



PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

OUR ENVIRONMENT includes the cultural surroundings as well as the natural things around us.

## Man And His Environment

BY BILL FAVER

Sometimes we forget man is also a part of the natural environment and tend to treat this highest form of animal life as if he were excluded from the laws of nature. Earth Day this year can remind us how man (and woman, of course) as a species has developed into what we feel is the most highly developed and creative life form. (That's from our perspective!)

When we talk about man's environment we usually think of all his surroundings and that includes the natural world and the cultural adaptations man has brought about to survive and to live comfortably. We can also think about our immediate environment, the things right around us, like our homes, families, neighborhoods. This can include woods and fields, marshes and seashores, but it also includes houses and roads, stores and offices, cars and traffic lights and detours.

Increasingly, we are forced to broaden our envi-

ronments to include rainforests, deserts, mountains, global affairs, and far-away countries. We are well aware that many of the environmental issues of our day are global, like warming from the greenhouse effect, acid rain, and others.

The days are gone when we could be isolated and removed from most of what is happening. We are losing much of our regional and rural cultural differences with the passing of those days and that is unfortunate.

Of course we are a long way from being all alike. We still have diverse habitat and a variety of cultural heritage. But a trip on any interstate highway will show you what I'm saying. For most of the way the only thing that lets you know you're in a different place is the road sign.

Perhaps we should never try to talk about our environment by seeking to divide it into the natural environment or the cultural environment. For our surroundings are our surroundings, whether they are grass and trees or bricks and stones. And man is a part of the it all, both natural and cultural. On this week of Earth Day-1991, try to put a little more "natural" in your environment!



FAVER

## Stop Brings Encounter With Unlikely Travelers

Stopping there was just a whim, but what followed was one of the most singular events I can recall.

Don and I were traveling up 19E on our way someplace else last Thursday when we decided on the spur of the moment to stop at Elk River Falls. We could do that; we were on vacation in one of our all-time favorite places, the North Carolina mountains.

When it comes to waterfalls, Elk River's isn't spectacular. But we like it, and unlike Linville Falls, usually fellow visitors are scarce. As the Elk River passes through the edge of the Pisgah National Forest in Avery County, near the communities of Elk Park and Cranberry, it makes a sudden drop, cascading into a calming pool before rushing on.

It's a peaceful, restorative spot, offering the same ease of mind that makes long walks on the beach so inviting.

The road to the falls itself offers a marked contrast to the resort communities, such as Elk River Club, that dot the nearby mountains. The single-lane dirt trail passes trout ponds, campgrounds, a few seasonal homes, and a series of shacks that are year-round homes to the people who live there. A typical home might have a plastic covered porch on the porch, with partly-dismantled vehicles studding the yard and a tiny garden scratched out of the red sediment and rock along the floodplain of the river.

From a picnic area along the river, a short hike leads to a spectacular view of the gushing falls. A rounded

Susan Usher



one blue-winged oddfellow. They meandered from boulder to boulder, touching lightly before moving on, occasionally disappearing again behind us.

Don and I scrambled over the rock, trying to find the home base for this bevy of butterflies. We found it after only a brief search, a pile of debris left by the storm's flood tide a week earlier. The butterflies were resting around a particular twig, huddled together wing to wing, with fellow flyers on all sides. As one butterfly landed, it would bump another aside.

Amazing. We didn't know what to think.

Were the butterflies migrating? If so, from where to where? Why stop at this beautiful but isolated spot on Elk River?

Perhaps these are migrating butterflies who stop every spring at the falls, or maybe it's their breeding ground. Someday Don and I might do some checking.

Meanwhile, we'll cherish this serendipitous encounter with one of God's most beautiful creations.

### Write Us

The Beacon welcomes letters to the editor. All letters must be signed and include the writer's address. Under no circumstances will unsigned letters be printed. Letters should be legible. The Beacon reserves the right to edit libelous comments. Address letters to The Brunswick Beacon, P. O. Box 2558, Shallotte, N. C. 28459.

## MORE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Don't Inflict More Hurt On Those Already Victimized

To the editor:

It was with interest that I read the recent decision of the board of education to save local school system funds by freezing the salaries of certain employees who have been placed into lower positions while maintaining their salaries in the former position because Fair Labor Laws protect that.

It was especially disheartening to have one board member quoted as saying that "it is unfair to put somebody in a lower position and pay them more money than someone else in that position." I wish to say to the board member that the important issue here should not be "paying" of these employees—many of whom have already suffered much in the way of humiliation, embarrassment, and denial of career advancement and professional upgrading in their administrative fields—but the "putting" of these people into these positions.

As an employee who is affected by this action, I urge the board to review not only the number of employees and the amount of money involved, but more importantly, the unfair, improper and inefficient employment practices that have been practiced for many years and condoned by various boards.

This has been done, no doubt, through either lack of knowledge on the board's part or inadequate legal counsel regarding the legal rights of employees in the education profession. Past boards have been lax in requiring superintendents to appropriately evaluate and to take action against incompetent employees (if that were the case) through established job performance evaluation

procedures. Perhaps the superintendents and boards should be held accountable for replacing the monies spent to correct the problem?

It is my belief that closer scrutiny of the situation will reveal that some of these demotions involve employees who were quite capable and qualified and that the transfers were too often made involuntarily, without prior notice or due process, without any negative job performance evaluations, and for reasons that were personal, political, or arbitrary. Would a better solution to the problem not be to return them to the experienced positions for which they are qualified and let them again work and be paid on the level that they should be functioning?

