

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Play It Safe On The Seas: PFDs Are Meant To Be Worn

It's too late for the three Greensboro men who lost their lives May 28 after their boat sank off Shallotte Inlet.

That tragedy might have been averted had the four fishermen on that 24-foot motorboat been wearing life vests or some other form of what the U.S. Coast Guard refers to as a "personal flotation device."

The one man who survived apparently grabbed for a jacket as the boat began going down. It ripped in two, but Gary Richardson held on to his half of a PFD and lived.

Boating regulations don't require wearing PFDs; they just say you've got to have one available for each person on board a boat. The vests can even be stashed under a seat, out of the way.

After all, they're bulky, cumbersome and sometimes uncomfortable. Who needs them?

Anyone who steps in a boat, that's who needs them. PFDs are meant to be worn, not stashed somewhere to collect dust or mildew.

If you're the "captain" of the boat, show respect for life. Wear your PFD. Make sure there are enough PFDs on board for every passenger to have one also. Then make sure they put them on and leave them on for the duration of the trip.

Play it safe on the water.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thief Created Ugly Memories

To the editor:
 Please publish the following open letter to the public:
 I don't know who you are but you will recognize yourself immediately. You're the one who stole the 9.9 horsepower Johnson motor on Stanley Road the evening of Saturday, May 25.

Sure, it was just a small motor on a little fishing boat. But besides violating my rights by illegally taking my property, you stole something from my husband and me that can't be replaced. The boat and motor had been given to us by my father just before he died in February of this year.

This was our first trip to Holden Beach since my father's death. Unfortunately, we never got to enjoy the boat even one time because of you.

I have many wonderful vacation memories of Holden Beach, both as a child and an adult. Why do you want to create ugly memories for me now? Why not keep Brunswick County a fun, safe and secure place to visit?

From the bottom of my heart I sincerely hope whatever benefit you derived from stealing this motor was worth the cost paid by my family.

Deborah L. Broome
 Concord

Here's How You Can Help

To the editor:
 Last year, from January through August, the Brunswick County Animal Shelter had to pick up 3,108 animals. Of that number, 2,366 had to be killed because no one adopted them. We, the taxpayers, have to support the cost of the shelter. Naturally, the shelter only has room for so many animals.

This large number represents irresponsible people. If you are a responsible person, unless you have a valuable animal whose offspring can be sold, you will help to prevent this carnage of death. Have your animals spayed or neutered.

Since the cost of this surgery is rather expensive, the Brunswick County Animal Welfare League was formed to help pay for the cost. You can help in two ways. Join the League for only \$5. Throughout the county are miniature dog houses for you help with donations. Even some change will help.

The other way you can help if you have an animal that needs surgery, call Jack or Jewel Perry at 754-4228 to find out how to get our financial help for the surgery.

At this time we are meeting on the last Wednesday of the month at 1 at the Senior Citizens Center. We are investigating a location that can hold more members than one of the small quiet meeting rooms at the center.

Teddi Neal
 Bolivia

Children Deserve A Break

To the editor:
 As a parent I oppose a 12-month school period. Our children deserve a break just like everyone else.

Everyone who works has a vacation at least once a year or more. How would other parents feel if they had to work 12 months with no vacation? They probably wouldn't like it at all. I know I would not like it.

So give our children a break, along with the sheriff's department. If you send students to school for 12 months, a lot of them will drop out at 16. Also the sheriff's department will have their hands full because it could increase crime in the area.

So, Superintendent Hankins, you better think twice about 12 months of school. I don't know how many parents are against 12 school months, but I am and I'll fight for my kids' rights. The school don't get enough money now and it might be a lot worse for 12 school months. So I'll keep on fighting.

Tammy D. Todd
 Route 2, Supply

Good Job Covering Tourney

To the editor:
 I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to your newspaper, and especially to Doug Rutter for his fine coverage of the North Myrtle Beach Rotary Club 2nd annual King Mackerel Tournament.

Doug was the only local reporter who took the time to visit our awards ceremony at Harbourgate Marina in North Myrtle Beach. Keep up the great job.

