# THE PILOT

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"In taking over The Pilot no changes are contemplated. We will try to keep this a good paper. We will try to make a little money for all concerned. Where there seems to be an occasion to use our influence for the public good we will try to do it. And we will treat everybody alike."
—James Boyd, May 23, 1941.

## For A Community Center

There would seem to be little doubt that, if a plan now under consideration by members of the Civic Club and the town board could be carried through, a lasting benefit to the town would result. This is for the town to acquire the club building facing the park on Ashe street and turn it into a community house. It seems clear that, besides filling a definite need, such a plan would be far closer to the original purpose of those who built the club.

For some time, now, the building has, while filling one definite need, failed in most other respects. The original purpose of the women who founded the Civic Club was to further the welfare and progress of the town. The club backed good causes, things that, in particular, the women were interested in: what might perhaps be called the house-keeping and exterior decorating departments of Southern Pines. They fussed about keeping the streets clean, garbage collection, smoke from the old town dump: they encouraged clean-up of unsightly lots, planting of front yards and parkways, general beautification; they were interested in the school and in cultural activities. They exercised a marked influence in keeping standards high.

Gradually much of this activity and interest has subsided as the efforts of the club have been channelled more and more into one groove. The entertaining of visitors, especially, perhaps, among the elderly, has become, during these past years, almost the club's sole activity. This is important: there are many older people with little to do who might be lonely and unhappy here were it not for the social afternoons conducted at the Civic Club.

It is generally agreed that this function of the club is of great value and must not be abandoned. On the other hand, the needs of younger groups in town are quite as important. The teen-agers, the young married set, army wives, and other groups badly need a place to meet. The Civic Club building appears to be the ideal spot, while it is especially suitable for the small informal dances so dear to the hearts of the younger set.

All these groups deserve consideration in any town plan. The thought that the Civic Club building might fill a multiple purpose for all is a tempting one but there are complications which require working out before any step of this nature should be taken. In their good and well-reasoned letter to this newspaper, published last week, the Teen-agers show a certain lack of awareness of some of the problems involved. For instance, in speaking of their desire for a place of their own, there appears to be a mistaken assumption that the Civic Club was, or might be, a place of their exclusive possession. Perhaps this attitude had something to do with the original trouble, stemming from the fact that a few, and we believe only a very few, young people treated the building too much as their own, to do with as they wished.

A community building, such as the town board and the Civic Club have in mind, would belong to everyone, not to any exclusive group; the Civic Club itself would of course, be given [illegible] consideration so that its activities should [illegible]ffer. But all this means that a well-bal[illegible]gram, with time apportioned among [illegible] the building, would have to be [illegible] a definite amount of supervi[illegible]. If the community house idea [illegible]ugh it must be handled [illegible]l perseverance; it will [illegible]d to get out of hand. [illegible]urricular town gov[illegible] be termed a lux[illegible]ity. Yet how [illegible]fe worth[illegible]tegory? [illegible] lux[illegible]ges [illegible]un [illegible]

## "God Bless Dr. Grum"

[illegible] Dr. Grum," we learn, was the [illegible] millions in India and Pakistan [illegible]olina's Frank Graham visited [illegible] first two efforts at settling [illegible]

[illegible]ndia again, going soon to [illegible]ediation effort for the [illegible] further failure is in [illegible]ayer—"God bless Dr. [illegible]orking sincerely for [illegible]orts may bring some [illegible]ed world.

of Charlotte telling us he is thinking of entering the gubernatorial campaign.

Mr. Clark is now receiving the acclaim of some North Carolinians after his fray with certain students at the University of North Carolina, and he could, we feel regretfully sure, expect much support in a campaign based on racial issues.

He states that the advantage of his getting into the race would be to "give our people the opportunity to express themselves" on the issue of segregation. This sort of campaign would not only do North Carolina no good, but would be a thoroughly degrading affair. It would revivify old animosities and create new ones. And it would not settle, nor help to settle, the pressing race problems which concern us all; it would make them worse.

It would be foolish to dismiss Mr. Clark as an eccentric. There is no doubt that he expresses the views of many North Carolinians. There is probably today more sympathy for his viewpoint, right or wrong, than in many years past. Recent actions of the NAACP, such as charging that Negro law students of the University of North Carolina were being discriminated against in grading, have deepened prejudices and alienated many who have been willing to lend the Negro a hand in his quest for opportunity.

Mr. Clark might have no hope of winning, but in making the race he would inevitably bring to the surface passions and animosities which would mean trouble for the state and for all of her people, white and colored.

## Driver Training—An Essential

While sympathizing with the thrifty attitude of the county commissioners, and their feeling that the schools are already taking as large a part of the county tax dollar as is consistent with a balanced program, we greatly regret that they do not look with more favor on the Kiwanis-proposed driver training course in the public schools.

We hope that they will keep the matter well in mind and do their best to fit it into the budget, and in any case not shelve it entirely but regard it as a measure to be taken just as rapidly as it can be afforded.

We think that on the whole such training is very slow in becoming a part of the public school system everywhere, and our feeling is not entirely based on the accident statistics.

It is absolutely true that the death, damage and disaster on our highways need a stern check and could probably be best checked at the source—the beginning driver, who soon becomes the adult driver, and should have correct training from the time he first takes the wheel.

There is another angle, too, which we feel has not been sufficiently emphasized, and that is that driving a car has become practically an essential of daily living and a requisite of most jobs. Training for any type of living today should certainly include driving—a vital education factor now passed on in haphazard fashion, often at inexpert hands.

