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**A FORWARD STEP**

In Tuesday's bond election, this community is being asked to take its greatest forward step in 25 years. The engineers' report, presented in full elsewhere in this week's Pilot, shows that we are in danger of being throttled by an inadequate water system. Good water, and enough of it assured for years to come, is an essential for the growth and prosperity of a town.

"Can we afford it?" is bound to be asked. "Can we afford NOT to do it?" is also a pertinent question. Those who ask these questions sincerely, looking at the facts for answer, will know that the bond election must be approved.

The last comparable step in the history of the town was the \$600,000 bond issue passed for the building of the present water plant in 1924, and for giving Southern Pines paved streets and a sewage system. The size of the project frightened the town board itself so severely that, in the words of one member, "We wondered if we hadn't better just leave town." They didn't leave. They stayed, and buttonholed one protesting voter after another, convincing enough of them to pass the bond issue and put Southern Pines on the path of municipal progress. The debt has been well carried and there was never any reason to regret the move.

The water plant built at that time, with a life expectancy of 25 years, has served well but its time is up. Consumption, now close to capacity, is straining the outworn pumps. New processes of purification demand new filter equipment and more space to house it. Growth of the town, actual and anticipated, necessitates more mains. The town board has voted to proceed with the project before the situation is actually crucial—though a dry season or large fire could make it so at any time.

True to its New England tradition, Southern Pines has elected a frugal town board, which studies long before it makes a decision, especially in financial matters. Their deliberateness has its uses. It gives us confidence that we are not in the hands of plungers, but of cautious men who look long before they leap. Their present unanimous decision in favor of the \$275,000 water plant and water system improvement project was made after 18 months' study. It should have the support of every Southern Pines voter.

**"PAY YOUR BILLS" WEEK**

Has some unforeseen emergency kept you from paying your bills? Or—

Are you a deadbeat?  
Are you living consistently beyond your means?  
Are you just plain careless?

If you're behind in your bills, chances are your merchant has you pretty well tagged. He'd like to speak to you plainly, as a friend and neighbor. For in a community this size, that is what we all are.

He'd like to say, "I owe a lot of dough, too, that I'd like to pay—and I need ready cash if I'm to stay in business. If things have been rugged with you let me know—I can understand that. If you've gotten behind through no wish of your own, let's talk it over. Maybe we can work something out."

"But if you CAN pay, and don't—that's hard to figure. And I'm pretty tired of financing things for you that I can't afford myself."

The Chamber of Commerce and Merchants association, launching Southern Pines' first official "Pay Your Bills" week, is trying a direct frontal attack on an old problem, without much hope of spectacular success. But the success does not have to be spectacular, to make the effort well worth while.

To get their oldest bills cleaned up, something paid along on the others, perhaps a plan of payment outlined to take of bills which have mounted too high too

fast, would have an immediately perceptible effect on our business life and our businessmen's morale. In many cases they have been betrayed by their own neighborly spirit—but they do need cash.

How about it, folks?

**MISQUOTATION**

A reported ruling by Attorney General McMullan, that teaching contracts can be broken by school boards at any time, without cause, was corrected in a later release last week but not before it had evoked considerable editorial comment, in The Pilot as well as other papers.

In his later statement, the Attorney General said no cause need be assigned for failure to RENEWE a contract, but it cannot be broken without cause while in effect. In the case of such summary treatment a teacher may demand a hearing, and the school board will have to present specific grounds for its act.

Harm may have been done by the misquotation before the correction came. In Moore county, in that interval a teacher offered his resignation while believing he had a valid contract, in which belief the Attorney General had upheld him against the view of his district committee and the county board of education. Believing he could have been dismissed at any time anyway, he gave in.

His appeal to the controller of the state board of education to support the validity of his contract had met with the reply that "there are so many of these cases" that the state board could not take them up.

The competence or incompetence of this particular teacher, and the rights or wrongs of his case, are irrelevant in view of the discovery that school boards are bypassing the laws every day in dealing with their teachers, and that the rulings of the Attorney General do not necessarily mean anything at all.

While harm may have been done by the misquotation, it may do good also, if it shocks the NCEA into looking into the matter of safeguards for teachers' jobs, and putting some teeth into the laws meant to protect them.

