

The Warren Record

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A Good Day For All

Congratulations are in order for members of the Warren County Firemen's Association who last Saturday put on an agenda of Fireman's Day events that will be remembered as one of the best ever held here.

Starting with a memorable parade along Main Street in Warrenton that featured two bands, a military academy color guard and an overwhelming array of fire-fighting equipment, the day's activities went off with very few hitches.

Joining in the effort to promote Fireman's Day, and staging the very first pig cook-off to be held at the Warrenton Lions Den, was the Warrenton Merchants Association.

Officers and directors of this group worked untiringly to feed some 1,250 people who turned up at the Lions Den for

a barbecue plate meal. Some snags surfaced which will require attention should a similar event be held in the future, but all in all the merchants' group worked smoothly with firemen in putting on the activity.

Members of the Norlina Fire Department are to be saluted in particular for outdistancing their competitors in the race to see who would be this year's top fire department. Norlina firemen now join the ranks of Drewry and Roanoke-Wildwood firemen in winning the coveted trophy which goes yearly to the county's best.

Firemen joined forces with merchants to give Warren County residents a real treat last Saturday, and local citizens appeared genuinely appreciative. It was a good day.

An Alarming Trend

In The Smithfield Herald

The people ought to be alarmed about a trend becoming more evident at all levels of government to keep taxpayers in the dark about certain aspects of the public's business.

We're talking, especially, about the lengthening list of exceptions to North Carolina's Open Meetings Law.

Before adjourning this month, the N.C. General Assembly added another: to exempt from the Open Meetings Law information "relating to locating or expanding industries" for as long as the release of such information would "frustrate" the state's recruiting efforts.

Keeping secret the details of government inducements to lure industries is a relatively popular stance by politicians, since most people want the state and its counties to do everything in their

power to create new jobs and boost the Tar Heel economy.

On the other hand, every time the law is amended to allow exceptions to the basic democratic concept of open government, it seems governing boards at every level are encouraged to conduct more and more of the public's business behind closed doors.

The trouble with the trend is that it is increasing the public's suspicion that elected officials are using the permitted exceptions as seemingly legal covers to discuss sensitive political matters that shouldn't be withheld from taxpayers and voters.

When governing boards and public agencies frequently resort to secrecy as they do the people's bidding, they are unwittingly sending up smoke signals that tell us they are eight insecure, incompetent, or downright defiant of democracy's sacred trust.

Looking Back Into The Record

September 12, 1947

The chant of the auctioneer will ring out here Monday morning at 9 a.m. inaugurating the opening of the Warrenton Tobacco Market for the 1947 selling season. For last year, 9,365,329 pounds were sold for an average price of \$45.83 per hundred.

Shooting doves from telephone and light wires is a violation of the law, Game Protector Alton Pridgen stated yesterday as a warning to hunters who will begin their quest when the season opens on Tuesday of next week.

The Town of Warrenton will furnish an extra man and truck to pick up trash placed in front of homes and buildings in an effort to encourage businessmen and other citizens to clean up back lots and yards.

September 14, 1962

Some 50 Warren County residents got a closer look at one phase of the space program when they viewed at Tuesday night's meeting of the Rotary Club a replica of Tel-Star, a satellite now circling the earth, which may one day make worldwide communication possible.

A mammoth illicit whiskey still—located almost within sight of a busy four-lane highway in northern Warren County—was smashed Monday as law enforcement officials brought to a halt the 160-gallon-per-day operation.

By vote of the sales committee of the Bright Belt Warehouse Association in Raleigh, tobacco warehousemen will close their doors for three days next week as committee members study whether the depressed prices are being caused by plant congestion.

September 15, 1977
Prices on the Warrenton Tobacco Market peaked again during last Thursday's sales, with an average of \$131.19, with one warehouse reporting \$143.08.

Construction of 100 units of housing for the elderly is expected to be started at Soul City in the late fall by the American National Housing Company of Soul City, Arthur Padula, president announced this week.

Banzet and Banzet has announced that Lewis Alston Thompson, III, an alumnus of UNC and Wake Forest universities, will begin practicing law at the firm's office on Monday.

The Warren County Scene



"Too close for comfort and too loud to be enjoyed" is what this little tyke seems to be thinking as he shields his ears from the blasts of the sirens which were a part of the Fireman's Day Parade in Warrenton last weekend.

