

# VIEWPOINTS

## If the peach picking doesn't kill you, the stairs will

When people who know me come by the orchard, they notice how dirty I am from the morning's work. They say, "You had better slow down." I could tell them I have already slowed down. I don't walk nearly as fast as I once did. Neither do I get as excited as I did in my earlier days. Although at times I do get impatient.

We — and when I say we, I mean my brother Corbett and my grandson — begin work at 6 a.m. Since I am the head picker, I must show up.

All of our customers are real fine folks. Every so often, we get a new customer who doesn't realize that we close at 6 p.m.; twelve hours is enough for two men who have a combined age of 143. One of those new customers showed up last week at two minutes until 6. To add to my frustration she couldn't decide how many peaches she wanted. We didn't have any on the stand, and I, being the head picker, had to go to the orchard to fill her order. Finally I said, "Lady, make up your mind." That is not exactly the way to make folks rush back to see you. She was nice about it and seemed to understand that I had a hard day.

To make matters worse, she had several children. Now, no one loves children more than me, but it is hard to love them when they are chasing the goats, tempting the electric fence around the animals, climbing trees, and jumping on top of the peach stand. When I arrived back with the peaches, Corbett looked like a man who had

been on a three-week drunk. I asked, "Brother, what is troubling you?"

He replied, "These children are driving me crazy."

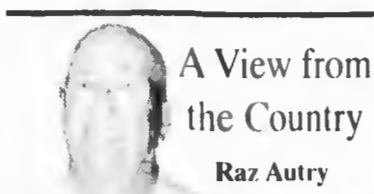
Corbett loves children, but he had rather for them to be seen and not heard. I kept telling him that this is a new day, the children now are telling the parents what to do.

My youngest granddaughter starts giving me advice at times. I always ask her to subtract 12 from 73. She comes up with the right answer, then I say, "Do you think there is a slim possibility that, since I am 61 years older than you, just maybe I know a little more?" Usually that does the trick.

I know children are smarter today than when I was a boy, but that doesn't mean they should be giving orders to parents.

Which reminds me of the old man and the young woman. It seems there was an old fellow in a mountain community. His name was Leo and Leo was a good friend of his nearest neighbor. Leo's first wife died when he was 86 years old, and when he was 90 he fell in love with an 18-year-old. His friend became extremely worried about him. He tried to give him some good advice by saying, "Leo, you know when an old man marries a young woman, it can get him all excited; in fact it has been known to kill some folks."

Leo thought about that for a while and said, "Well, if she dies, she dies."



A View from the Country  
Raz Autry

They lived together for about six months. Lovemaking began to get to Leo. He started feeling terrible and he went to the doctor. The doctor, after examining him, said, "Leo, now you are going to have to cut out having so much fun. If you don't, it could be the end of you."

So Leo went home and told his

wife about the conversation he had with the doctor. He said, "I'll take the upstairs bedroom and you take the downstairs."

So they lived like that for three months. And in the middle of the night one night, when old Leo started downstairs he met his wife on the way upstairs. She asked, "What are you doing coming down the stairs?"

He said, "I am coming down to die. Why are you coming up?"

She answered, "I am coming up to kill you."

My parting thought — think peach ice cream.



## Letters to the Editor

### Let's race on a smooth track

To the Editor:  
Let's start by saying that every Saturday night my family is at the race track. We spend enough money there along with the rest of the fans and drivers for you, the track promoters, to keep the track in tip-top shape. If there had been a hat race this past Saturday night, that track would not have had holes in it the size of small fishing holes.

It is all good if the "big boys" such as Scott Bloomquist, Jack Pennington, Ed Gibbons, and Booper Bare are there. But someone has forgotten that if not for the "local boys," that are there every weekend, rain or shine, that track would not be able to stay open. If the track is not open, how do you figure the "big boys" are going to run there?

So you see the track needs to take care of its own drivers. We have some of the best like Ricky Boahn, Hank Edwards, Porky Edwards, Chris Blackwell, Larry Willis, Raz Davis Jr., and Eddie Bullard, to name just a few. These guys call Fayetteville Motorsports Park their home track. That means if these drivers are there, common sense will tell you that. So will their fans. Take care of your fans and they will take care of you.

I have been attending races at this track through four different name changes and owners. And this is the worst condition that I have ever seen the track in. It embarrasses me to know that FMSP has no more pride in

their abilities to make a Grade A top 10 track than this. A little more effort needs to be made.

