

# THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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## If You Really Do Want To Hear From Parents . . .

If you really want to hear from parents, what do you do? Follow this example, of course:

- Schedule a mid-week meeting after 9 a.m. when many grown-ups are already at work.
- Hold it in the most centrally-located place you can think of, perhaps Boiling Spring Lakes.
- Give little or no notice: announce it to the public the day of or the day before the meeting is to take place.

That's exactly what the support service program for the Brunswick County Board of Education did in announcing a meeting today for parents of handicapped or academically gifted children.

Since this was an important meeting, one must hope those parents were also notified earlier, by mail, in time to rearrange their schedules so they could attend.

## Decide For Yourself

If extremists have their way, the decision on whether to see "The Last Temptation of Christ" will be taken out of our hands.

While many of those who are protesting loudest have not seen it, they're certain Martin Scorsese's film is "evil" because it depicts a Jesus Christ who is both human and divine.

The movie, starring William Dafoe as Jesus, depicts Jesus Christ as being tempted to abandon his divinity. In a hallucination while dying on the cross, he imagines giving up his divinity to live as an ordinary man, married and with a family. He fantasizes about sex with Mary Magdalene. But he resists that temptation and fulfills his divine role.

When the book on which the film is based was published in 1951, the story line offended Greek church officials, who wanted to excommunicate the author. However, those plans were abandoned in a storm of protest from everyday Greek citizens, who appreciated the late Nikos Kazantzakis and his works, many of which were religious and/or philosophical in nature. They tended to reflect his own inner struggle, his being torn between the active and contemplative life, between the sensual and the ascetic and between nihilism and commitment.

In the U.S. reviewers have found more fault with the pacing and quality of the movie production than with its content. Most appreciate, if not agree with, the author's effort at interpretation.

Meanwhile, before most of us can even think about buying tickets, our curiosity is being piqued by protesters who are organizing pickets and other mass campaign in their effort to keep "Last Temptation" out of theaters all across the state.

While they may see themselves as acting in the best interests of the general public, you should be angry about their efforts to pre-empt your rights. Censorship is something America outgrew a long time ago. You have a right to decide for yourself whether to see the film or to allow other family members to see it.

An adult telling a 10-year-old what he can and cannot see is one thing; one adult telling another is something else. Most of us are capable of making up our own minds, thank you, based on its rating and on information available, such as positive or negative reviews.

Don't leave the decision of what you see at the theater to someone else, conceivably those who haven't even seen the film themselves.

If, after seeing "Last Temptation" you want to express your personal opinion about the film, then do it. But don't keep others who want to make up their own minds from being able to do so.

## School Bells And Wishful Thinking

Susan Usher



School's about to begin again. This time last year, we at The Brunswick Beacon were saying goodbye to fellow staffer Terry Pope, who was about to begin a career as a public school teacher.

Terry survived that first year, through all the ups and downs associated with the teaching profession. He returns this year for a second go at it, wiser for his experience. While wishing him well, I don't envy him in the least.

He's in education at an exciting, confusing time. A time when the educational system is being blamed for the country's illiteracy problem (a blame that families should at least share in equally) and for young people not knowing how to locate the United States on a world map.

It's a time when the demands upon the schools are greater than ever, yet when good teachers are in short supply.

Once hired, they're to teach

students everything the schools once taught, plus a lot of what we used to learn at home. They're to—without interfering with the success of the athletic program—get across not only the three Rs and other academic essentials, but how to drive, how to say "No," how to administer CPR, how to operate a computer, and even how to think.

It may strike you as funny that "thinking" skills have to be added to the curriculum. But it seems we've forgotten that essential somewhere along the way. We've been teaching lots and lots of facts and formulas,

the kind you need to have under your belt in order to do well on certain tests. But we have apparently neglected the art and science of reasoning, which once was the basis of a classical education.

It happened, though, probably in the same way multiple choice and true-false questions replaced essay exams and sight word skills replaced rather than supplemented phonics in the teaching of reading.

When it comes to education, as in other areas of our hurried modern lives, we seem to always want to go the easy route, the route that draws the least heat, the least flack, while getting quick if superficial results.