John Schwab, Committee Chairman
 NMB Roary King Mackerel Tournament

(Letters To The Editor Continue On Following Page)

Having To Learn Our ABCs All Over Again

I'm not a businessman. However, understanding North Carolina's Alcoholic Beverage Control system requires a business mind.

In my mind, I've always placed ABC stores in the same category as pharmacies. To me, it's difficult to picture either as a business, but that's exactly what they are.

The restrictions placed on buying alcohol or drugs (legal ones) always confuse my brain. Liquor stores are not found on every corner. In North Carolina, I think that is a welcome sight.

ABC stores operate by selling a product. Prescriptions are not needed to buy alcoholic beverages, but buyers must be 21 or older.

Recently, a controversy has brewed between the county's nine municipal ABC systems that each operate a store and Brunswick County's ABC system, which operates a Holden Beach Road store that opened last year.

The county is establishing an ABC system that apparently is sapping profits from existing municipal systems. There has been talk of a possible merger of the 10 stores, but...

From there the arguments fly. There are both pros and cons to a

Terry Pope



merger. Those who know how to run ABC stores talk about indirect operating expenses, bonded indebtedness and working capital. That leaves me out.

I'm slowly learning to see ABC stores as businesses, in the same light as a shoe store or pizza parlor, but it takes practice. I want to fully understand the whole touchy situation, the fears of municipal ABC store managers. They believe it all boils down to this: a little brother (county system) is trying to take over an empire.

I'd like to share what I've learned in a language that I understand. There are two types of state ABC systems, a controlled system and an open system.

North Carolina is one of 18 states that operate controlled systems. An attempt is made by law to regulate

alcohol use, but the most important point is that net profits in a controlled system revert to the state.

In an open system, as in South Carolina, net profits from alcohol sales revert to the owner of the store.

Yet only in the Tarheel state does the profit from ABC systems stay in the county or town where the sales are made. Not one penny of local or state funds (or tax money) is used to operate ABC stores in North Carolina.

That's both good and bad. ABC stores struggle just to survive. In Brunswick County, each store has its own expenses, rent, etc. The state charges a fee of 85 cents per case to deliver liquor to an ABC store, regardless of where it is located.

Horace Deudney, administrator for Forsyth County's three municipal systems, spoke to Brunswick County ABC officials recently. He told them how the liquor business nationwide is taking a beating—sales are down.

"The problems we face today in the spirits industry are the same problems we faced with the tobacco industry," said Deudney, who spent over 30 years working for R.J. Reynolds in Winston-Salem.

Hearing that there was a decline

in alcohol sales started to brighten my day, but I quickly remembered who filled the seats around me at that ABC meeting. They were ABC store managers and ABC board members who took it as terrible news, because an ABC store is a business, not a service.

Tougher driving while impaired laws and awareness programs and the recent health consciousness kick are reasons for declining ABC sales, Deudney said. "The day of the happy drunk is over," he added.

So ABC systems are fighting back by building stores that are more attractive and stores that offer self-service convenience to its estimated 52 percent female clientele.

