

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Let's All Stop Blowin' Smoke

Like most problems besetting modern life, there is no one simple solution to the recent smokescreen that blanketed much of Brunswick County.

It was no minor matter. Highway accidents and severe breathing problems resulted from the aftermath of that controlled burning whose smoke could not be absorbed in the atmosphere.

Much finger-pointing is now going on, with the three paper companies in the area the favorite scapegoat. Citizens are organizing in protest, calling for action.

It's true that most controlled burning is done by Federal Paper, Georgia Pacific and International paper companies, who are not required by law to obtain burning permits, as is everyone else.

But they're not the only ones contributing to the smoke that hung around a couple of weeks ago, oppressive, pungent and a vacation spoiler.

Developers burn in quantities, and so do farmers and other assorted individuals. They are regulated in a rather loose fashion since Brunswick County was removed from the state's "high hazard" list in 1982.

High hazard counties require more stringent controls on any open burning, so the recent smokeout, caused by a Bermuda high pressure system and no wind, prompted calls for a return to the 16-county list labeled "high hazard."

That's probably a good idea, because all county burners apparently need a heavier hand. Our removal from the list in '82 was done in a pique, according to the recollections of Benny Ludlum, a county commissioner at the time.

"Paper companies could burn anytime, and citizens couldn't," he recalled. He is convinced, by the way, that aforementioned companies are the sole villains in this piece.

If so, becoming a high hazard county would do no good. But, as noted before, nothing is that simple, and there are a number of "villains," so tougher restrictions on the general populace would probably help.

As a matter of fact, Willard Lane of N.C. Forestry Service's Whiteville office said paper companies have been exceedingly careful to practice their controlled burning under the most favorable weather conditions.

The recent incident was a combination of unusual weather and some laxity on the part of everyone. It's the latter, that carefree, thoughtless attitude that must change to one of responsibility, and that usually doesn't happen solely through regulation.

Along with the return to a high hazard status, let every property owner and developer sharpen his weather eye and tighten up his conscience in this matter. Along with a permit, every burner should take extra precautions in regard to climactic conditions, remembering what the smoky highways of summer '87 were like.

Let's all take that aggravation very personally, note its effect on tourism, health and safety, and put those pointing fingers to work testing the wind.

It's not somebody else's fault. There's enough responsibility for us all.

Once More, With Feeling

A spate of letters responding to last week's editorial comments on the heroism of Ollie North were vehement, sincere, and completely missed the point.

So, here's one more crack at it. Now, folks, try to put that wicked Congress and those wild-eyed liberals completely out of your mind, and listen carefully.

North was disqualified for heroism, in our minds, by his very own admissions that he had lied to everyone in government and the public and had ignored the U.S. Constitution he swore to uphold when he donned that handsome uniform.

That's it. That's all. His unheroic behavior is something he described freely to his questioners, without embarrassment, without apology.

Is the Constitution worthless? Is dishonesty unimportant? Or do the ends North served justify even dishonorable means?

If so, we could use a few thousand words to debate the communism supposedly running rampant in Nicaragua and the desirability of trading arms for hostages. But that's another editorial.

But, if not, if you Ollie-lovers do still have some affection for integrity and our Constitutional form of government, then anyone who tramples on both cannot possibly be heroic.

And this has nothing in the wide, wide world to do with Congress, collectively or individually. They could all be rank, vile creatures and North's own words would still brand him the non-hero of the year.

Rebels Have Their Own Drink

An entrepreneur from up north has hit upon a superb marketing tactic.

At the peak of America's health food and fitness craze about five years ago, C. J. Rapp and his father began developing a sinful concoction that would restore to the public the dangers of cavities, obesity, and heart disease.

And so it is that today we have Jolt!, a carbonated soft drink with "real sugar and twice the caffeine of other drinks."

Rapp held a press conference in Wilmington last week, to which a Beacon representative was invited.

I didn't go, but as a public service I decided to give Jolt a test.

I bought a can at a convenience store and drank half of it as I drove home in the late afternoon in my usual stupor of fatigue.

Immediately upon reaching home, I gave the cat a plateful of Jolt and



Marjorie Megivern

saved the rest for my husband.

Here are the test results: the cat refused to touch the brown liquid, obviously not milk. My philosopher husband rendered a one-word verdict: "Pretentious." He explained it was pretentious of Rapp to assume that anything that wasn't good for you would necessarily taste good.

That's the funny way philosophers think.

In my more orthodox fashion, I disagree with both Jim and Rascal. Jolt tastes pretty good, about like the

classic soft drink that has been recently deprived of its sugar and caffeine but is still No. 1 in its category.

It did not even begin to keep me awake, which a cup of coffee consumed after 1 p.m. will always do. I'll report later on new cavities and/or a weight gain.