(Staff Photo by Howard Jones)

Carolina Commentary Jay Jenkins

Only 'Minimal Damage'

More than 30 years ago when the federal government located the Sunny Point ammunition depot in coastal Brunswick County wags said shipping access was only one factor in the decision.

The big one, they said, was the fact that if the depot went up in a thunderous fireball Brunswick was such desolate country damage would be minimal.

Now Brunswick is the second fastest-growing county in North Carolina, and is discovering that a growing tax base can pose painful decisions as well as pleasant results.

The major problem is how to preserve the qualities that made Brunswick (substitute the name of any other underdeveloped county) so attractive to immigrants, individual and corporate, in the first place: easy living, an uncluttered landscape, room for orderly growth.

The answer to the problem is adequate zoning. To date, the Brunswick County commissioners have refused to accept zoning. Four months ago, they voted 4-1 against the concept, despite the pleas of county planners. The longer they dally, the greater the damage.

As the agricultural base of Eastern North Carolina totters, there is unprecedented activity in the region aimed at securing new industry which will provide new jobs. One of the most recent developments was the announcement that Pembroke State University in Robeson County is organizing an office of economic development to serve surrounding counties.

Such offices attempt to put the area's best foot forward by touting the educational and cultural advantages, as well as the existence of an ample pool of potential employees with adequate training facilities. Often the mere collection of date will spur localities to correct deficiencies that loom large in the research.

A Regional Development Institute at East Carolina University has been at work for some time. Chambers of Commerce in Greenville, Goldsboro, Kinston, Rocky Mount, Tarboro, Washington and Wilson publish a slick magazine extolling the region.

Former Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. is spearheading an effort to create a satellite triangle anchored by Wilson, Raleigh and Rocky Mount that would complement the Research Triangle, the mother lode for the

explosive development occurring in Wake, Durham and Orange Counties.

So the beat goes on. The state's massive school construction effort, authorized by the 1987 General Assembly, will help. Local industry-hunters will tell you that many a smokestack has been lost because the wives of company officials took a look at the local schools.

From the industry-poor northeastern section of the state, Holly Mack Bell of the Bertie Ledger-Advance writes, "It's my contention that industrial development is inevitably coming to this area. Why? Because one day it will be the only space left open."

Bell adds that "Meanwhile, we should figure out how to keep the benefits of 'green space' and other advantages we have." In other words, adopt zoning regulations while there is still time.

Once zoning rules are in force, they will be under incessant attack from developers. That will be as true in the smallest eastern county as it is now in Raleigh, where on every side giant cranes vault upward out of the trees like so many prehistoric praying mantises. So take heed, brethren.

Letter To Editor

Writer Outraged

To The Editor:

I am writing in regard to the annual Fireman's Day Parade. I enjoyed the parade and the turnout and support of the town's people—with the exception of a few.

I was outraged by all of the persons who cut in front of the Warren County High School Marching Band as I watched them turn in front of the band, dividing the parade into two sections.

The parade was led off by the Color Guard, Army band and the fire trucks. After the fire trucks were the marching band and the rescue vehicles. Those inconsiderate 30 cars cut off our band, making them march in place for five minutes before they could continue along the parade route.

I think it is wonderful that our community supports such efforts as Fireman's Day. I only wish they would exhibit that same support to our fine young musicians in the Warren County High School Band.

JUDY HOLT
Warrenton



Kay Horner

The Record's First Issue

It was November 1892. Grover Cleveland had just been elected to his second term in the White House. The case of Lizzie Borden, charged with the hatchet murders of her parents, was about to go to trial. The London Financial News predicted a boom in American Railway securities that would leave Americans "literally burdened with money seeking investment."

In Warren County, J. M. Ransom was making carriages, A. M. Miles was specializing in roofing, Long and Tarwater were selling real estate, S. T. Miles was dealing in staples and "fancy" groceries and John E. Dugger was pulling teeth.

Or so the first issue of The Record, later known as The Warren Record, reported. It hit the newsstands November 17.

The editor, B. F. Long, had been a resident of the county for more than 30 years when he undertook the task of providing the people of Warren with "all important items of news every week, both foreign and domestic," and keeping readers "fully posted up on all county matters."

