

# If They Don't Want Water, Take It Somewhere Else

Based on what they've heard so far, Brunswick County Commissioners will be hard pressed to uphold the Utility Operations Board's decision last week to proceed with a lateral water line assessment project in the North Holden Beach area.

While residents in other areas are clamoring for the privilege of paying for county water lines, a majority of the residents of S.A.D. 1 (Special Assessment District 1) at a hearing last week told commissioners and utility board members they are happy with the well-water supply they've got. They said they didn't want and couldn't afford to pay for the county water lines. Approximately 100 residents had signed a petition to that effect that was submitted before the hearing began Tuesday night, but not discussed until the UOB met Thursday afternoon.

The residents' position against the water came as something of a shock, given all the fussing and begging commissioners have heard during the past two years from com-

munities that desperately want county water at almost any price.

It's one thing to have all taxpayers pitch in and help pay for a water system that will promote the overall economic betterment of the county after first telling them the system would pay for itself. But making folks who don't want to do it pay to put in a water line down their own street is something else. Especially when you've just told them they don't have to tap on unless they want to.

Given the potential for salt water intrusion and septic tank leaching, public water might, like spinach, be good for this community. But apparently they'd rather not have it forced down their throats.

If that is truly the case, why not let a community that really wants and needs the water have it instead?

Excluding Utility Operations Board member Alfonso Roach, who owns property in the proposed district, so far commissioners have heard, on the public record at least, from

three freeholders who favor the project—two in person and one in writing.

A hearing in the middle of the week no doubt was inconvenient for most of the district's landowners, since a vast majority live the major part of the year outside of Brunswick County. Perhaps that should have been taken into consideration in choosing which areas qualified for the assessment project.

Barring a flood of mail or calls from the remaining property owners endorsing the assessment project, commissioners can't in good faith tell the folks in Holiday Acres, Holiday Ranches, Holiday Pines and G & S Potter subdivisions they must pay for water lines they apparently aren't even asking for.

Overriding a recommendation from the utility board they appointed might be difficult, but at the least commissioners should tell the UOB to put S.A.D. 1 on hold and start somewhere else.

## Opinion Page

### THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Edward M. Sweatt and Carolyn H. Sweatt.....Publishers  
Edward M. Sweatt.....Editor  
Susan Usher.....News Editor  
Marjorie Megivern.....Associate Editor  
Etta Smith.....Staff Writer  
Johnny Craig.....Sports Editor  
Mary Potts.....Office Manager  
Cecelia Gore & Susan Barefoot.....Advertising Representatives  
Tammie Galloway & Dorothy Brennan.....Typesetters  
Bill McGowan.....Pressman  
Breanda Clemmons.....Photo Technician  
Lionie Sprinkle.....Assistant Pressman  
Clyde and Mattie Stout, Phoebe Clemmons.....Circulation

Page 4-A

Thursday, March 19, 1987

## Kids Need More Than Nay-Saying Lessons

Nancy Reagan and Kate Brooks, and everyone else from Washington to Brunswick County who is trying to teach the word "No" to drug-prone kids, are admirable in their concerns. There is no question the problem of drug abuse is strangling the future of even the very young.

The question is, what is the most effective preventive to that first experiment with drugs or alcohol?

To answer that, well-meaning adults must recall their own adolescence and remember the urges of that tumultuous age. Hormones, energy level, vulnerability, and idealism are some of the forces that, along with puberty, possessed us as kids.

The same tensions drive kids of the 80s. They experience disturbing physical and psychological changes, need to be reassured of their own value, crave affection, want to save the world, and have a mega-dose of energy that must somehow be expended.

Ignoring these valid teen needs is to misunderstand the appeal of drugs. Mind-altering substances replace reality with the good, but illusory feelings that one is secure, ten feet tall, and forever problem-free. And ingesting them with friends is a satisfying communal activity.

What else could provide the same satisfaction, but in a realistic and wholesome way? That is the question for which answers must be found.

Kids need excitement and activity as energy outlets, so where in Brunswick County is that available, except in the school athletic programs? Why not a youth center where parties and games and contests could bring teens together every weekend, under supervision, for fun that's better than any drug "high"?

Why not more county recreational events that include all young people, whether sponsored by churches, civic organizations, schools or families? The New Hanover County Sheriff's Department experimented this year with a non-alcoholic New Year's party for teens that attracted many hundreds of enthusiastic youngsters.

Why not a movie theater, a bowling alley, a dance hall for youngsters only, where drugs and alcohol are prohibited? (The latter is another recent successful venture in New Hanover County).

To nurture youthful idealism, as well as self-esteem, why not more programs in which kids help the elderly, the disabled and the needy? More competitive programs for those with artistic and academic skills?

