

Opinion

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Christmas came early for one in Aulander...

To the Editor:

To the sitting council members of Aulander, I applaud the newly elected to represent the voice of all those who reside in Aulander. With that privilege comes the awesome task of maintaining ethical viability. On the very night of the swearing in of the newly elected commissioners, without hesitation, a gift was presented to one person. The motion was made to re-instate a former employee. This initial elective action has caused me to wonder if Aulander has reverted to a state of cronyism and favoritism.

The ends do justify the means. To be endorsed by the same person whom you seek to re-employ reeks of cronyism. Were you aware that this person utilized an individual with known illegal associations to assist in his efforts towards your winning elections.

Yes, it was legal for these persons to participate as they did, yet what will the cost be to Aulander? Does one now owe the other? Because of this past elections results, there is now an air of impropriety and favoritism that looms over a governmental body that is supposed to be unbiased and fair.

Pertaining to your decision to rehire this individual who assisted in your winning... were there deliberations on the reasons why that individual was no longer employed by the town. Did you interview that person's supervisor to gain further understanding and information for full disclosure? I dare say no! Based on a limited amount of information gained from personal knowledge, you are rehiring him based on the outer appearance of him being a good person and the fact that he had been employed as a police officer of Aulander and its police chief at one time. Sometimes good people do some not so good things that don't show up on the radar of personal friendship. I guess you folks do adhere to the idea of cronyism. Governing bodies must be able to make difficult decisions based on merit and not recklessly empower the select from yesteryear because they are "nice."

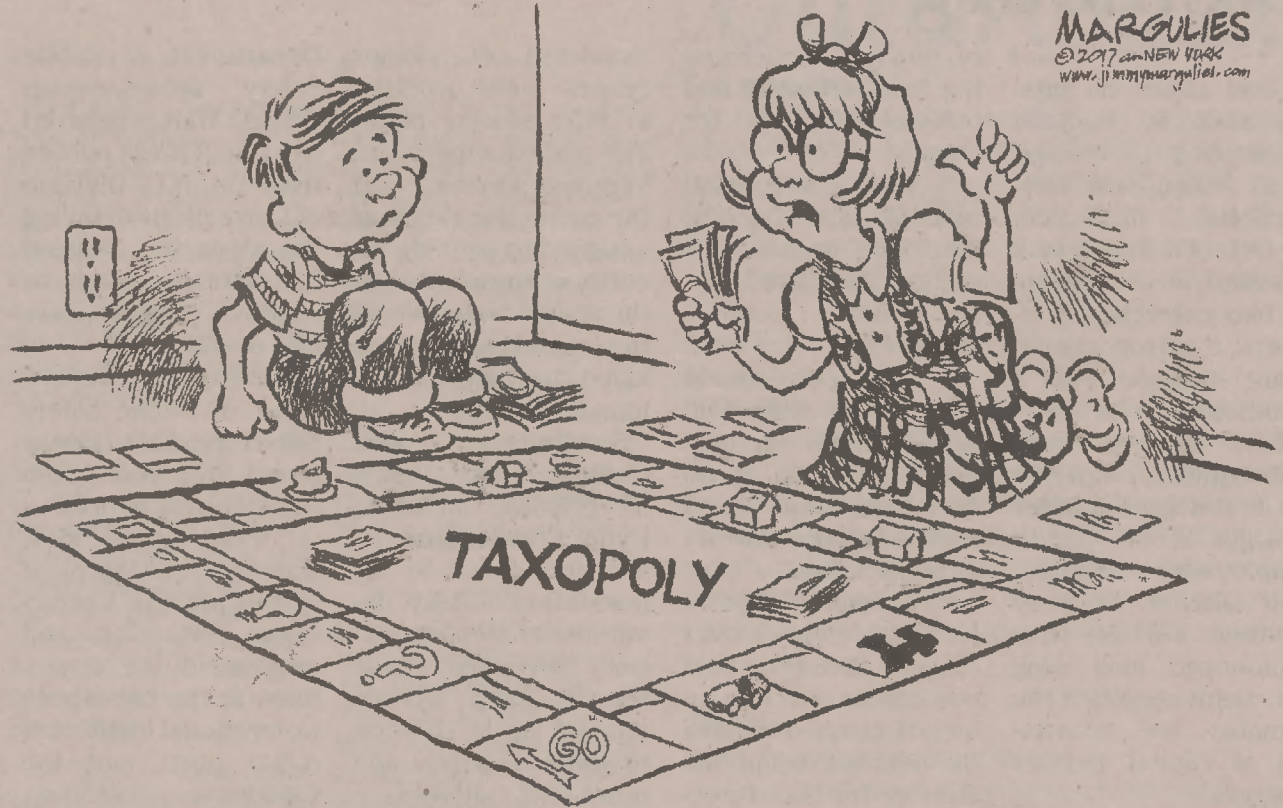
After having sat on the town council for the past five years, I imagine that Aulander had been governed to his likes because I don't remember seeing his small throng of supporters at any of the town monthly meetings for any other concerns. Sadly, a friend of yours was no longer employed by the town and that enraged you enough to seek public office and then hire him back. Well done and shame on you! You used your rights as an American citizen, but you used them for the wrong reasoning. However, you have not done the citizens of Aulander justice by having reverted to the "Good Old Boy" system of governing.

