will have more than ever to talk about, this being our 200th anniversary.

We are in the verge of a banner year for tourist visitors in Southport, and this indoctrination for ferry passengers will help make it even better.



"He bought me this car so I'd drive around with his bumper sticker!"

Not exactly news

Two TV shows we have watched many times over the years are "Night Court" and "Golden Girls". The final segment in each series was shown last week. "The Cosby Show" wound up its fabulous career last month. All three were NBC stand-bys, meaning that network has some huge holes to fill before next fall.

From "Night Court", Markie Post was our favorite. From "Golden Girls", Estelle Getty was the best of the ol' broads. Currently she stars with Sylvester Stallone in the movie "Stop, Or My Mom Will Shoot!" and it proves her versatility as an actress... We still are wondering when Disney is going to release "Spies", the movie made in Southport last year.

The oldest town in Bermuda is St. George's. Since St. George is a popular family name in Southport we wonder if some of our early settlers may have come here from that mid-Atlantic island... Before we leave Bermuda for the last time, we want to report that there was zero insect population while we were there. It has been almost as trouble-free in this regard so far this season in Southport.

Only rarely do we have the two teams we are pulling for win both ends of a doubleheader, but

it happened for us Sunday when Cleveland defeated Boston and Chicago beat New York to earn places in the NBA eastern conference finals. We will be in a quandary in the next round; what with Michael Jordan, Scott Williams and Horace Grant, all former ACC stars, playing against Brad Daugherty, Mark Price, Larry Nance and Danny Ferry also from our conference... Two good things happened to Quinton McCracken during the past weekend. He received his diploma from Duke University and he was named second baseman on the All-ACC baseball team.

Who do you think of as being North Carolina's all-time most popular athletic hero? We'll simplify the question by limiting it to native North Carolinians, thus eliminating collegiate stars of four-year residency. The name of Michael Jordan immediately comes to mind, and from the past there is Charlie Justice among others. But for long-lasting popularity, plus our admiration for how well he has handled his public adulation, our vote goes to Richard Petty. Who would you pick?... Here in Brunswick County we would have to go with Chucky Brown, former North Brunswick basketball star,

now with the Los Angeles Lakers in the NBA.

We were saddened Tuesday by news of the death of Lawrence Welk, the most durable of all the big-band leaders. His orchestra wasn't in the top ten of this select musical company but he kept on doing what he was doing long after most of the more famous names phased out, and in the later years of his career his musicians could reselect the sounds of some of his more famous contemporaries and play their arrangements as well as they could... We will miss his music, but we still will be watching his Saturday night recycled programs on public television.

Not one but two cruise ships stopped overnight in Southport during the past week. The *Caribbean Prince* came in Thursday afternoon and passengers had a chance to visit points of interest and do some shopping before a special program for their benefit was given at the Community Building... Late Sunday afternoon the *New Shoreham II* tied up at the city pier and left so early Monday morning that few local residents had an opportunity to see her. Both cruise ships are on their way north, where they will operate during the summer months.

Public opinion

Worthy goal

To the Editor:

A sad thing happened several days ago. My 11-year-old son watched as three workers for the Town of Long Beach removed and took away his basketball goal.

We were given fair warning. We received two written citations and a copy of the ordinance prohibiting any structure in the right-of-way except mailboxes, newspaper boxes and traffic control devices.

Now, I have no problem with mailboxes or traffic control devices, but you'd better believe my son's basketball goal was just as important to him as reading the newspaper is to me and all other subscribers in Long Beach.

This was not a permanent structure but one that was freestanding and takes about two minutes to remove.

As long as my son and his friends were shooting basketball we knew where they were. No one had to worry about having their windows broken out, homes vandalized or running over them on Oak Island Drive while they were riding their bicycles. It seems to me this is a much bigger problem than the basketball goal. The only real problem the goal created was for motorists who were used to using this street as

an international speedway and were forced to slow down.

This goal was no more an impediment than the mailboxes, newspaper boxes or the real estate sign that is sitting directly across the street from where the goal stood, in the right-of-way.

Debra Shrader
Long Beach



"Read my lips . . . I'm going to DO something!"

To The Editor:

The State Port Pilot invites its readers to share their views on subjects of public interest. Comments should be addressed to The Editor and mailed to The State Port Pilot, P.O. Box 10548, Southport, N.C. 28461. Letters should be limited to 250 words, longer letters will be edited for space, or will be returned to the writer if editing would significantly alter the content. Please include the writer's address and/or telephone number so he or she can be contacted by the Editor if necessary. Addresses and telephone numbers will not be printed.

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