

## Opinion

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832

## ONE-ON-ONE

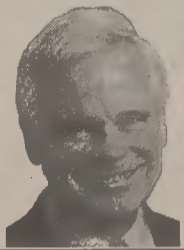
## HB2 over a good meal...

Where are Ruby and Jack Hunt when we need them?

Somebody needs to sit our political leaders down and guide them into talking to each other about how to get our state out of the HB2 mess we have made for ourselves.

"There were always desserts of homemade cakes and pies."

D.G. MARTIN



That is what former Cleveland County state Representative

Jack Hunt and his wife, Ruby, used to do in Raleigh. I admired their ability to get people of different views together at the same table for meals and fellowship.

Here is the way I described their magic meals in my new book, "North Carolina's Roadside Eateries." "Jack and Ruby regularly invited their government friends for informal suppers of country ham, baked chicken, cornbread, biscuits with sourwood honey and molasses, and vegetables from her garden, including corn frozen minutes after it was picked the previous summer. There were always desserts of homemade cakes and pies. Of course, there was also the opportunity to make friends with governors, Supreme Court justices, and legislative leaders.

"Once, when UNC President Dick Spangler and Governor Jim Hunt were at loggerheads about the governor's budget proposals for the university, they could hardly speak to each other until Jack invited them to breakfast with Ruby. Neither the governor nor the university president could say no to Ruby. It only was after they sat down to Ruby's cooking and warm spirit that they worked out a compromise."

North Carolina has a history of people with hard-line different views coming together informally to hear each other out, and working something out of situations that had seemed intractable.

It happened in Charlotte during the school desegregation turmoil when people at war with each other sat down and ate wonderful food together at the black-owned McDonald's Cafeteria or at potluck meals organized by teacher Maggie Ray.

People in Durham still celebrate the unlikely friendship that developed between Ku Klux Klan leader C.P. Ellis and black community leader Ann Atwater when they addressed community and school challenges in an informal setting. Ellis explained what happened this way, "I used to think that Ann Atwater was the meanest black woman I'd ever seen in my life. But, you know, her and I got together one day for an hour or two and talked. And she is trying to help her people like I'm trying to help my people."

At last the governor and some legislators are proposing bills that attempt to craft workable solutions. But each proposal has met only with critical resistance from those on both sides who are unwilling to consider compromises.

Summarizing his longer commentary on possible solutions to the HB2 situation, Chapel Hill attorney Patrick Oglesby writes, "No middle ground will satisfy everyone. Folks on both sides—call them hardliners—sincerely yearn for victory based on principle and morality, and despise symbolic defeat. But a principled return to 'pre-existing law and practice' sows pardon where there is injury, and it relegates the non-problem of the wrong bathroom to old, tried and true trespassing law—and to the jury. We can ask our leaders to sit down together and assemble a package to make the fighting stop. As a Christian pastor put it: 'We can live together as brothers or perish together as fools.'"

Oglesby's quote about living together comes from Martin Luther King Jr.

It calls out for good will and a willingness to put aside absolutism in order to find a good pragmatic, if imperfect, accommodation.

D.G. Martin hosts "North Carolina Bookwatch."



## SMALL TOWN GIRL

## A final farewell...

Almost everyone it seems has been to a Barnum & Bailey Circus.

I can still remember my trip to the circus as a little girl.

I had the opportunity to go as a first grade student on a field trip. I remember how excited I was when we pulled up.

I don't remember much about of the circus other than the gentlemen walking around shouting, "snowcones, get your snowcones here" or carrying the tall poles covered in bags of cotton candy.

Years later, my husband, Shevon and I had the opportunity to take our children to the circus in Virginia as a field trip.

As the circus started, I realized my fascination had changed from the excitement on the floor to the expression on my children's faces.

Each act was busy enough to hold the attention of Cheyenne Grace, who was a toddler at the time.

"I can still remember my trip to the circus as a little girl."

-LESLIE BEACHBOARD



The lions, clowns, acrobats and elephants were amazing. The children sat on the edge of their seats quietly, patiently waiting for what was to come next.

It always will be a day I remember because of the excitement that was in the air.

I am saddened that Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus will perform its last show on May 21 in New York.

This show started in 1919 and was called "the greatest show on earth" and for years has entertained those young and old alike.

Just to mention the name usually would bring back fond memories to most about seeing the show at

some point over the years.

The end of "the greatest show on earth" will mean children from now and forward will not have an opportunity to see this spectacular show.

Even after the elephants were retired, the show still had many great attributes. The performers always create an amazing show.

I just hope another circus event or show can take the place of the Barnum & Bailey Circus for children who look forward to the big field trip each year.

Some families take this opportunity to make a family trip like we did.