For example, one of the trends in public education today is to make school "fun," to get students to come to class and be part of the team.

That is a well-intentioned idea; you have to have students present before you can teach them. But are they being turned on to school as an exciting

place to learn, or simply a fun place to socialize with friends and wear the latest fashions?

I may be off base, but among all the balloons and bears I think we're forgetting some basics.

An education increases with time and is of immense value, but you can't give it to someone. Neither can they beg, borrow or steal it. It's costly, yet something neither cash nor time alone can buy.

One must invest effort as well.

In the year ahead, nothing would please me more than to see students take a greater interest in their education—not in getting a certain grade or admission to the "right" school, but the pleasure and reward in learning for the sake of learning itself.

For that to happen, someone first needs to let them know that learning is what's really important. That someone is you or me, in the attitudes we convey each and every day, particularly in our own homes.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### If Money At Root Of Cablevision Problems...

To the editor:

Maybe things are beginning to happen in our never-ending, on-going cablevision saga.

Since Mayor Mason Barber's letter about his Sunset Beach cable dilemma, and my ensuing follow-up, the situation has made the Wilmington Star-News twice. Not that this fact makes the issue any more important because, frankly, I prefer your paper to theirs, but it may serve to reach an additional reader or two.

I am told by various parties that money, or the lack of this precious stuff, is at the root of all the problems. Atlantic Telephone can't subscribe to more programming

because there are not enough available customers to warrant doing this. There are not enough available customers bunched close enough together to justify adding to their present coverage.

Since the federal government funds about everything that is fundable already, and since all of us know that we are growing in number in Brunswick County every day, let's encourage Atlantic Telephone to get the money from whomever is dishing it out in Washington at the present time or who will be doing so in the very near future and get on with the program improvements. Let's face it—no matter how much

we as a nation are taxed, we ain't never gonna get out of debt, no matter who is in office. Don't get me wrong. It's still the greatest place in the world to live!

Jimmy Simpson  
Shalotte

### Willing To Pay More For More

To the editor:

Hats off to Mayor Barber of Sunset Beach and others who feel the same way regarding cablevision in Shalotte and at his beach.

Before moving to Shalotte about a year ago, I lived for many years on

Holden Beach. You can well imagine that I hope Mr. Price and his fine staff will take a concerned look at improving the service and program selection of the present Atlantic Telephone Cablevision.

As it now stands, and I am sure that they are cognizant of the fact, it's like comparing a Volkswagen (Beetle vintage) with a Rolls-Royce.

If it's a question of money, give us a chance to help. I, for one, would be willing to pay more for more, even though I believe our fee now already surpasses that of Vision Cable, based on a per station breakdown.

Dillon Taylor  
Shalotte

### Add My Name

To the editor:

Add my name to those who firmly agree that Atlantic Telephone sadly needs to improve their service and selection of programming to at least be in the same ballpark as Vision Cable, who so ably serves our surrounding neighbors.

Dewey Jones  
Shalotte

### Why, Why?

To the editor:

Why does Atlantic Telephone Co. cable offer the least stations (20) of all the area cable firms?

Why is Atlantic Telephone cable the only cable company not to carry Channel 9-WGN? It's the nation's sport station and famous for family movies, day and night baseball and major basketball and football.

Cable management doesn't listen to its subscribers; maybe they will listen to the commissioners when the next lease is to be renewed.

Odell Johnson  
Shalotte



CONDITIONS must be right for clouds to become rainmakers!

## Raindrops Keep Falling

Apparently, conditions have been right this summer for raindrops to form and fall to the earth to drench us. All those big clouds we see drifting majestically across the summer sky have potential as rainmakers. Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't!

Clouds are composed of billions and billions of tiny droplets of water and sometimes ice crystals. A cloud may hold several tons of moisture, but it may produce no rain. Only if everything is "right" do we get any rain.

Water droplets are formed in the clouds when warm, moist air rises and then becomes so cold that water



Bill Faver

vapor condenses. Water vapor collects around small particles of dust and microscopic bits of other materials known as condensation nuclei. At first, droplets are so small they float easily on air currents. As they move, the droplets collide and combine to form larger droplets.