These are some of the practical answers to that normal adolescent urge for socializing with peers, excitement, and active pursuits. If there are some positive alternatives to which they can say "Yes," saying "No" to drugs is much easier.

## St. Patrick's—It's A Day To Celebrate

As a child I always thought there was something wrong with the way we celebrated—or didn't celebrate—St. Patrick's Day.

Blame it on the TV, if you like. Based on that yardstick, we did it too quietly. We didn't have much fun, at least not like the people back East and in the mid-West who marched in parades, donned green carnation boutonnieres and dyed beer, rivers and confetti. They really enjoyed the Emerald Isle's patron saint.

I'd always been told we were Scotch-Irish, along with most everybody else around. But those origins didn't seem to be something they cared about. I wondered why. Perhaps because of the poverty and misery associated with Ireland's troubled times or perhaps from their



Susan Usher

parents' and grandparents' desire to melt into the American pot as quickly as possible.

If so they missed out on a lot of fun. Irish Americans all over the U.S. use St. Patrick's Day as an excuse for a party—a chance to sport the green, to sing Irish songs with a heavy accent, to get sentimental over the homeland that many have never seen and to cry

"Erin Go Bragh!" to anyone who will listen.

The best celebration I've ever joined in was while attending graduate school in Ohio. In this predominantly Catholic city known for its churches and its neighborhood bars, my date and I (he was a native) paraded and sang and laughed and visited along with the rest.

Such a contrast to the way I remember Shallotte on St. Paddy's Day. The most we ever celebrated was by wearing a piece of clothing with green (easier now with all the Trojan jackets at West Brunswick High School). We might cut out paper shamrocks in class or for a bulletin board.

Horror of horrors, the school luncheon menu usually featured

something green—as often as not that awful gelatin salad with carrots in it.

Downtown, a local business might have a St. Patrick's Day Sale and put green things in the window display.

And at home there was always the Irish tenor on Lawrence Welk, singing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" or some such song.

After that kind of childhood, I was relieved to learn today that somewhere in the South they know that St. Patrick's Day is a day for fun—brass bands, bagpipes revelry. I'm talking, of course, about Savannah, Ga., where they jumped the gun and started celebrating last Friday.

That part was a little embarrassing. Where's their self-restraint?

## Listening To The Experts Gets Harder

There was a time not so long ago (or so we thought) when we could listen to the experts and expect what they told us to be the truth. We expected a degree of bias, possibly, but for the most part the word from the experts could be accepted as the latest word on a subject and to be believed by those of us who depended upon them for answers.

That time has passed in most areas, such as politics, religion, history, sociology, medicine and science: One of the more recent examples is the debate about the "greenhouse effect."

Scientists were almost in agreement some years ago that the continued burning of fossil fuels, such as coal and oil, would so pollute the atmosphere that a layer of pollution will cover the atmosphere and block the reflected rays of the sun which struck the Earth and were reflected back into space.

This great shield would hold the heat in, force the polar ice caps to melt, raise the temperature



Bill Faver

of the Earth from two to eight degrees. Such an increase in temperature would cause the oceans to rise and the beaches to erode. Impending doom seemed close at hand.

As the beaches began to erode and the winter seemed milder, some of us were convinced the experts were right and there wasn't much we could do.

Now the experts are saying the temperature rise could be far less, no more than one or two

degrees and that this probably would have little effect on ice melt and temperature rise over the next several decades. Now they are saying the only alternatives are limited and nuclear power is the answer.

So! What experts do we believe? Our suspicions may tell us the latest group is sponsored by the nuclear power interests. Or are they working for the development lobby to play down the cost of beach erosion? Or, are they dedicated, unbiased, hard-working searchers for truth? How can we know?

In this great time of experts in every field and an abundance of them telling us what to believe and how to believe it, the unfortunate truth is we don't put much credence into what any of them tell us! Listening to the experts gets harder as the years go by. Perhaps there are no absolutes in these debates and everything is relative to who you are and what you believe and where you stand.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Undeserved Traffic Citation Poses Dilemma

To the editor:

Today and probably in the month to come, I will be trying to decide whether to become a crusader.

On March 10 my wife and I visited Whiteville. What promised to be a beautiful day was spoiled for us.

A police officer apprehended me for, "Passing at or near an intersection; to wit, Franklin St. and Clay St., clearly marked as an intersection by the city of Whiteville."

This much said, one might suspect that I am a second-class citizen from a third-world nation. What proceeds, unless I let the episode rest, promises to become a war of words.

As a defense, with the purpose of salvaging my bruised ego and/or regaining the confidence or courage required of a defensive drive, permit me to relate my version of what actually occurred. And let this letter be accepted as an instrument to alert the general public.