Farewell to "the greatest show on earth."

Leslie Beachboard is a Staff Writer for the Bertie Ledger-Advance, mother of four, avid house restorer and a East Carolina University Pirate at heart. She can be reached via email at lbeachboard@ncweeklies.com.

## AROUND HERE

## First time for everything...

It was bound to happen sooner or later.

I finally had a collision with a basketball player during a state playoff game Saturday night.

For much of my 30 years as a community newspaper journalist, I have been pretty fortunate not to have been in the way of student-athletes despite my close proximity to the field or court.

Until Saturday, I have never been hit full-on by a basketball player while covering a game.

But luck just wasn't on my side this time.

I was covering one of our local teams in Rocky Mount in a gym which politely could be referred to as a band box.

There is about seven feet of buffer from the baseline under the basket to the wall on each end of the court.

Normally, when I photograph basketball, I sit as far back as I can so as not to interfere with play. In close quarters, I make a point to inform the officials that I am there so they don't accidentally hit me. It hasn't stopped them, however, because they usually are trying to do their jobs and perhaps forget I am there.

In the case of Saturday's game, because the home team's gym only holds a certain number of spectators, they had to cap ticket sales at slightly over 300.

"I was fortunate and so was he."

-JIM GREEN



I was not going to take a seat already sold, so I took my spot to the right of the basket for the first half, then switched ends for the second half.

Everything was fine until the team I was covering tried a layup.

The player went up with his left hand as I tried to photograph his shot.

The next thing I knew, he was coming right for me, hoping to brace himself against the padded wall.

I am sure he didn't see me, but it wouldn't have mattered anyway. I shielded my camera and tried to turn away, hoping he would just graze me.

But there was nowhere for me to go, and impact was imminent.

I took the back of his elbow on my lower lip as he stumbled and landed on my right leg.

The player was able to get up and resume play with no stoppage, but I was in a lot of pain.

I first checked to see whether I had a bloody lip, which I didn't.

All of a sudden, I became light-headed - not severely, but enough to cause me to sweat (it didn't help that there was no air circulating in that packed gym, which made matters worse).

I retrieved some water I had nearby and drank about half a bottle in just a few seconds as a fellow photographer, who was seated to the left of me, asked if I was okay.

After the game, I had no problems walking to my car; when I arrived home, I checked my leg, which didn't even have a bruise on it (which I'd feared). I did have a slightly bruised lower lip on the inside, however.

I hope the athlete who collided with me is okay. He seemed to be fine the rest of the game and came up with a big rebound late, so I don't think the collision affected his mobility.

This is one of those instances where it could have been worse - broken glasses, bloody lip or nose, even a broken leg (if he had landed directly on it). And Lord only knows what could have happened to my camera.

I was fortunate, and so was he.

Jim Green is Sports Editor for the Bertie Ledger-Advance. He can be reached via email at jgreen@ncweeklies.com.

## Bertie Ledger-Advance

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832

THE BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1928 THROUGH THE HERITAGE OF THE WINDSOR LEDGER AND THE AULANDER ADVANCE. THE NEWSPAPER TRACES ITS HISTORY TO 1832 WHEN IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED AS THE WINDSOR HERALD AND BERTIE COUNTY REGISTER

Kyle Stephens  
Group Publisher  
kstephens@ncweeklies.com

Angela Harne  
Group Editor  
aharne@ncweeklies.com

Thadd White  
Editor  
twhite@ncweeklies.com

Deborah Griffin  
Staff Writer  
dgriffin@ncweeklies.com

Leslie Beachboard  
Staff Writer  
lbeachboard@ncweeklies.com

Jim Green  
Sports Editor  
jgreen@ncweeklies.com

Michelle Leicester  
Creative Services  
mleicester@ncweeklies.com

Jessica Mobley  
Advertising Manager  
jmobley@ncweeklies.com

Lanny Hiday  
Copy Editor  
bertienews@ncweeklies.com

THE BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE (ISSN 051-700) IS PUBLISHED EACH WEDNESDAY FOR \$26.69 (PLUS TAX) PER YEAR (IN BERTIE, HERTFORD, MARTIN, NORTHAMPTON, CHOWAN AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES) BY COOKE COMMUNICATIONS NORTH CAROLINA, LLC, 109 S. KING ST., WINDSOR, NC 27983. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT WINDSOR, NC AND ENTERED AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.

POSTMASTER:  
ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE, P.O. Box 69, WINDSOR, NC 27983.

CONTACT US:  
BERTIE LEDGER-ADVANCE  
P.O. Box 69,  
WINDSOR, NC 27983.  
PHONE: (252) 794-3185  
FAX: (252) 794-2835