

THE PILOT

Southern Pines North Carolina

"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.

The Coming Bond Election

This newspaper approaches the question of the coming bond issue election with some hesitation, not to say apprehension. The items are complicated, and at least one of them is open to misunderstanding and could lead to unhappiness.

Also the financial picture, while it does not raise the debt limit to risky heights, as has been, we believe, widely imagined, piles up a big debt for the town to carry when interest charges are considered. It is not something to be entered into lightly.

On the other hand: the town is proceeding in the orthodox methods of financing upon which most big business is run—and that Southern Pines is now big business few will deny. Also, we have an economy-minded administration that will not incur, we believe, unnecessary expenses for the taxpayers to carry. They believe in the need for this bond issue and that should carry much weight with the citizens.

To discuss this matter at one sitting is impossible: it is too complicated. We propose to take up only the first two items, this week, reserving the last two and the discussion of finances for the next issue.

The first item, additions and improvements to the water system, seems to be pretty clear

sailing. The survey, advising the changes embodied in the proposal was made by a highly competent firm with no ties in the area. It should be entirely objective. The \$150,000 proposed to take care of the water system is less than a third of what the survey advised. It is reassuring that this amount, according to plans, will be used to replace small pipe lines by larger ones, thus eliminating some of the low water pressure which is the subject of a good many complaints, and, especially, that it will greatly improve fire protection. On the whole it looks as if the water system funds would be well spent and are needed.

Giving additional incentive to voting for the water system item of the bond issue is the fact that borrowing money for water needs does not affect the statutory debt limit. We can improve the water system without feeling that we are adding to a debt that will affect the future legal borrowing capacity of the town.

As for the sewer, here technicalities stump the layman, who is thrown back on the judgment of local officials: the town manager and the town engineer, who will be supervising the work. However, there is little doubt that the proposals have been given close and conscientious study by the council and have their full approval as being truly necessary.

Danger In The Woods

The old proverb, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," certainly applies to forest fires.

A perfect demonstration of it may be seen in the fire that took place last Saturday in which some 22 acres of woodland area was burned. And the prevention we would have in mind is simply: no permits should be issued for hunting, camping, or fire-building unless conditions warrant it.

Conditions were far from ideal last Saturday and continue in the same state. The country is dry as tinder. This section has had no rain to speak of for weeks and only seventy-one hundredths of an inch since the first of December. Normally such conditions are not looked for until March when high winds are blowing and the spring green has not yet had a chance to moisten the foliage. This danger-time in the Sandhills has come a couple of months earlier, to lengthen by that much the perilous forest-fire period.

Under these conditions, it was unwise, to put it mildly, to have permitted six troops of boy scouts to go into the woods, for any purpose. To stage, at this time, maneuvers involving camp fires and exercises that scattered all these boys over a wide area making close adult supervision virtually impossible seems sheer folly.

The event was wildly exaggerated, due to mistaken radio reports, as we understand, but

that the affair was nevertheless extremely serious cannot be denied. The fire was kept to the 22 acres only through the expert work of the county fire forces, with help from the nearby towns whose departments stood ready to throw in their entire forces if needed. If the fire had jumped the road where the county crew was holding it, it could have run for miles.

This sort of thing is a thoroughly unhappy event. Those who planned the scout expedition had selected their boys carefully and had gone to endless pains to plan an intricate and interesting exercise. The warden, issuing the permit, was helping in what seemed a thoroughly worthy cause. If he was too lenient, it must be remembered that it is hard to refuse boy scouts, not to mention leading citizens working hard for the youth of the county.

It is good news that Fire Warden Travis Wicker is planning to visit all boy scout troops in the county to give talks on fire prevention and the strict rules that must be observed in any trip into the woods. With Saturday's demonstration of what can happen in mind, it is likely that his words will be taken to heart by both boys and leaders.

It is equally important, we feel, that the warden himself and all his force should understand that the public will back them to the limit in imposing whatever restrictions they deem wise in their important work of protecting Moore County forests.

In Search of Freedom

The story of the escape of the Hungarian families through the Iron Curtain-ed border over into free Austria gives proof, if any is needed, of what conditions still exist behind that barrier. Also of the spirit of the satellite people. Perhaps there is need to hear such a tale. For there has been a tendency, of late, to feel that things must have gradually improved in these Red-ruled countries, during the years and especially since the change of regime in Russia.

Three couples escaped. Two of them had children, three in one family, four in another. The men had been working on farms close to the border. They had made a practice of studying the terrain and the hazards of minefields and guards with dogs they would have to face should the time come when life in Hungary would become, finally, unendurable.

That time came. Things were so bad that these people preferred to take the terrible risk, and to subject their children to such danger, rather than stay where they were. Their escape, through the wire, the guards, and the mines, was called "miraculous" by the Austrian border patrol. "Never before has such a large group broken through the Iron Curtain without suf-

fering serious injury from exploding mines," the Austrian captain said, evoking a ghastly picture of previous attempts.