The races on July 15th were a disgrace to the fans, drivers and car owners. The cars were being unnecessarily torn up. Some of these guys don't have the sponsorship that others have so every night counts.

The person who made the decision to not qualify any division but super late models must have been out the night before and just couldn't be bothered with using what brain cells they had left to make a smart call. The wrecks in the divisions that are there every weekend, not just every other weekend, attest to this very point.

Just because you have a good standing in points doesn't mean you can drive it; it just means you are a little bit luckier than some others.

My last comment is about the announcer we have at the track. Larry Long he isn't and I don't mean to berate him by saying this, but to be an announcer at a local track, you need to know the names of most of the drivers and their car numbers. This is only logical. If you don't, the best thing to do is learn them. This shows that you enjoy what you do and take pride in knowing the racers.

One last thing to remember, the "local boys" are just that, they are the ones that keep it going. The "big boys" just come to visit.

Thank you.  
Karen Grantham

### Cheers for those who clean roads, jeers for litterbugs

To the Editor:  
Kudos to Ruby J. Green (Wayside Road) and the military veterans group (Lindsay Road) for their recent participation in the "Adopt a Highway" program.

Their efforts have made a remarkable improvement in the appearance of these streets. (Ms. Green enlists the help of young boys and girls of all backgrounds. These young folks need to be applauded too.) Prior to their involvement, the amount of roadside trash was incredible!

Just as incredible is trying to un-

derstand why some folks need to litter. Prior to Ms. Green's efforts, the buildup of trash on Wayside Road got so bad that I and a couple of neighbors used to "police" a portion of Wayside on a regular basis.

Perhaps if our schools and churches can continually educate the young and old alike, what a negative effect littering does to our communities along with stronger enforcement of existing anti-litter laws we can minimize this growing problem.

Thank you.  
Michael Des Jardins

## Searching for splendid isolation

Figure Eight Island, North Carolina.

It is Friday morning. This quiet barrier island beach should provide a splendid isolation for the lucky people who own a waterfront home here.

Their island community is private. You can't drive across the drawbridge that connects their island to the mainland without a pass. No one comes on the island without registering at the gate.

Their miles-long unbroken beach is almost deserted this beautiful morning.

This beach struggles against the advancing ocean that pushes against and over the low sand dunes at the borders of oceanfront lots. Someday the beach will lose and it will be gone. But not today. Running down the beach from north to south, I see a beautiful solid black conch shell that washed up last night, waiting for the few morning walkers who will shortly have this beach and its unclaimed seashells to themselves.

At the south side of the island, the same forces that take sand from the beach near the oceanfront lots have re-deposited enough sand to build up a large, new undeveloped landmass. It is gradually growing southward toward Wrightsville Beach. All kinds of birds have set up nests in this empty space.

I want to run along the beach all the way to the very end and look across Mason Inlet to the north end of Wrightsville Beach. From there I think I could see how the powerful water is eating away the land under the seemingly doomed Shell Island condominium towers.

But, as I run along the beach beside the nesting area, an alarm goes up among the birds. First one small bird flies up from the nests and goes over me, then circles, squawks, and drops down toward me at high speed, breaking its fall just before it reaches me, and going up again.

I am not concerned. It is just one crazy bird and he can't really want to pick a fight with me.

Then, there are two birds doing the same thing together. I break my trot to a slow walk. Surely this is just a warning for me not to go into the nesting area. I will just stay on the beach and not bother them.

Quickly, there are four up above me in a sort of formation, breaking out, one by one, they drop, each one swooshing by me closer than the one before.

I have stopped trying to figure out what this is and have turned around and started to walk northward. I am not going to show any panic that might encourage them. But now there are eight birds circling and rising up to the sky above me, and suddenly I am



One on One  
D. G. Martin

running, waving my arms, and shouting at them to go away. The formation makes one more pass and then breaks up. A single bird follows me up the beach. It drops and sails by once or twice to let me know what will happen if I come back.

I run back up the beach leaving the birds to the isolated territory they have claimed and protected.

Along another road there is no "splendid isolation." Just a few hundred yards from the nesting area where the birds reign supreme, there is Manhattan-like traffic moving up and down the island. On the few remaining vacant lots, new houses are going up. Construction equipment—bulldozers, pile drivers, and small cranes move into place and start their symphony of unmuffled engines and pounding machines. Construction workers seem to be everywhere. They are building, not simple beach cottages, but gigantic, imposing palaces.

