

## Year Number One Was Exhausting

Doug Rutter



which I know nothing. As you can tell, clarity is one of the concepts I have yet to grasp.

On the other hand, I don't suppose I have to tell you that my job is not the epitome of perfection. It has its bad points too.

I've literally sat through weeks of board meetings and yawned through more hours of executive session than anyone should have to bear. I've taken heat from the public for things I've written.

And I've watched helplessly as rescuers treat an accident victim or firefighters work to save a burning home.

It hasn't all been a barrel of monkeys. In fact, there have been times when so many things were happening at once that I just wanted to get up, walk out the door and never come back.

But for some reason, when the paper comes out each Wednesday morning, all the sacrifices I make seem to be justified. The feeling of satisfaction I get for contributing to something tangible like this newspaper makes the long hours and headaches worthwhile.

This was not an easy column to write. I usually don't have much time to reflect on anything.

To tell you the truth, it was very difficult to look back on the year and give my impressions. I felt like I had to pull myself up out of the trenches momentarily and just look around.

The view was spectacular, but for better or worse, it's time to get back in the trenches.

Excuse me while I catch my breath.

It's just that I've been running hard for a year now and feel the time has come to stop and see where I've gone.

When I started working at The Brunswick Beacon last August I had no idea whether or not I'd still be here this August. Starting out as a newspaper reporter, or in any profession for that matter, is not an easy task. But in spite of myself, I survived the first year.

A little while back, Susan wrote about her first year of marriage. It was a great one, she said, which passed very quickly.

Well, I guess you could say I'm married to my job because it has also been a great year and one that has disappeared in the blink of eye. If that doesn't automatically qualify as marriage, how about the hours I spend with it.

I've been exposed to a lot in just a year's time. There have been good times, bad times and times when the news wasn't good or bad.

Undoubtedly, the best thing about working as a reporter for the past 12 months has been the different people I have been able to meet. On the job, I've had the opportunity to meet everyone, from everyday average folks to the big wigs.

I talked with an elderly Texas couple who was sailing around the country and a young Frenchman spending a few weeks at Holden Beach.

I've also had the chance to rub elbows with some local decision-

makers and learned a great deal, some of it enlightening and some disheartening, about politics in America.

Through it all, I've concluded that there are some mighty different people in this world, and each one has his or her own values and ideas about how things should be done.

But I guess the old saying is true. The world would be a boring place to live if everyone were the same. And there would probably be very little news to write.

Another benefit of being a reporter is the free education it provides. I have learned more geography, science, psychology and other assorted disciplines in one year as a reporter than I did in 12 years of grade school and four years of college combined.

Someone once told me that reporters have to know something about everything, and that's about the truth.

I'll be the first to admit that I don't know something about everything yet. But at least I know more about some things than I did a year ago, and there are fewer things about



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

BRUNSWICK COUNTY SHRINERS Don Willetts (left) and Gene Cowan watch Monday night as Brunswick County Commissioners Chairman Grace

Beasley signs a resolution proclaiming Friday, Aug. 19, as "Brunswick County Shrine Club Fish Fry Day."

### Shriner Fish Fry Planned

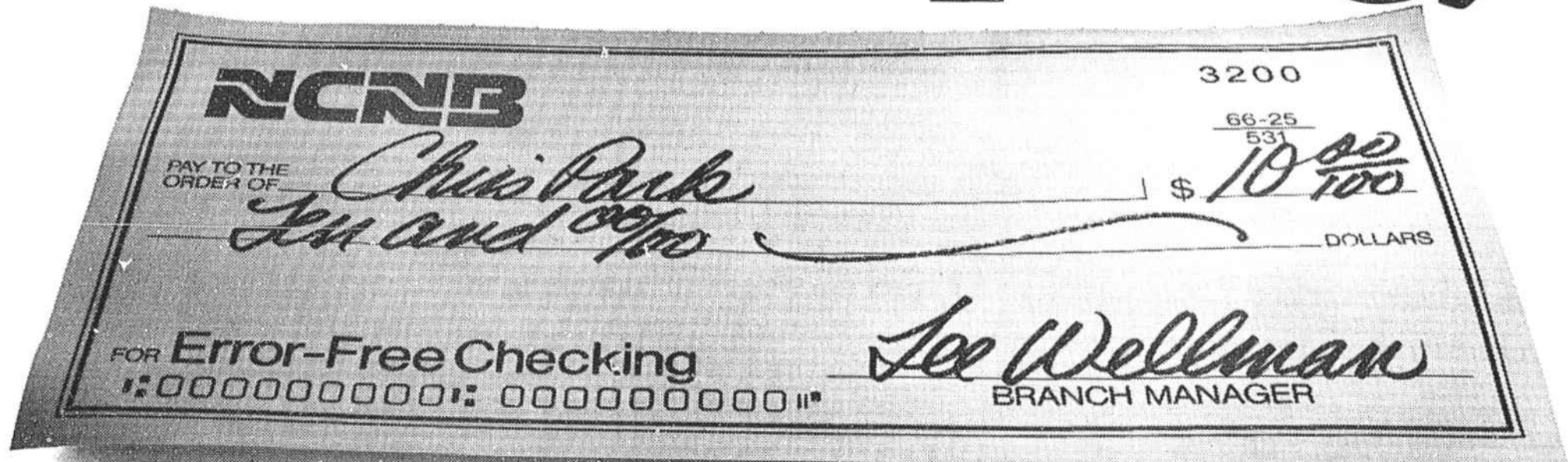
The Brunswick County Shrine Club will hold a county-wide fish fry at seven locations in Brunswick County on Friday, Aug. 19, beginning at 11 a.m.

According to local Shriner Don Willetts, the individual fish fries will be held at the Hill's shopping center in Shallotte, on the Holden Beach causeway, at Ocean Isle Beach, next to Bethel United Methodist Church in Bolivia, near United Carolina Bank in Leland, at Wilson's shopping center in Southport and at Middleton Park in Long Beach.

Willetts said more than 100 Shriners will be involved in preparing two tons of fish fillets, a ton of cole slaw and a ton of potato salad for the event, which will continue until the food runs out or until around 7 p.m. Cost is \$3.50 per person.

He said the club hopes to raise at least \$16,000, with 98 percent of the proceeds to go toward the care of crippled children. Some 26 Brunswick County youngsters are patients at the Crippled Children's Hospital in Greenville, S.C., he said.

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