

Opinion

ONE-ON-ONE

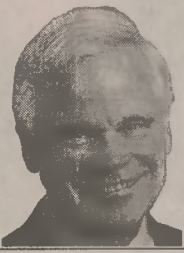
Challenging our views...

Two recent books have pushed North Carolinians to deal with unpleasant episodes in our state's history.

In "The Wilmington Ten: Violence, Injustice, and the Rise of Black Politics in the 1970s," author Kenneth Janken asserts, "The case of the Wilmington Ten amounts to one of the most egregious instances of injustice

"Arson plays a role in another story that leaves a scar..."

- D.G. MARTIN



and political repression from the post-World War II black

freedom struggle. It took legions of people working over the course of the 1970s to right the wrong."

Journalist Cash Michaels writes that Janken's book describes what is "arguably North Carolina's most notorious case of criminal frame-up," and he says it "sheds further light not only on why state prosecutors worked so hard to falsely convict the Wilmington Ten, but how a black nationalist-inspired worldwide social justice movement emerged to demand their freedom."

In 1971 racial demonstrations in Wilmington resulted in violence and arson. Through perjured testimony coached by the prosecution, 10 activists were convicted and sentenced to long prison terms. Efforts to overturn the convictions and secure their release brought widespread negative attention to North Carolina, much like what happened in the recent HB2 controversy. Janken's detailed narrative of the 40 years of these efforts shows why the saga of the Wilmington Ten left a deep and abiding scar on Wilmington and North Carolina.

Arson plays a role in another story that leaves a scar on North Carolina's history. It is told in "Bad Girls at Samarcand: Sexuality and Sterilization in a Southern Juvenile Reformatory," by East Carolina University's Karin Zipf.

In 1931, at a reform school for girls in Moore County, some inmates set fires that destroyed two residential buildings. The girls were charged with arson, then a death penalty crime, and put on trial for their lives.

The institution known as Samarcand was founded in 1917 to provide for the betterment of young women in troubled circumstances. But these high ideals tumbled under the governing attitudes of racism, sexism, and misguided religious and scientific ideas. For instance, between 1933 and 1947, 293 women were sterilized there.

Zipf's account of such disturbing activities is balanced by descriptions of the well-meaning and sometimes successful efforts to prepare young people to return to society. Those efforts ended in 2011 when Samarcand Youth Development Center closed.

As your reward for reading about the serious matters above, one of North Carolina's favorite food writers has written about one of our favorite foods. In "Bacon: A Savor the South Cookbook," Fred Thompson tells many wonderful ways bacon can bring happiness to your table. Although he appreciates ordinary store-bought bacon, he asserts that paying more money for very good bacon is an excellent culinary investment. He encourages us to make our own bacon, starting with pork belly from a local butcher. His short book of memories and recipes gives good ideas about how to end the summer with delicious feasts.

In "Home to Cedar Branch," Brenda Bevan Remmes takes readers back to the eastern North Carolina Quaker community where she set her first novel, "The Quaker Café." In the new book, a popular school employee is caught in a compromising situation with her doctor as three young boys watch through a skylight and come crashing into the scene. When her husband learns of the affair, he kills the doctor. She loses her job and retreats to the small town where she grew up and tries to make a new start. Remmes's thriller is enhanced by the interplay of evil criminals and Quaker culture.

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

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832



SMALL TOWN GIRL

I want to talk about me...

There have been many columns I have written about my house, my family or topics dear to my heart. But seldom do I write a column about me.

So this week I decided to share a little about myself.

First, my husband, children and pets take top priority in my life. I always strive to make sure they are taken care of and provided for.

To see my children do their best and succeed in life is my greatest goal.

I have several hobbies, some of which I have had since my childhood, and others I have gained as an adult-but my favorite is playing the piano.

I love to play that piano. I began taking lessons under Mary Mardre at the age of 8. This has been a hobby I have continued as an adult.

I can read sheet music, which makes it easy for me to sit down at any time and play. Sometimes I think I may sound a little rusty, but it's like riding a bike; you never forget.

I love to listen to music, watch movies and read books. It is hard to believe I love all three when I find it hard to make time for any of them, which makes it part of a multitasking venture.