Service trucks of one kind or another — roofing, lawn service, plumbing, and cable TV — are parked in driveways of most of the existing houses. Trucks full of lumber, bricks, dirt, plants, and workers, unload, move out, and come back later with more. Yard workers are bringing in rolls of pre-grown beautiful green grass to replace last season's sod that is now turning slightly brown. They tend to the flowers and plants that have turned this

barrier island and its rough, tough vegetation into a series of beautiful formal gardens.

There are, I am sure, more workers than vacationers on this island today.

It is no longer what the splendidly isolated place it might have been.

I ask myself what has happened and why.

The people who own property here are active and successful. They have high energy levels. They are used to being in command and getting things done.

They are competitive. Maybe they just can't leave it all behind. Even when they say they crave a place of "quiet isolation," they can't resist their competitive drive to take control, to manage, and to "improve."

Maybe the only places for "splendid isolation" will be areas like the south end of this island where the vigilant birds drive out creatures like you and me, who look for isolation and then finding it, set about to change it — and destroy it.

## He supports Raz for President

To the Editor:  
I don't know the man; I've never met him personally; but I am hereby endorsing Raz Autry for President of the United States! Whether he decides to run or not. I read his column every week, and yes The News-Journal's answer to the great Will Rogers is a very humorous fellow, but on those occasions, when he chooses to make serious comments between his funny stories, he make more sense than our politicians. Mr. Autry's "View from the Country" (rural area) is just what our country (nation) needs!

For example, in his July 19 column, "Want to know about the weather? Check your bones," Mr. Autry wrote: "Somewhere along the line the American people have gotten their priorities mixed up. When the local TV station cuts into a program with a message which reads: 'This is a special bulletin,' one comes to expect an announcement of a plane down, or a war started, or a political official shot. Not so, the announcement — a basketball coach has been selected or turned down the job." Also: "High paid athletes and coaches have become our god. We think they have a one-way ticket to heaven."

Mr. Autry is right. Issues pertinent to everything from our everyday lives to our very survival have taken a "back seat" to sports, and those who play and coach them. If Karl Marx were living today, he would probably say "sports" is the opium of the people. To add insult to injury, more and more of the famous athletes are demonstrating a lack of moral character — some even becoming notorious criminals. So much for positive role models!

I'm not a sports fan; I'm a news addict, totally hooked on current events — sports bore me to tears. I try to discuss current events and future possibilities with friends, coworkers, and family members, but those subjects bore them to tears. So I read and watch news programs alone, while most of them watch, read about, and discuss sports — never the twain shall meet — but it almost did.

A famous athlete, of impeccable

moral character, recently ran in the Democratic primaries. I thought to myself (no one wanted to talk about it), finally, a chance to get these enthusiastic sports fans interested in the political process. And a few began to show some interest. Well, they at least discussed what a good athlete he had been. The famous athlete of impeccable moral character lost to a man who could already be our President of the Democratic Party had considered him capable or replacing a man who demonstrated a serious lack of moral character. Of course those same Democrats who refused to replace the man who demonstrated the serious lack of moral character with the current Democratic candidate, are now telling us that he is capable of filling the job after all. If he is, and was, why didn't they demand "Slick Willie's" resignation and inaugurate him instead of dragging our nation through the embarrassment and expense of the impeachment process?

But why did the famous athlete lose to the man who in the Democrats' opinion wasn't qualified before, but is now? Mr. Autry told us — "Somewhere along the line the American people have gotten their priorities mixed up?" The famous athlete was a man of impeccable moral character — the Democrats didn't want him! But, if one of the famous athletes with no moral character should run for political office on the Democratic ticket, he might get the support of the politically apathetic sports fan as well as the Democrats? That dude might be tough to beat!

As for me, I hope Raz Autry runs for president. I'd wear a "Raz for Prez" button! Now I realize that Mr. Autry is a humorous person who is occasionally serious, and most think a politician should be a serious person who is occasionally humorous. But, with that Democratic athlete of high moral character and his Republican counterpart both out of the running, and the special interests "bought and paid for" candidates in, we're going to end up with a "joke" in the Oval Office anyway so why not have ol' (See CURRIE LETTER, page 3)

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