After many collisions they grow large enough and heavy enough to fall as rain.

The smallest droplets are called a drizzle and fall slowly. Some raindrops can be 1/4-inch in diameter and fall at a rate of 25 feet per second or more.

Raindrops keep falling on us, sometimes giving us more water than we need. Conditions must be right for water to be pulled from the ocean, lakes and streams and formed into clouds. Conditions must be right for those water droplets to become heavy enough to fall. At least, this July and August, conditions must be right.

## Every Town Needs A Lizard Man Or Woolly Booger

I've just about decided to pack a bag and head for Bishopville, S.C., this weekend. Why? To look for the Lizard Man, of course.

In case you haven't heard about him yet—which is highly unlikely, considering all of the media coverage the story has gotten—the Lizard Man is supposed to be a seven-foot-tall, red-eyed, three-fingered, blackish-green horror that lives in Scape Ore Swamp near Bishopville.

If that sounds like a terrifying creature, you should see me when my wife gets home from the shopping mall—and then a few weeks later when the credit card statement comes.

But even the CBS Evening News with Dan Rather reported the Lizard Man tale last week, telling how the creature supposedly bushwhacked a

Rahn Adams



local teen-ager who was fixing a flat tire in the swamp one night in June. Whether the Lizard Man is a real-life, slimy version of the Abominable Snowman or simply the product of someone's overactive imagination, he must be doing wonders for Bishopville's tourist trade.

Until last week, all I knew about the tiny South Carolina town was that it is located somewhere between

Florence and Columbia. Even though I've seen road signs pointing to Bishopville when traveling through that area before, I don't remember ever stopping there.

But now I'm itching to go to Bishopville and tramp through the swamp in search of that scaly, old varmint. While I'm there, I may even buy an official Lizard Man T-shirt and try to get Sheriff Liston Truesdale's autograph—just as long as it isn't on a traffic citation or arrest warrant.

About 15 years ago, my hometown in the North Carolina foothills had a mysterious, Sasquatch-type creature of its own for a few weeks. The Woolly Booger, as it is aptly named, was spotted loping across a mountain road by a teen-aged motorist one dark night.

Sensible folks figured the Woolly

Booger was just a bear or maybe a gorilla that had escaped from the circus. Others, however, were determined that it was Bigfoot alive and well in Burke County, and they scoured the area where it was sighted, looking for footprints and other evidence of its existence.

I figured that it was simply a hermit I'd heard of who came down out of the hills once every couple of years for a haircut whether he needed one or not. Or it might have been the wino I knew who slept wherever he could find a dry sawdust pile. He always looked like a woolly booger to me.

As it turned out, though, the Woolly Booger wasn't a real booger at all. If I remember the story correctly, it was just a guy whose idea of fun was to put on an ape suit and try to scare the living daylight out of his neighbors.

Still, the hunt for the "creature" was fun while it lasted. The hoax generated a lot of free publicity for a town that attracts tourists about as easily as Bishopville ordinarily does. And for a while there, Woolly Booger T-shirts were in vogue.

Although I'm definitely not encouraging anyone to pull a similar stunt, Brunswick County sure could put a monster or two to good use.

For instance, the new Calabash Merchants Association is trying to increase tourist traffic by promoting the town as the Seafood Capital of the World. It could be profitable for a Calabash Shrimp Man to rear his ugly head near the docks every now and then.

Residents of other communities that need some extra attention could wish for visits from creatures like the

Makotoka Monkey Man, the Winabow Wombat Woman or the Varnamtown Varmint, not to mention the Green Swamp Booger, which could terrorize half of the county at once.

Not only that, the Brunswick County Fire and Rescue Association, which is campaigning for volunteers anyway, could enlist the services of curiosity seekers across the county by forming an elite "monster-busters" unit. Naturally, prospective team members would have to join a fire department or rescue squad first to be eligible.

And even though it would mean a lot more work for reporters like me, I'd be more than happy to have a whole passel of monsters in Brunswick County—just so long as I owned the T-shirt concession.

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