**BUS STATION**

We don't know what number editorial this is in the series we've written on our lack of a bus station. We do know, though, that we are going to keep on as long as incidents happen which point up this sad reflection on our town.

The lady—a distinguished one, too—who came here from Washington last week, and tried fruitlessly, and to the point of exhaustion, to get a bus out of here to Candor, is not a friend of our town any more. Whenever she thinks of Southern Pines she will think of her exasperating day here—a precious day, wasted out of her long-anticipated vacation. She couldn't get a bus because she could get no information about buses—or at least what she got was wrong. No one was responsible.

These things are happening every day. They are practically routine. Contrary to the expressed opinion of some who ride only on trains and in cars, thousands and thousands of people ride buses. Where buses go, people go. That's true all over the land.

Is Southern Pines the only town without a bus station? It would seem so. Maybe we are asking too much. There is not enough revenue for a bus station here, we are told. At hundreds of other towns this size and smaller, there is at least a place where tickets are sold and schedules kept. At Carthage, and in many other places, this is in a drug store. Where such an arrangement is made, all those regulations about two waiting rooms, four rest rooms, etc., which have stymied Southern Pines simply do not matter.

Let's scale down our dream of a modern bus station, complete with all conveniences, and ask only for a bit of counter space in drug store or restaurant, with someone willing to put a little time on the job. Surely such revenue as there is would repay them for this part-time service.

The town or Chamber of Commerce should make it their business to get someone responsible to take over the job.

**BROAD STREET PARKING**

Citizens of the town turned out last week, to deal summarily in public meeting with the question of parking meters (a thrumpling "no") and also to present in unmistakable terms their own solution of the local parking problem.

If the town's businessmen and their employees would keep their own cars off the streets, where sometimes they sit all day while their owners are at work, there would be no parking problem, was the general verdict.

This came even from several who admitted, "I'm one of the

**Grains of Sand**

"Pay Your Bills" week, as announced in The Pilot last week, stirred some immediate interest around town. Several days later Harry Fullenwider, Merchants Association acting manager, reported, "I've been getting both brickbats and bouquets!" He had three phone calls of commendation at most at once, and one gentleman stated, "I'm paying my bills pronto. I didn't know anybody was hurting!"

That's it—hardly anybody knew how badly merchants were hurting, until the Association got to building the credit file and found what a load of debts they were staggering under. It's worse now at the end of a long dull summer.

Sad part is, each merchant numbers among his slowest payers some of his best friends—and he hates to push them. He knows, too, that their intentions are of the best.

But you can't spend good intentions—nor barter them to deplete shrunken inventories.

Count on our Bessie to get there right in the thick of things. When Bessie Cameron Smith forsook The Pilot's society desk for a week's vacation, and left Thursday night for her first trip to Florida, we were a little miffed at the newspaper headlines the next day: "Hurricane Heading for Florida." What a way, we thought, to refer to Bessie!

Then it turned out that it was a real hurricane, approaching Florida from one end while our Bessie approached it from the other. They were due to hit about the same time, and we began to get worried. Not that we didn't think Bessie could take care of herself; the hurricane might well turn out to be the loser in the encounter.

What happened we hadn't yet heard early this week. A look at the map reassured us; Zephyrhills, where Bessie went, seemed to be somewhat out of the line of fire. But we hope, for Bessie's sake, it wasn't too far off and she managed to see some of the excitement. As a true newswoman we think she'd hate to miss it.

But we do hope the hurricane didn't do anything to her lovely new storebought suit.

FLASH! As we go to press—a postcard from Zephyrhills. "Bessie's" hurricane has been blowing pretty hard here—kept me awake most of the night, but is much calmer now. Oranges and grapefruit (green ones) are dotted all around on this and neighboring yards. Not bad enough here to frighten us, though, and I'm having a good time. Bessie."

So our Society Editor and her store-bought suit got through all right.

Jim Cole, who is from Duluth, assures us that the bear invasion up there is not only real, but time-honored—that the bears come roaming into town in the chummiest fashion every once in a while, especially in seasons when they find their natural foods sparse in the woods.

His mother sent him a handful of clippings concerning the latest visitation, which is still going on. On the streets or in the yards, or peeping in the window, most any time, it seems, you can see a big black bear. Or a little one. There

guilty ones myself." Long custom and lax enforcement of limitations have built up bad parking habits among the home folks. It's human nature to take advantage of them.