It's been said that power can corrupt, and absolute power can corrupt absolutely! With due respect to your elected positions,

Phillip L. Thomas  
Aulander

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Bertie Ledger-Advance encourages Letters to the Editor. Letters should be on topics of public interest to Bertie County, and writers must have a connection to our circulation area. Letters should have the writer's name and hometown as well as including a telephone number for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 500 words. For a full list of criteria, please contact Editor Thadd White at [twhite@ncweeklies.com](mailto:twhite@ncweeklies.com).



"New rules. Smaller deduction for your house on Baltic. Bigger breaks for my Trump Hotels on Boardwalk and Park Place."

## Grateful for good Samaritans...

We all tend to take certain things for granted. That is, until we don't have them, or have to do without them for a while.



JIM GREEN  
Around Here

Last week I was reminded why we should never take anything for granted, and how we should always thank those who offer their time or assistance whether it's solicited or not.

On Christmas night, I was returning home from Smithfield after spending the day with my brother, Scott, and his 13-year-old daughter, Sarah.

Somewhere around Tarboro, my tire pressure light came on.

The last time this happened, I was on my way to work, and I stopped into a local car dealership to have the problem looked at. It turned out to be, as the light suggested, low tire pressure - mainly caused by the cold weather.

So when the same light came on during my trip last week, I figured

I could make it home (19 miles), get up the next day and take it to be fixed.

There was one big problem with that idea - it turned out I had driven so many miles on that low-pressure tire that it caused a flat.

I made it three blocks out of my driveway before I had to stop. Being that it was the day after a holiday, some businesses weren't open.

And while this may sound humorous to some, I had not changed a flat tire in more than 35 years. I learned how to do so when I first started driving, but until last week, I hadn't needed to change one again.

I mean, it's not like I sit around and practice changing tires in my spare time. And my vehicle, a newer model, didn't come with a spare tire anyway.

I was able to contact my car insurance company, and they arranged for a tow to a local tire dealer.

While I waited for the tow truck to arrive, several people stopped and asked if I was all right. One

man helped fill the affected tire with air so I could get it on the tow truck.

It turned out that the tire was too damaged to be repaired, so I had to purchase a new one.

Not exactly how I wanted to spend my Christmas money, but entirely necessary.

I didn't get everyone's name that stopped to try and help me, but I hope they read this and understand how grateful I am for their generosity and kindness.

These Good Samaritans remind me of the saying, "Always be kind, for you do not know the journey this person is on."

I wholeheartedly and most humbly thank everyone who helped me the day after Christmas. You have no idea how much your kindness means to this stranger.

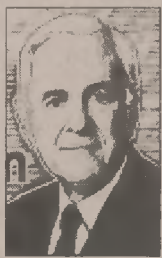
It truly has been a season of giving.

Jim Green appreciates Good Samaritans and is the Sports Editor for the Bertie Ledger-Advance and the Martin County Enterprise & Weekly Herald. He can be reached at [jgreen@ncweeklies.com](mailto:jgreen@ncweeklies.com).

## The year of the dog...

2018 is the Year of the Dog.

That is, if you're Asian and follow the Chinese zodiac. It rotates between the Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. And as I mentioned, 2018 is a Dog year.



BOB FRANKEN  
The Bob Franken Column

That's a good thing, particularly when us Westerners remember Harry Truman's bromide: "If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog."

But I was surprised to find out Donald Trump's birthdate also had the Dog as its sign, considering my affection for puppies. Obviously, he was so mistreated that he turned dangerously ferocious. His Christmas Day astrology fortune, by the way, was, "The Year of the Earth Dog 2018 is a good time for lifestyle changes (time to quit smoking or change residence) and for the start of new business ventures."

He doesn't smoke, but while the Chinese are probably happy with his ineptitude in the face of their intimidation, millions of Americans might embrace the "change

residence."

For those who haven't given up on impeachment, perhaps they'll be fascinated to know that Robert Mueller's Asian birth sign is the Monkey. His 2017 Christmas Day horoscope is: "Stay on track today. Refuse to quit or be distracted. You know what's important no matter what others think or say. It's important to not let the words or actions of negative people discourage you."

That will be music to the ears of Trump's enemies, although it's probably advice that's wasted on Mueller, who is already known to be methodically relentless in every pursuit he's undertaken. His latest pursuit, of course, is that of Donald Trump, or certainly those around the president.

He's not only investigating the possibility of campaign collusion with Vladimir Putin's Russian government chicanery in contributing to Trump's victory, but any crime that arises as he's fact-finding.

Already he's drawn enough blood that Republicans are trying to discredit him. They're using every trick they can muster to leave an impression that Mueller's people are too politically biased to be fair.

What Bob Mueller has demonstrated is a persistent prosecutor's bias, which is to say that everyone is suspect until they show otherwise.

But Trump's supporters are really trying to manufacture a public case against him. It's obviously an attempt to clear the way for him to fire Mueller if the flames get too close to Trump or family members. The president says repeatedly that he has no such plans, but Donald Trump is not known for being a man of his word.

The whole firing scenario is so transparent to many of POTUS' adversaries that they've awoken from their stupor. They are advance-planning street protests.

Actually, 2018 is not just the Dog, but it's the year that every governing process will be dogged by the elections. It's the midterm that will preoccupy Washington, D.C., with tentacles stretching to many states and also every congressional district in the land. Thousands of politicians will be forever calculating all things Trump. Like it or not, he's the big dog in this year's campaign.

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