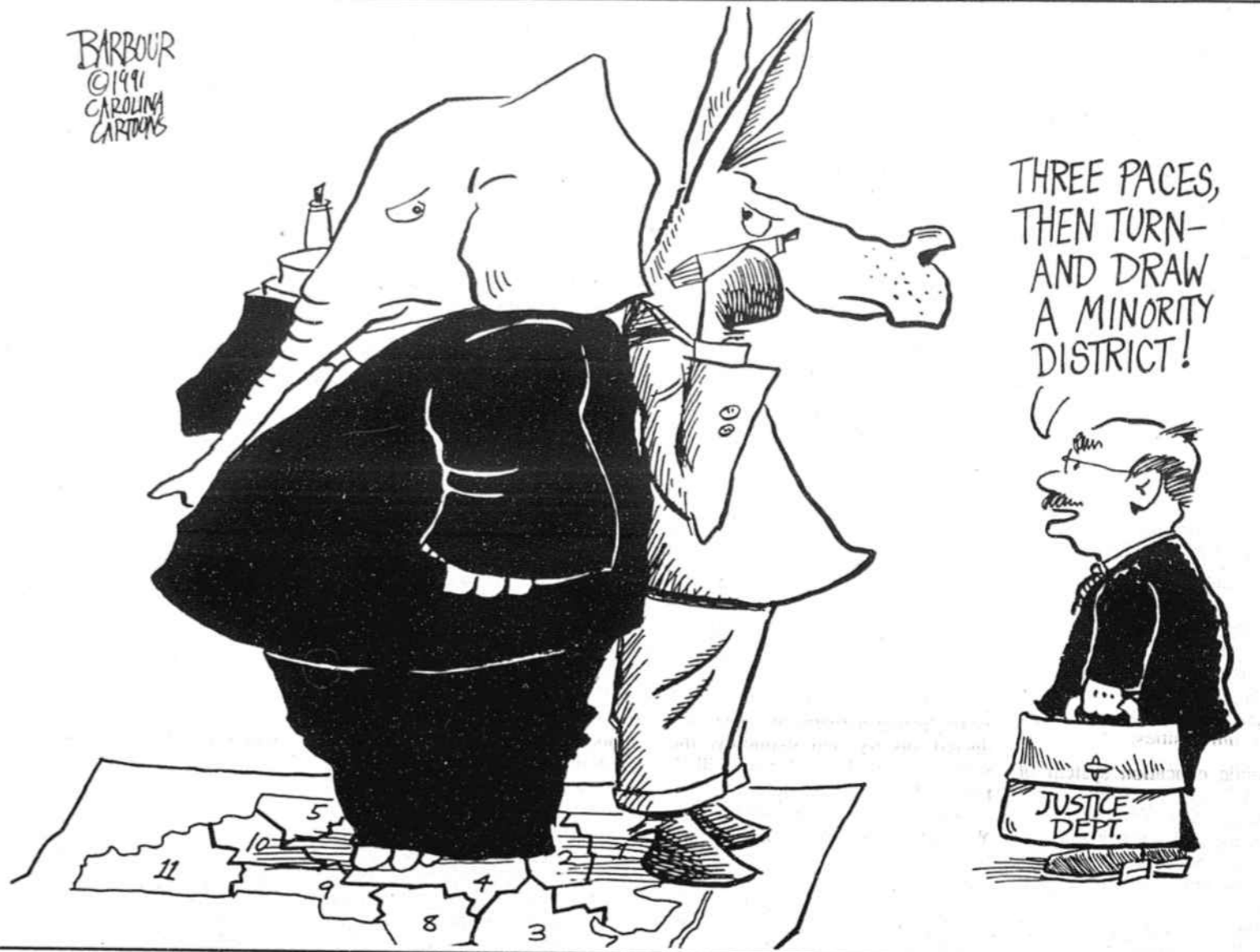
In Forsyth County, Deudney is locating as many stores in shopping centers as possible. Developers want the ABC stores there to lure customers to the center, which will also help rent other retail spaces.

Inside those ABC stores are shopping baskets and attractive aisle displays. It's called marketing.

ABC stores are, after all, another business. When profits are up, so too are revenues to the towns and other community organizations.

When profits are up, it keeps the town's tax rate from going up.

BARBOUR
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 CAROLINA
 CARTOONS



State General Assembly Looks More Like Us Now

The times they are a'changing.

For the first time in decades, white male Democrats no longer hold a majority of seats in the North Carolina General Assembly.

That's the word from the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research in Raleigh in its latest publication, *Article II: A Guide to the 1991-92 N.C. Legislature*.

The year I graduated from high school, 1971, white male Democrats held a total of 79 percent of the seats in the legislature. The Senate had only white males, while the House had two black and two female Democrats along with the white male Republicans.

These days white male Democrats comprise 46 percent of the House membership, at 55 members, while they have remained in a majority at 54 percent (27 members) in the Senate.

This decline is concurrent with a move toward greater diversity in membership among other groups—



Susan Usher

more women legislators in both parties, as well as more black male and female Democrats and white male Republicans, according to Kim Kerschull, a policy analyst at the center and author of the guide.

Blacks now account for 11 percent of the legislature's total membership (19 members), the highest level since the turn of the century. The total number of women remains stable at 25, or 15 percent. The first Native American was elected to the House since 1981; there have been no Native American members in the Senate.