There's no doubt that many a merchant's car has blocked his own stretch of sidewalk, not to mention his neighbor's to potential trade. What the reaction among hundreds of visitors must have been to a solid phalanx of cars at the curb, we shudder to think.

While the meeting held Tuesday night of last week was not the biggest ever seen here, it comprised an interested body of solid citizens, most of them with much at stake in the town's business life. They had something to say and they said it well. In giving them the chance to do so, the Chamber of Commerce did an excellent service. The town board, alert to popular feeling, will surely heed their judgment. Limited parking can now be enforced with full knowledge that this is the solution the people approve.

Effects of the meeting were seen almost at once in cleared parking spaces on Broad. If action now follows before that old human nature starts working again, the will of the people will truly have been served.

And woe betide the local citizen who squawks at having to pay an overparking fine. He will pay it by judgment of his fellow townsmen, for a better and more hospitable community.

are a lot of bear cubs visiting town, and already the cry has risen, "Don't shoot the cubs!"

For some Duluth citizens have taken to shooting them, though this is against the law. Most citizens spotting bears, though, just call the police, and the blotter must look odd: "7:43 a. m., two bears behind LeBorious Greenhouse; 10:45 a. m., bear walking around house at 2107 Vermillion road; 11 a. m., bear at James Oreck residence, 2033 Princeton." The police shoot the bears or capture them, turning them over to the zoo, which has sent out word it will accept any and all bears.

It's an Ill Wind department: Most folks here were considerably annoyed at church time Sunday at the sullen skies and sharp showers the hurricane whipped in our direction. But they made one person happy—little Miss Gael Harvie, whose fifth birthday it was, and who had received a brand-new umbrella for a birthday present. Up went the gay-colored umbrella to see her safely across the street to church, with dad Bud Harvie, and up it went again afterward, to keep her dry on the way home. Umbrella and Gael made a mighty cute picture together. As for Dad—we're afraid he got wet.

We enjoy things like this—from The Chapel Hill Weekly: "Bruce Strowd was 58 on Thursday of last week, August 18.

He knew wives had a way of giving their husbands surprise birthday parties, and early in the week he said to Mrs. Strowd: 'I'm feeling sort o' low. Don't you be having any birthday party for me. I'm not quite up to it.'

She obeyed, but a gang of Mr. Strowd's younger friends did what she agreed not to do. They came out to the farm with picnic baskets and spread a feast on the porch and in the yard. One of the visitors was Norman Cordon, and he sang Mr. Strowd's favorite song 'Ol Man River.'

"The handsome white-haired man, standing in a circle of friends, was deeply touched. Tears came in his eyes. When the song was finished he said: 'I never thought I'd ever have the honor of hearing a Metropolitan Opera star sing a song specially for me in my own home.'

With the election of Harry Howie, Jr., as a town commissioner (succeeding James Smith, resigned) our neighbor town of Pinebluff became one of the few with an all-GI town board.

Veterans are rightly in the thick of their community affairs everywhere, and probably most town boards and councils have one or two. . . We haven't heard of a single other place, though, with a 100 percent veteran governing body.

Harry is not only a former Air Corps lieutenant but an alumnus of a German prison camp, where he spent a good many months after being shot down behind German lines.

Probably developed plenty of stamina, and he'll need it, too, entering public life in Pinebluff. . . Looks quiet there, but oh, boy! EVERYTHING happens in the unique municipality of Pinebluff.

The night-blooming cereus plants at Chandlers Greenhouses and the Walter Yow home stirred much interest when they underwent their brief, climactic blooming one recent night. . . We've been asked what we knew about the plant, and it wasn't much.

Here's some information gathered by Sadie Root Robards, of Sanford: The night-blooming cereus is a member of the cactus family, constructed by nature to survive with little moisture. Its leaves have disappeared, to prevent evaporation, and the enlarged stems gather and hoard the precious water. They are compressed and notched to resemble leaves. From these grow the buds, covered with a lacy brown network, delicate-looking, glowing light, showing silvery-white as their blooming time nears.

The blossoming comes swiftly. The rare flowers last all night but in the morning at the touch of a finger they hang their heads and die.