But the important aspect, which Rapp, in his marketing genius, counted on, is that I felt a thrill of guilt at drinking something considered unhealthy.

A sip of Prohibition whiskey must have produced the same titillation.

And that is a commentary on our times. Americans are so self-consciously pursuing perfect health, we're afraid to have any fun.

Rapp said his product is "for satisfaction, not sacrifice," and that sums up its appeal.

"We forget that soft drinks began

as something for fun that we enjoyed," he said in a radio interview. "We just wanted to provide that fun and to inject a little humor in our advertising."

The obsessive joggers, who down wheat germ and skimmed milk after the morning run and check their blood pressure, weight and cholesterol on a regular basis will disdain Jolt and Rapp's irreverent question, "Is the health kick over?"

But for the rebel that lingers in many American breasts, a little adventure is just the thing to brighten the day.

So, for them an enterprising New Yorker has invented the perfect conversation piece and designer drink. It probably won't thrill their taste buds, but neither will it ruin their health.

And what fun to give the pretentious health kick a kick in its own assumptions!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'Wake Up Little Susie,' Says Ollie Fan

To the editor:

The headline on Susan Usher's July 30 column paraphrases a song about Tom Dooley. Has she ever heard the song, "Wake Up Little Susie?"

She really should not make written remarks about evidence arising out of the Iran-Contra hearings without watching and listening to the witnesses as they appear on live TV. It appears that Ms. Usher has resorted to repeating some of the phrases that she has picked up from other media.

I know that newspapers (and TV) do not like to report a story like the hearings because such a large portion of the public has watched the witnesses and know the truth, thereby reducing the media's opportunity to twist the facts to correspond with the story they would like to tell the public.

So the media is reduced to commentary, alterations of facts, and other tricks of the trade to permit them to let us hicks know what they (the media) consider good for us.

Susan's accusation that Colonel North scoffs at the constitution is without basis. It is obvious that she either is uninformed of the revelations of the hearings or she, too, believes that we hicks do not have enough sense to watch, listen and make up our own minds without the help of the press.

The day has past when one would read a newspaper and believe what he had read. The hearings have helped the American people learn that the press in this country is, for the most part, radically liberal.

We have learned that the hearings were aimed at embarrassing the president. When that failed the

liberal elements (Democrats, liberal Republicans and the press) went searching for inconsistencies in testimony, unpopular decisions, and mistakes in organization and execution that could be indirectly blamed on the president. Hence, they attack the one that made them look so bad—Ollie North.

Susan could have reported and commented on her trip to Williamsburg without attempting to degrade Colonel North. But, I suppose she is suffering from the same disease that appears to be running rampant through the press corps—unbridled socialism.

Next she will probably tell us hicks that John Wayne was a Nazi, Audie Murphy was a coward, apple pie will cause cancer, mothers are never to be trusted and the flag is a symbol of oppression.

If I may borrow from Wesley Pruden in his July 10 column in the "Washington Times," "(Colonel North) demonstrates best the power of a just cause, passionately believed in. To the consternation and rage of Mr. Inouye and his partisan colleagues, who thought they were cooking up something very different, the colonel has conducted an effective teach-in about what is at stake for the United States in Central America... Ollie North comes

across first and last as a soldier with his heart in the right place..."

It is obvious to those of us who care enough to stay informed that most of the press is going to continue to distort the facts of these hearings in an attempt to attack the Reagan administration. Ollie North stated his love of country and its president, he is a symbol of administration and the leftists feel they must attack him.

But, I firmly believe that you can tell Little Susie to give it up—Ollie North and what he stands for is here to stay. It has been around since the first secret meetings to form a constitution—or before—and it is the strength upon which we, the people, draw when we need it. Nathan Hale felt it. It was with us one night in Boston, it was with us in Flanders, Corregidor, Bataan, Normandy, Pork Chop Hill, and Hue.

It makes us feel good to identify with Colonel North, to be a part of a group that is proud to be Americans, ready to fight for our country and our way of life. Why do you (the liberal press) want to destroy the thing that makes us feel good? I guess we are just too dumb to know what's good for us.

Remember the Maine? Remember the Alamo! Remember Pearl Harbor! Thanks Ollie!

Davey L. Stanley
Shallotte

Capillary Waves

The first ripples caused by the wind as it begins to blow over the surface of the water are called capillary waves. We can see them on freshwater ponds and lakes or in bays and the waterway when a slight breeze begins to blow. These are the smallest waves on the ocean surface, but the greatest amount of wind energy is transferred through them to the water.

Capillary waves are exactly opposite from the more familiar ocean waves we see. Their troughs are v-shaped and their crests are rounded. As capillary waves grow, they slow down in speed rather than increase as the other waves tend to do.