To my colleagues who may feel resentment towards the "overpaid" employees, please consider that it could be you in the next "go-round" and that some of these folks were placed in lesser positions involuntarily while being replaced by either others with less qualifications and ability and sometimes merely as a "political payback" to those in power.

Brunswick County taxpayers must realize that the most effective expenditures of monies will be realized and educator morale will improve when those making educational decisions are held accountable for fairly evaluating and following personnel policies that do not violate the rights of individuals.

My point: there are many ways that should be considered for saving a few dollars for the school system other than inflicting more hurt and disadvantage on a few employees who have already been victimized

for a long time.

I realize that the present board is trying to "correct" some of the past history and I urge them to take a careful look at personnel employment policies and procedures. This seems important in the interest of the best utilization of the most qualified staff and also to avoid unnecessary costs for contract buyouts and in litigation. Staff morale will also be enhanced when employees feel that all employees are treated more fairly and professionally.

Jean Parker  
Caswell Beach

### Unique Beach Welcome Created

To the editor:

Far too many months have slipped by without expressing our appreciation and personal pride for the attractive entrance as we drive on to Holden Beach.

I know Mrs. Margaret Vasco has dreamed big dreams and given countless hours and effort to leave Holden Beach more charming than she found it many years ago. With each passing season, we have been enchanted with the beautiful artwork created by Judy Bryan. We know there are many others who have been dedicated to this project and we apologize that we are unable to honor them because we do not know their names.

However, the committee deserves a special recognition for their combined efforts have created a unique welcome to each person who comes to Holden Beach.

Mrs. Jane Cole  
High Point and Holden Beach

### Don't Do Anything To Taint Water Supply

To the editor:

We have a newly-constructed home on Holden Beach that my wife and I plan to spend our retirement years in and we wish to express our concern about a new hog slaughtering plant that is proposed in Bladen County.

We agree with the mayor of Southport and our Holden Beach town manager, Diane Clark, in their concerns about our Cape Fear River water supply expressed in the April 11 Beacon.

We happen to live in upstate New York and receive our water from a large underground aquifer and this artesian water is extremely pure. We

appreciate this, but we are constantly fighting people who want to develop on or near the aquifer. We have won every dispute so far.

We also live near Lake George, N.Y. in the Adirondack Mountains and it is one of the prettiest lakes in the country but it is polluted to the extent that the million dollar beach has to be closed from time to time because of runoff pollution not unlike Lockwood Folly which has to restrict its oyster harvesting from time to time because of runoff after rain storms.

This is the most important point that Mr. Caroon makes when he says, "Most of the swine will be raised in and around the plant, and

rain will wash the hog waste into the river." This will not be treated waste effluent.

My own feeling is to go slow whenever there is a threat to the water supply. The South Brunswick Islands are receiving more and more publicity and more and more people are looking there for pleasant living, but if word gets around that the water supply may become tainted, the private building increase will wither away and no one will be happy.

William and Sarah Hoffman  
Schenectady, New York  
and Holden Beach

### SOUTH WIND SIGNS

CUSTOM PAINTED SIGNS  
ANY SIZE  
SPECIALIZING IN  
CUSTOM ELECTRIC SIGNS  
INSTALLATION & REPAIR  
754-8439  
HOLDEN BEACH ROAD

### Make Earth Day Everyday



Brunswick Clean  
County Dept.  
919-253-4691

### More News From The Land Of Darkness

To the editor:

More news from the land of darkness. Seems that one of our latest concerns is having house numbers that can be read from the street. Try reading a ten foot high number on a house with a ten foot high sodium vapor light between you and the number.

There's more! We are now embarked on a crusade to eliminate all wildlife from the island. What started as an effort to reduce fire hazards has escalated to complete razing of empty lots, thereby removing cover for small animals and birds.

Seems someone complained about rats and snakes (which eat rats and very seldom bite people) and in a typical over-reaction, our governing body decided to turn a

bush hog loose. That's a big mowing machine. It also removes a lot of the vegetation we need to hold the island together.

If you were concerned about a baby turtle becoming confused and lost on the beach, you should see a rabbit frantically searching for its nest in a stripped lot.

The next logical step is to have a tourist (please bow) complain about the noise made by our Purple Martins and there go our martin houses. Better that we remove some of the extraneous life forms that we put in eight-bedroom rental houses that were built under a four-bedroom septic tank permit.

J. A. Fournier  
Holden Beach

Welcome to the Beach Cafe!  
Our Commitment To You...

**CALABASH SEAFOOD BUFFET**

Breakfast Bar

LUNCH DAILY 11:02

SEAFOOD BUFFET 5

BREAKFAST BAR 7

Great Food!

Great Service!

Great Value!

**\$3.99**

**\$8.95**

**\$3.99**

On the Causeway Holden Beach 842-5515

Thank you for your patronage!

Why Wait Months For Delivery?  
We Have In Stock - Ready for Delivery  
These Items and More!!!

- \* 67 Living Room Sets \* 34 Sleepers
- \* 36 Dinettes and Dining Rooms
- \* 78 Recliners, Rockers and Swivel Rockers
- \* 27 Bedrooms (open stock) \* Odd Chests starting at \$49<sup>00</sup>

DIRECT FACTORY OUTLET FOR HIGH POINT BEDDING

These items plus many others are ready for delivery... Today!!

Check Us Out!

**WAREHOUSE FURNITURE Distributors**

Hwy. 90 Nixons Crossroads, North Myrtle Beach  
(803) 249-8874

WHOLESALE

WE CAN FURNISH OR REFURNISH ANY CONDO, HOME, HOTEL OR MOTEL

DELIVERY AVAILABLE

RETAIL

FINANCING AVAILABLE  
90 DAYS  
SAME AS CASH