On the desert they grow very tall, and thirsty travellers look to them for water. The juice bottled in their stems and flowers was used by primitive peoples for medicine and also a lousy, intoxicating drink. From the cereus is extracted a fluid used as a cardiac stimulant, resembling digitalis in its action.

The flower is known also as Star of Bethlehem and has a religious significance. The bloom holds a star in its heart, and deep within is a formation of perfect white in which some see the Christ Child's manger.

**Foresters Of District Hold Successful Training Meeting Here; Awards Made**

The North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, Division of Forestry, held a very successful training meeting here August 23 and 24 for all personnel of the N. C. Division of Forestry working in Anson, Chatham, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond and Scotland counties.

Presiding over this two-day training session was District Forester J. A. Pippin of the District 3 office of the N. C. Division of Forestry at Rockingham. He was assisted by Assistant District Forester Richard Robertson, Farm Forester Walter Marshburn and District Forester Ranger N. T. Faulkner, all attached to the Rockingham office.

Forestry law enforcement was stressed and studied at the first day's session. Acting as instructors on this portion of the program were Charles W. Brown, special agent in charge of the Charlotte office, FBI; Lewis Williams, special agent of the North Carolina Bureau of Investigation office, High Point; Major James R. Smith, executive officer of the N. C. State Highway Patrol, Raleigh; District Supervisor Tom Rollins of the N. C. Wildlife Resources Commission, Sanford Agents Marvin Dunn and Ray Acker of the Alcoholic Tax Unit office of the U. S. Treasury department, Rockingham; Chief of Police Louis Allen of Rockingham and Chief of Police Newton of Southern Pines; Judge J. Thomas Page of Rockingham, judge of Richmond County Special court; Manley Carstarphen, chief law enforcement officer, and N. T. Faulkner, district ranger, both of the N. C. Division of Forestry, Rockingham.

**Awards Are Made**

Law enforcement awards were made to the county forest wardens who made the best law enforcement record in their respective counties during the first six months of 1949. These were A. B. Clark, Chatham county, who was presented a silver loving cup for having the highest record; A. R. McMillan, Scotland county, who was presented a silver plaque for second highest, and Robert Freeman, Richmond county, who was presented a bronze plaque for third. These awards were made by District Forester Pippin.

Tuesday evening, a fish fry was held at Aberdeen lake. Speakers at the fish fry were Clyde Causey, chairman of the Richmond County Democratic committee; T. L. Blue, Moore County commissioner; Mayor C. N. Page of Southern Pines and Mayor Forrest Lockey of Aberdeen.

At the training session held Wednesday, forest fire control work, forest fire prevention work, forestry education, and forest management were stressed. Appearing on this portion of the program were Horace Campbell from Columbia office of the South Carolina Commission of Forestry; T. Clyde Auman, president of the Moore County Farm Bureau; O. L. Moore, publisher of the Laurinburg Exchange; Hawley W. Poole, president of the N. C. Association of Soil Conservation District Supervisors; Jack Younts, secretary-treasurer of the N. C. Broadcasters' association; William Edmunds, executive director of the N. C. Forestry association, Wanauch; District Foresters Robert Scheer of the Lexington office, Joe Herlevich of the Whiteville office; Seba Wooten of the Rocky Mount office; District Ranger Tim McMillan of the Fayetteville office; P. W. Tillman, assistant state forester in charge of forest fire control, Raleigh; Management Foresters Phil Griffiths and James Maynard of the Raleigh office, and Don Traylor, forester of the Weymouth Estate, Southern Pines.

**Work Is Commended**

All of the guest instructors and speakers highly praised the splendid work on forest fire prevention, forest fire suppression, and forest management that is being conducted by personnel of the N. C. Division of Forestry in all the counties represented at this particular training meeting and in the entire State of North Carolina. The session on law enforcement brought together for the first time all law enforcement agencies in the entire state, and a round-table discussion was held on all phases and types of law enforcement conducted by these agencies. Two motion pictures were shown to the group on forest fire prevention methods, and also on forest management work.

Business sessions of the two-day

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training meeting in Southern Pines were held at the Southern Pines Civic Center, with demonstration work being held at the Southern Pines Horse Show grounds.

Attending from Moore county were Forest Warden E. W. Davis and all N. C. Forest Service personnel working in Moore.

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