My destination was the hospital, so I turned of Business 701 in compliance with the blue directional sign which guides unfamiliar motorists to the hospital. Having been informed by a sign as I entered Whiteville, that all streets are to be traversed at the maximum of 35 miles per hour unless otherwise designated, I proceeded watching for speed signs as well as the blue direction sign.

I came upon a 20-mph sign in the vicinity of the shopping area and railroad crossing, whereupon a motorist appeared just ahead of me. He seemed to pose no threat immediately. We left this area and came upon a widened pavement where a posted sign raised the speed permitted to 35 mph.

The motorist ahead did not respond to widened pavement or the posted speed. I remained patient and followed calmly for several blocks. Then it became clear that the motorist was

either confused, distracted or of the attitude that he was not required to respond to the increased speed or drive to the extreme right portion of the road.

Having evaluated the situation, I felt the volume of traffic, the freedom from pedestrians, animals and/or obstructions, and the possibility of an unpredictable motorist making yet another unreasonable decision, it would be in the best interest of all concerned to pass on the right since a double solid line was in the center of the street and 12 feet or more clear space was on the right.

My recent study of the N.C. Drivers' manual verified 37 years of driving knowledge. A motorist traveling 10 mph or more less than the posted speed should be aware that he should move to the far right because failing to do so could result in accidents and/or violations.

Page 42 of the current drivers' manual reveals this to the uninformed motorist. While this is a well known, basic fact, it is also true that while usually more dangerous and sometimes illegal to pass in designated areas, congestion caused by slow moving cars or left turning cars can legally be alleviated by passing on the right.

Having been apprehended, the arresting officer attempted to justify writing a citation by calling his superior. I was stunned and amazed by what followed.

I asked why the drivers' manual tells me that a law permits me to pass on the right and a citation denies me the right. The officer, quoting an inappropriate section of the manual or a hypothetical situation, attempted to inform me that passing could be dangerous.

I countered with another inappropriate or hypothetical situation. I asked where I was expected to pass if the car indeed was planning to turn left and was actually stopped by oncoming cars? His reply was that I should wait until the turn was made.

I am happy to say that better informed drivers, police and lawmakers know that just is not so. Without a sign restricting passing, without a barricade preventing the use of a paved portion of the highway, I cannot be expected to know that the Whiteville police prefer to ignore laws and good driving practices.

Readers can encourage me to become a crusader or take up the task themselves.

Motorists should also know that according to the clerk of the Superior Court, policemen don't fill out the form correctly. According to the police, they do fill out the form correctly. Usually forms are reprinted when outdated. The citation given to me

(See TRAFFIC, Page 5-A)

## Safety Training Should Be Part Of Gun Purchase

Since crime in Brunswick County is increasing in parallel to the population, more people are seeking ways to protect themselves and their homes.

According to records at the county sheriff's department the applications for gun permits have doubled since January, partly due to the three murders that have occurred here in the last four months. And the reason most people are giving for wanting a gun is personal protection.

I have never owned a gun because I'm afraid of them. It's funny how a 125-pound person can be afraid of an instrument that weighs a couple of pounds. But it certainly doesn't hurt to respect that powerful little package, since a lot of people are accidentally killed by them every year.

According to the sheriff's depart-



Etta Smith

ment Crime Prevention Officer Don Gates, the safest place to keep a gun depends on the situation.

He said in the case of a woman living alone it is best to keep a gun nearby at night and to keep it loaded.

However, when there are children around a gun should never be kept in their reach and loaded.

He suggests keeping guns unloaded and the ammunition separate when children are in the house. Although

he said Brunswick County has had no fatal accidental shootings in several years, it can happen and it's best to take the precautions.

Another suggestion he makes for gun owners with children is to let them hold a gun with a parent's supervision so they may learn how to do this properly while they are young. This will show them how dangerous a gun can be and will take the mystery of guns away and lessen their interest in playing with them.

"I trained my kids to respect guns while they were young," he said. "If you're going to have a gun in your house, it's a good idea to take this precaution."

He said he also keeps a loaded gun where it is in his control, although he has others in the house which he

keeps unloaded.

Gates will be teaching a training class in firearms safety and handling sometime in late April or early May. Although he said the class is primarily for women, anyone can attend.

If you have bought a firearm or plan to in the near future, you may want to take the class, because Gates said that the fear of firearms can be the most dangerous factor.

The class will include both classroom and practical exercises to help overcome the fear of a gun. It will also illustrate to gun owners how to shoot without experiencing "anticipation recoil." Anticipation recoil is when someone is afraid of the gun and flinches, or jumps in anticipation of pulling the trigger.

Gates said that this reaction can