Listening to music is probably

"Don't talk to me until I have had my coffee."

- LESLIE BEACHBOARD



what I do most frequently because I travel a lot. I love all genres of music, but most of my listening pleasure is 80's rock.

I am a huge Guns N' Roses fan. Currently my XM radio is tuned into "Guns N' Roses Radio" much of the time.

I love to travel, whether around the block or on a long-distance trip. I love to visit unique places, and try to blend with the locals.

Which leads to another fact I love eating at different restaurants. I like to find the popular local places and tend to avoid the chain restaurants that may be found in every city.

I have never been one to like to shop unless it is at my favorite local boutique, Kaley Jase, or ordering online and having it shipped to me.

A weekly trip to the grocery store is a chore, because I just hate having to shop.

I am an East Carolina University Pirate at heart, and anyone who rides by my house will find my

"purple and gold" flag flying high during football season.

I have a passion for American muscle cars, specifically 1969 Dodge Chargers and the 1967 Ford Mustang GT 500. The louder the rumble coming from the engine, the more I like it.

I love putting a monogram on everything, especially my shoes. I always joke that I do that so my girls, Rebecca and Cheyenne Grace, can't borrow them one day.

I am a "night owl." I get most of my tasks done at night, but the problem is I hate to get up in the mornings.

More importantly, I cannot, repeat cannot, live without coffee.

I can drink coffee, morning, noon and night.

When I interviewed for this job I was asked, what was the one downfall I had.

My reply was, "Don't talk to me until I have had coffee."

I guess that is why we soon started using the coffee maker in the office.

Leslie Beachboard is a Staff Writer for the Bertie Ledger Advance who likes fast cars, 80's rock and cannot function without coffee. She can be reached via email at lbeachboard@ncweeklies.com.

AROUND HERE

Entering the Twilight Zone...

Anyone who knows me well knows of my love for the television show The Twilight Zone. Every year when the Syfy channel holds a TZ marathon, I stay home and watch as much of it as I can - the episodes never get old.

The main reason I love this show is that Rod Serling offers his own social commentary through reality-based fantasy scenarios. The morals of these stories can have endless interpretations, depending on the viewer.

The show spawned a movie in 1983, aptly titled Twilight Zone: The Movie. There are four episodes.

One of the episodes is titled "Time Out," in which there is an angry man, William Connor (played by Vic Morrow) who has a major chip on his shoulder.

This lonely man is tired of waiting for breaks that are awarded to others but never to him, a man who displays his hatred at a bar with his friends by uttering slurs toward Jews, Blacks and Asians.

A black man asks him to stop, and Connor leaves the bar angrily. When he walks outside, he finds himself as a Jew in occupied France during World War II. A pair

"He sees his friends standing outside looking for him..."

- JIM GREEN



of Nazi officers interrogate him, but Connor can't answer satisfactorily because he doesn't speak German. A chase ensues where he falls off the ledge of a building after being shot by the officers.

Connor falls and lands in the rural South during the 1950s, where a group of Ku Klux Klansmen see him as an African-American man they are about to lynch. He tries to tell them he's white, but to no avail.

Connor escapes by jumping into a lake, and then surfaces as a Vietnamese man in a jungle during the Vietnam War, being fired at by American soldiers - one of whom throws a grenade.

Instead of killing him, the grenade launches Connor back into occupied France again, where he is captured by the Nazi officers and put into an enclosed railroad freight car along with Jewish pris-

oners.

He sees his friends standing outside looking for him and he screams for help, but they cannot see him or the train as it pulls away.

Originally the segment was to end with Connor's redeeming himself by rescuing two Vietnamese children during a helicopter raid on their village. The scene was dropped due to the death of Morrow and two child actors during filming.

I often watch this episode in the movie and others in the original 1959-64 series and liken them to the behavior that I sometimes witness in people today.

While the Twilight Zone wasn't real, a lot of the 92 stories Rod Serling wrote in the series (great storytelling combined with psychological horror and suspense) offered their own commentaries about everyday life and how we, as imperfect beings, choose to deal with our fellow man, technology and the world around us.

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