What does it all mean? Perhaps

more accurate representation of the people of North Carolina. Case in point: a marital rape bill that ran into trouble with conservative male legislators in 1987-88 and appeared headed for the scrap heap. But all 24 women legislators—liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, agreed unanimously to support it. According to former Rep. Sharon Thompson of Durham, a spokeswoman for Women Elect, the bill would not have passed without women legislators.

The legislature may be getting more diverse. It's also getting older. The average age in the House is 57, up from 49 back in 1971. The average age in the Senate is 58, up from 51 in 1971. As the average age rose, so did the number of retirees serving in the House (from 22 in 1989 to 28 in 1991). The Senate still has just six. Retirees account for about 20 percent of the total membership.

There's more, lots more, of this type of demographic information contained in the eighth edition of

Article II, along with some other useful stuff, such "bill success ratios" and overall effectiveness rankings for each member, district maps and committee listings.

Once upon a time, jokes equated the legislature with lawyers or would-be lawyers. I can't speak for the would-be part, but for some it will probably be good news that the number of lawyers in the legislature has shown a considerable decline, from 45 in 1989 to 35 in 1991. On the other hand, we're seeing an increase in insurance agents, Realtors, farmers and health care workers in the legislature.

Get a copy; it makes for interesting reading. In fact, it's not recommended for bedtime. It might keep you awake.

Copies are \$20, plus \$1 tax, plus \$1.50 postage and handling from the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, P.O. Box 430, 5 W. Hargett Street, Suite 701, Raleigh, N.C. 27602, 919-832-2839.

The World Needs More Dreamers Like Emma

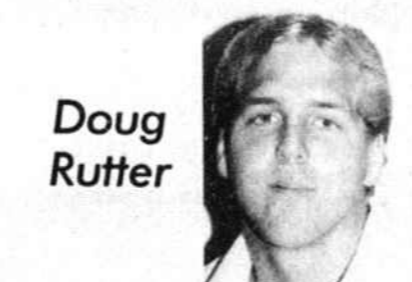
I have some tragic news to report. One member of the British duo that came through Brunswick County earlier this year on a world bicycling tour has died.

Emma Scrimshaw, who had plans to travel the globe with companion Steve Bradford, was killed May 16 near Des Moines, Iowa. The 23-year-old woman was hit by a truck while bicycling on Iowa Highway 163.

I had the pleasure of meeting Emma and Steve when they came through Brunswick County in March. They had big plans.

The couple from Nottingham, England, had started their trip around the world in November in Miami. They had logged nearly 1,500 miles by the time they crossed the North Carolina state line on U.S. 17.

They planned to see the United States and 31 other countries on their mountain bikes. They planned



Doug Rutter

to cover six continents over a five year period and travel 50,000 miles.

While exposing themselves to the cultures of the world, they were trying to pass on what they discovered to a special group of children with learning disabilities back in England.

They planned to send packets of information to students at the Hayes School in Kent County to let them know about geography and culture.

Ironically, the story of Emma's death as told in the May 17 edition

of *The Des Moines Register* has a Brunswick County connection. Mrs. Joseph Hewett of Shallotte brought us the issue last week.

On their way through the county in late winter, Don and Deborah Arnold, who live in Des Moines and own property at Brick Landing, befriended the cyclists.

The British couple spent two nights with the Arnolds at Brick Landing Plantation before continuing their journey through North Carolina.

They hadn't planned to visit Iowa at all, but changed their itinerary so they could help celebrate Mrs. Arnold's birthday May 16.

With the birthday party on their minds, Miss Scrimshaw and Bradford were pedaling their way toward Des Moines on a four-lane divided highway when their dream trip came to an end. A bread truck struck and killed the young woman.

They had traveled just 9,000 of the 50,000 miles and not even covered one of the 32 countries on their map.

To pay for their extended vacation, the couple had sold just about everything they owned in England. They had left their homeland with no ties.

A lot of people would say that's the craziest thing they've ever heard. But I think it's one of the neatest things I've ever heard. I respect anybody with the guts to do something like that.

The world is chock full of people who are willing to put another person down for doing something exciting with their life. Maybe that's what's wrong with the world.

Maybe we need a few more people like Emma Scrimshaw, somebody who wasn't afraid to dream a little and ride her bike around the world.