All of this was for the mere price of \$1.50 a year, "cheap for the paper we propose to furnish," Long noted.

Among the most effective advertisements in that fledgling issue of The Record was the one for C. E. Jackson. It occupied a third of a column and read in small print, "We're so busy that they did not have time to write up their advertisement this week, but will tell you the news next week."

Among the miscellany used to fill the columns of that issue were a lengthy explanation on the two nautical expressions "weighing anchor" and "under way," which were described as "quite distinct, but have been and still are sadly confused," and excerpts from a lecture given in Calcutta by Mr. Rajendra Lal Mitra, LL.D., on "changes wrought of late years in the Parsee community."

Such items prove that there is one constant in the newspaper business, namely, those weeks when there simply isn't any news.

Among the locals and personals in the first Record was an item announcing the marriage of R. B. Boyd of Warrenton, "one of our largest tobacco buyers," and Miss Tempie Burwell at the home of the bride's father in Mecklenburg County, Va.

The Boyds escaped the editorial comment tagged to the wedding notice of Mr. J. E. Wilson and Miss Pattie A. Gee of Lunenburg County, Va. who "made a flying visit" to Warrenton and were married. "Another illustration of the old saying that 'Love laughs at locksmiths,'" The Record stated.

Long wrote nothing in the first Record on the virus of life in Warren County. His writing was not given to understatement.

"We have the best conditions in the state in everything which goes to make a good country to live in. A generous soil with capacity to produce almost every kind of the temperate and semi-tropical climate. We have a climate, which for healthfulness, is unsurpassed on the continent. No county in the state has a more intelligent and moral population."

All the county lacked, Long believed, were accommodations for tourists.

"This has changed Asheville from a straggling village to a prosperous city. We have greater advantages, and if we will utilize them, can make Warrenton one of the most prosperous towns in North Carolina. Let us wake up and no longer be laggards in the race."

Almost a century has passed since Long challenged Warrentonians to make Warren County the jewel of the East. One can only imagine how his editorials would read today were he to be resurrected for commentary.

But he no doubt would be pleased to know that time had proven true his promise to his first readers that "The Record is here to stay."



Thurletta Brown

Falling For Fall

Next Wednesday, Sept. 23, is the first day of autumn, and it can't get here quick enough for me!

Having always detested summer's heat and winter's cold, the prospect of cool, comfortable temperatures in the fall of the year generally fills me with a sort of relief that is only rivaled by that caused by the advent of spring.

Fall is a time of vibrant colors as the leaves change from their usual green garb to the reds, yellows and oranges of the new season. Trees on a mountainside take on a new type of beauty—beauty so impressive that "brain lapses" are not uncommon.

I suffered such a lapse, I'll admit, while driving through the countryside of Pennsylvania a few years ago.

The occasion was a student recruitment trip for the Duke University Office of Undergraduate Admissions, where I was employed before returning home to Warrenton. I had flown in to Pittsburgh on the first Sunday in October with an itinerary spanning the entire month that would take me by car from Pittsburgh, through the Amish country and Allentown, ending up in Philadelphia, for a swing through the Main Line schools.

During the second week, I was driving along the interstate toward points east. The highway was your usual four-lane-high-speed variety—except that it had been cut through mountains. That in itself blew my mind, so I was ripe for what followed.

While driving along, I was overwhelmed by the beauty of the forests that covered the mountains and blanketed the land in patchwork-quilt-style splashes of color.

"Who did the landscaping?" I wondered to myself.

As sharp as you are, dear readers, there is no need to explain.

The advances of modern technology and the egocentric attitudes of man have made us all assume that our kind is responsible for all that is good and worthwhile. For a moment there, it went without saying that some horticulturist with grid-and-analyst-pad in hand, had decided the appropriate placement for those trees, taking into account just how many oranges, reds and yellows should go where. (All of this had been done with plain old green trees, mind you.)

Man has taken credit for those red-white-and-blue flower displays that have been planted along the highways in recognition of the Bicentennial Year. They're beautiful, but not nearly so as those Pennsylvania trees that have been forever imprinted in my memory.

There is so much beauty in nature, if only we stop to look and appreciate it. And, for that, I'm thankful. You should be, too.