The recent package deal, as it was called, which admitted to United Nations membership, along with several Western nations, some of the Soviet-governed nations, seemed on the whole a good thing. In the overall picture, perhaps it was, but to the suffering people of those nations behind the Iron Curtain, and to those who have already escaped and their governments in exile, it came as a severe shock. For such membership in the UN gave official status to the Soviet-controlled governments of the satellites. Although President Eisenhower proclaimed the United States' continued insistence on their eventual freedom, the move seemed to confirm the status quo. Certainly the way to freedom seems longer to them now.

It is up to the western world to make it clear to these people that they are not forgotten. The fact that refugees are still crossing the borders in great numbers and that even families with little children are willing to take such risks is proof that in those lost lands freedom is still "a holy light." The free world must not forget.

Prescription For The New Year

Our prescription for anyone inclined to enter the New Year grumpily is the story about the Hurst twins that appeared last month in The Pilot.

When an eight-year-old girl who has lost both feet can smile and laugh and play and tell a reporter that her new artificial limbs are her best Christmas present, the rest of us must think twice about our troubles before we complain.

When a family takes a blow like this as the Hurst family has taken it in stride, the rest of us can quit complaining about most of our fam-

ily difficulties.

When churches and civic clubs and fraternal orders and other organizations and individuals pitch in and raise money to help with medical and hospital expenses that have been mounting for almost a year now and which haven't stopped yet—we can be proud to live in such a town.

Thinking about Marie, we made a wonderful, a marvelous discovery, and we suspect others have made it too: the ordeal of Marie Hurst and her family is giving back to the community in inspiration far more than the community has given them in financial help.



Drummer Boy

THE TRAVEL COUNCIL'S JOB:

Selling All North Carolina

In an organization meeting at Raleigh on Monday, over 200 persons interested in the tourist industry elected officers and directors of the N. C. Travel Council, including two directors from the Sandhills—Mayor Voit Gilmore of Southern Pines and Richard S. Tufts, head of Pinehurst, Inc. Before this week's meeting, The Greensboro Daily News commented on the function of the newly formed Travel Council as follows:

Writing on the problems of the recently established Travel Council, Lynn Nisbet, Raleigh correspondent of Tarheelia's afternoon newspaper, declared one of the biggest of these is maintenance of the all-state viewpoint.

As Correspondent Nisbet puts it:

"Already there is some indication the vacation and recreational resort centers might try to dominate the council. Along with that is evidence that the non-resort areas, which profit substantially from travel trade, might seek to make the resort centers pay the full bill for promoting travel, particularly from out of state.

"It seems appropriate here to point out that North Carolina as a unit has an overall stake in nearly all the development projects, even though major benefits accrue to a relatively small area."

It certainly is not merely appropriate but imperative to point out what Mr. Nisbet points out in that second paragraph.

Mutual Benefits

North Carolinians are generally credited with having good sense and sound judgment. It should take no more than that to make them realize that what helps one group or section of the state helps all; it is reflected in our overall income, living standards, purchasing power for private needs as well as public services, and a tax bill which can be reduced organically only through development and stimulation of enriched sources.

We doubt if there is any industry which scatters its benefits more widely than tourism. Filling stations, restaurants, motels and hotels along the way all get substantial cuts. And there is no means of knowing how many purchases tourists pick up, either as gifts to take home with them or for their own enjoyment or useage, wherever they go.

Many a new citizen, with subsequent contribution to the state's business, industrial or social life, settles in Tarheelia because of what he saw or liked, because of the way he was treated while visiting in our midst. It is in this field that residents themselves,

by courtesy, hospitality and the spirit they exude, can do most.

See Whole State

Actually North Carolina's most appealing tourist attractions are in the mountains and along the coast. Efforts of the Travel Council, Department of Conservation and Development and all other individuals or agencies engaged in promoting tourism, should be centered in a campaign to get visitors to visit both mountains and coast, and while so doing, to see North Carolina whole. Plenty of interesting places and attractions should be pointed out in between. Consider, for instance, the various state parks, Kings Mountain and Guilford battlefields, the restoration of Old Salem, golf and sports spots such as Sedgewick and Pinehurst, the Duke Chapel and the Morehead Planetarium, historic Edenton and New Bern with Tryon's Palace soon to be, the capitol, upcoming art museum and even the State Fair's cow palace, and a visit to cigarette factories and other industries for which the Old North State is nationally known.

Selling North Carolina whole is the Travel Council's first job, even if it has to begin its campaign among Tar Heels themselves.

The Public Speaking

A Word for Cats

To the Editor: As a lover of birds and cats I am by way of being Hurricane Hazel and Hurricane Janet blowing at cross purposes. Much as I mourn the death of a pretty songster, I must protest the belling of a cat. I tried it once.

The poor creature, whose neck, like those of all felines, was merely a bone and a hank of hair, in trying to rid himself of what any super-hunter would consider an unfair handicap, got his lower jaw caught under the collar to which the bell was fastened, and came back in great agony for help.