Many things have been blamed for the high accident rate—mechanical failures, speed, drinking, etc. All of these boil down to ignorance, carelessness and incompetence. Proof, if any is needed, lies in the fine records of trained truckdrivers, who probably travel more miles per person than any other one group, under all sorts of traffic conditions and at a generally high rate of speed. Yet the accident rate for this group is far below that of the ordinary driver.

It may be that Moore county is destined not to take the lead among North Carolina counties in installation of driver training courses in the schools. But a start has been made, and some day the schools must follow, as they have in the past quarter century in so many things which have meant better living, greater safety, added skills and improved job opportunities for youth.

## Senator Byrd and the Budget

Senator Byrd has now gone through his annual act of pruning down the federal budget, and this time has announced to the press he has found ways to reduce it by some eight billion dollars.

This has happened a good many times now, and outside of getting a few headlines for Senator Byrd, we have not seen any tangible results.

The Senator is a member of Congress, which has the final power of determination as to the federal budget, and we don't see why, if he has something to sell, he doesn't sell it right there in the Senate. He is not the only one in Congress loudly protesting heavy federal spending, and laying the blame at President Truman's door. Yet no one knows better than these same Senators that the President actually has very little to do with it. It is up to Congress, and Congress alone.

Talking about economy gets nobody anywhere unless the talkers become doers, and ideas become translated into action. The people are disturbed, and rightly so, by the mounting budget figures. They would, we think, be grateful for some action to get them down.

Instead, they get a lot of talk aimed at getting [illegible]es and headlines, while the ones doing the [illegible]ing continue to pile up those expenditures [illegible]revile.

The Red Cross must cover the world these days—do your part—answer the call.

## Grains of Sand

Members of a local AA group met at the home of a member one night last week in anticipation of hearing a fine guest speaker, a visitor in the vicinity they had heard of but whom none of them knew.

As they sat waiting for him the doorbell rang and there stood a pleasant-faced man who was promptly ushered in by th host. He was taken around the circle and everybody was introduced. He didn't give his own name and nobody asked it—names aren't important in AA.

He was seated in the most comfortable chair in the room and everybody waited expectantly for him to speak. Finally he did speak. He said, "Er—ah—is this the Boy Scout meeting?"

It ended up with his being escorted across the street, where a Boy Scout meeting was being held, with his arms loaded down was AA literature—pretty good stuff whether you need it or not.

We may not have a Grauman's theatre here, where celebrities immortalize their handprints in wet cement, but we saw a little dog immortalize his paw prints by trotting briskly the other evening across new-laid cemnt in front of the A & P supermarket.

A temporary fence had been placed there, and flares lighted to keep the people off, but these didn't mean a thing to the little dog.

## The Public Speaking

### AGAIN—YOUTH SPEAKS

To the Pilot.

As a former Southern Pines teen-ager, I have read with interest the correspondence in "The Public Speaking" concerning the problem of the Civic Club; and I should like to congratulate the high school students who took it upon themselves to bring the "firm believer in Democracy" up to date.

Perhaps the greatest shortcoming of the teen-agers of my high school years was our lack of public spirit, which the present group so aptly displays. Had we taken the active part which they are now taking, there might not be the problem which now exists, and the Civic Club should probably have provided constructive entertainment for a great many people, young and old, before its floor became "unsafe for crowds." In any event, here follow some observations on the problems of the teen-age center, past and present

The event which gave the Civic Club its ultimate case against the young people was a breaking and entering of the building for purposes variously described as indecent, clandestine, and immoral. Granted—the activities of those people warranted the open mouths and over-the-bridge-table comments of the members. But I wonder how many know that the perpetrators of the "foul deed" were not members of the Teen-Age Club at all, but young adults, some of whom had previously graduated from high school, others who had never attended school in Southern Pines.

In any case, the reaction was set off. At the next meeting, the teen-agers were fully as indignant as any of the Civic Club members or older taxpayers of the town: and later, a committee of three young people appeared before the Chamber of Commerce and presented their point of view. Many of the same civic-minded citizens who are now working for a true community center were on their side and gave them a great deal of encouragement. However, even with the citizens' help, they were unable to move the Civic Club from the firm conviction that they should be evicted to the Broad Street benches.

Finally, the High School donated the use of the former Men's Club, which was renamed the "Foxhole." In true, so-called "socialistic spirit," a great many high school students "pitched in" and made a serviceable meeting place for young people in all club and social activities. In so doing, they showed that they were willing to work untiringly for their "protection and entertainment" and that they were not content to sit idly by and let the "entertaining" citizens dictate to them. Is such constructive action to be construed as an outgrowth of "a breaking up of family life and home influence"? Not only did they have the Foxhole for themselves, but they voted to allow any school-approved functions use it. They neither needed the Civic Club nor asked for it; and many hoped never to have to request it for a teen-age function again.

Now, the town is once more trying to make the Civic Club a community center. I, too, hope that "some way might be found." Some way by which our "firm believers in Democracy" may realize that we under 25 do not intend to be seen and not heard; some way by which they may realize what group really constituts the "irresponsible, selfish, discontented citizens" (and I thank the writer for his or her appropriate words); and some way by which they may gain an understanding and love of teen-agers and will end their attempts to smother the spirit of open-minded progress for which the community of Southern Pines is so well-known.

A COLLEGE STUDENT

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