These waves get their name from the behavior of fluids in a capillary tube where surface tension determines behavior. The attraction of water molecules for each other is stronger than the attraction for the air molecules above them. An inward pull on the surface molecules results and gives the fluid surface a strength as if it were covered by a stretchable membrane. This is the reason a needle floats on the surface of an over-filled glass of water. It also allows water striders and other insects to walk on the surface of water.

When a slight breeze blows across water, the surface is stretched. Surface tension tries to restore the stretched surface and it begins to vibrate. The new ripples increase the surface area for the wind to push on the



Bill Faver

water. Capillary waves grow larger and become more noticeable. At a certain stage, their shape and other physical properties change and capillary waves become the ordinary gravity waves we experience at the shore. The waves increase in speed and size as more and more area is exposed to the wind. New capillary waves may be formed on the surface of the gravity waves, to add to the buildup of wave energy. At some point, the waves will have absorbed as much wind energy as they can and will be traveling at about the same speed as the wind. These are the storm surges that can create devastation when driven by hurricane force winds.

It may seem hard to believe that the greatest waves owe their existence to the little ripples of capillary waves we see beginning over a calm surface. Next time we see the wind begin to stir the surface of a lake or the ocean, we can be sure the small capillary waves are just the beginnings of the waves that greet us along the shore.

Citizens Guaranteed Right To Ask Questions

To the editor:

In response to the letter written by Charles Rajskey, published in last week's Beacon, I would offer the following comments:

1. The exact quote as published by this newspaper on 7-15-87 is as follows: "Dr. Ken Neal, Calabash veterinarian, asked what immediate plans the town has for annexation on Thomasboro Road." Since I have recently purchased property there, possible annexation is of course an important issue to me. I neither stated that I was in favor of or opposed it, but was rather seeking information.

2. The U.S. Constitution, proven now for 200 years, guarantees under the First Amendment, the freedom of speech. This allows anyone to openly ask questions or express their views before any branch of our govern-

ment. I don't believe these same privileges are enjoyed in the Soviet Union. I have never seen Mr. Rajskey at a council meeting. Perhaps if he were to attend, he could more intelligently form an opinion of the issues that face Calabash as well as the surrounding areas.

3. Mr. Rajskey presents himself as a water quality expert. What, I wonder, are his credentials? Will readers misinterpret his statements in the same manner he did mine?

4. Carolina Shores is a fine area as well as the one we live in. I find it hard to believe that Mr. Rajskey can segregate the quality of living into communities or that he speaks for all of our neighbors when he says, "agitate for things we don't want."

Kenneth R. Neal, DVM
Calabash

(Letters Continue On Following Page)

Note In A Bottle Humbles A Man

Putting messages into bottles or attaching notes to helium-filled balloons may be kid stuff, but we adults get just as excited when we find one.

I found a message in a bottle last week that had washed ashore. The coast is a good place to find such things, for both balloons and bottles float and can be carried by the tides and changing winds.

It also gives you a feeling of discovery. To be the person who finds a note that is released for all of the world to find is humbling. It may travel hundreds of miles, but it ends up in your hands either by fate, accident or just good timing.

The bottle I found was a clear one with a white cap that didn't seal exactly tight, so the note inside got a little wet.

Marsha Rabon, of Holden Beach, also called last week to say that her husband, Ronnie, a commercial



Terry Pope

fisherman, found a balloon with a message attached that was floating in the ocean about 50 miles offshore. He had taken a group out fishing when they came across the balloon.

It was still inflated, but the message tied to it was a little soggy. It was from a church in Summerville, S.C., where children there released balloons last month.

Summerville is a town about 30 miles from Charleston, S.C. It is safe to say that the balloon had traveled over 200 miles. Now tell me that

you're not interested in such trivial things.

The note inside the bottle that I found had gotten soggy also, and an attempt to rake it out with a stick began to tear the paper. My brother began telling me how someone he knows found a note inside of a bottle once that had been launched by someone in Cuba, with some Spanish coins inside for return postage.

There were two coins inside the bottle we found as well. One fell out and got lost in the sand when I opened the bottle. Another coin was an American dime that had turned brown from the salt water that had seeped inside.

I discovered the only way to get the paper note out without tearing it to pieces was to break the bottle. Have you ever tried breaking a vodka bottle with a seashell? It isn't easy. In fact, it can't be done.

The suspense continued. I had to

drive home with the bottle safely tucked away in a fishing bucket, thinking of millions of things that could be on that note. My curiosity was unbearable.

With one gentle tap from a crowbar, the vodka bottle shattered. From the debris, I carefully pulled the folded paper out.

I caught a glimpse of the writing—large, stick letters, like someone's poor attempt at writing in English.

I carefully unfolded the note, and here is what it said:

"Help us. We are stranded on an island. Please read the back."

I carefully turned the note over.

"This is a joke," it stated.

So much for that humble feeling we adults get when we try to get excited about such trivial things as finding notes in a bottle.

Rotten kids.