After all, the bird has the advantage of wing and space. Any human hunter would be given a medal for such expert stalking and killing.

If people would feed a pet cat as regularly and as amply as they do a pet dog, there would be small temptation for him to hunt those scrawny little winged creatures. After all, a red bird on toast, even with gravy and wild rice, doesn't make a very hearty dinner for a hungry man or woman, does it?

Sincerely,
KATHARINE NEWLIN BURT

FROM THE SANFORD HERALD

Friend Of Farm Wives

From the lively atmosphere of

ing and canning instructions. She had many, many friends.

Some of these are still on hand, although the record of her work has become dim. They were saddened recently by Miss Little's death at the age of 78 in Moore County Hospital. The Episcopal burial service was read for her by the Sanford rector in the Pinebluff Methodist Church. She was buried beside her parents in the National Cemetery at Arlington, where the family plot included room for the oldest of the Admiral's three children.

We said the facts of Miss Little's home agenting have grown dim. No matter. Between the time she commenced her duties and the hour of her passing, 17 Home Demonstration Clubs were organized in Lee and all now flourishing. The soldering iron she introduced to farm kitchens has been replaced by scores of pressure cookers and deep freezes. The conservation practices she explained have become a way of life, and the daughters and granddaughters of the overworked farm wives she visited live comfortably and usefully. What does it matter whether these women know Miss Little's name? Their shining kitchens and the still greater horizons before their children are record enough that she passed this way.

Naval stations, which she knew as an Admiral's daughter, to the sand and clay of Lee County farms, with which she became familiar as a pioneer home demonstration agent, is a considerable distance which Miss Gertrude Little negotiated in good order.

It was the retirement of her father, Rear Adm. William Nelson Little, USN, from the sea that brought her to Central North Carolina; she arrived at Pinebluff with her parents and a sister and brother in 1907, the year that Lee was carved out of Moore. Having a knack for housework and organization and an appreciation of saving which would seem now to be in some contrast with her Tidewater Virginia birth and New York schooling as well as her family association with Naval gold braid (her grandfather was an officer too), she was available for the first full-time job as home agent here. Her service extended through the First World War and for many years.

Upon retirement, Miss Little returned to her adopted home of Pinebluff. She retained membership in Sanford's St. Thomas Episcopal Church, whose tiny congregation was as grateful for her continued support as the field that residents themselves,

Grains of Sand

What's In A Name?

There seems to be some difficulty deciding what the girls' basketball team ought to be called. The boys, as everybody knows, are called "Blue Knights." This newspaper finds itself calling the girls' team "Blue Knights Girls."

That doesn't seem exactly right. First place, maybe some of these girls who are on the team don't like to be called the Blue Knights' Girls. Maybe some of them aren't the Blue Knights' girls at all. To call them that may start all manner of trouble on the campus. Non-Blue Knights will be calling out Blue Knights with pistols or sabers at dawn.

Then there's always the chance, of which we live in terror, that some joker in the composing room will make a "mistake", (i. e. his idea of a joke), and leave off the K in K-nights. Making it Blue Nights Girls.

Some of the team might not like that, either. Or their long-suffering parents might not.

We've tried to stick to the Days of Chivalry in thinking up a title to conform with the Knights idea. There's "Mistress", of course, or "Damsel," both good respectable medieval forms of address.

Or we might leave King Arthur and his Knights for musical comedy and call the teams: "Blue Knights" and "Pink Ladies." Or "White Ladies," to stick to the school colors. That sounds a bit ghostly for our vigorous ball-players.

Maybe this is a case where GRAINS had better bow out and quit making unsolicited suggestions.

President's Christmas Eve

Frank Warner, a Southern Pines winter visitor who is faithful in his attendance at Rotary Club meetings, always going to the local club's Friday noon sessions when he is in town, was showing friends at last week's meeting a poem from his home town paper at Garden City, Long Island, in which a local man pictures President Eisenhower's Christmas Eve at Gettysburg.

As the President dozes beside the fire, in this poem, apparitions of Washington, Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson appear to him, urging him to work for peace.

The poem was written by Frank B. Sohl of Garden City, an ardent admirer of President Eisenhower, and Mr. Sohl sent it to the President before Christmas, receiving a gracious personal reply.

Mr. Warner is so taken with the poem he's having copies mimeographed for friends. Lack of space prevents The Pilot's using it, but we're grateful to Mr. Warner for showing it to us.

Sequel to the poem story is that a second letter came to the author from the President, requesting additional copies of the poem. Which proves that the recipient must really have liked it.

Jumped The Gun

Sadie McCain, who is, we wager, a good many people hereabouts' favorite person, loves her friends. And loves parties with them. If you ask her to come for supper or something on a certain date, she is apt to accept and say: "Oh, I can't wait!"

The phrase caught up with Sadie last week. Invited to a party at Buffie and Ernest Ives's for two weeks from now, Sadie showed up at the door on the night last week.

Everybody had a good laugh, especially Sadie.

"You see," she said, "I just couldn't wait!"

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