

MORE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Soles Helped Ethics Bill Pass

To the editor:
Thanks to the efforts of N.C. Senator R.C. Soles (D-Columbus), the 1991 session of the N.C. General Assembly enacted a much needed ethics/lobbying bill which creates both better government and more openness in the governmental process.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary I Committee, Sen. Soles ensured a fair and thorough hearing on this ethics bill in the face of intensive private lobbyists' pressures to weaken and kill the bill. Sen. Soles also successfully directed the crucial passage of the bill on the Senate floor which then cleared the way for its passage into law.

As sponsor of the ethics/lobbying bill, I appreciate Sen. Soles' firm commitment to greater openness in government and his substantial political influence and effectiveness. The bill, which requires lobbyists

and their employers to disclose their lobbying expenses, to identify specific legislators they entertained, and prohibits lobbyists from contributing to campaign fund-raisers for individual legislators during odd numbered years, has been heralded by most of the major North Carolina daily newspapers and public interest organizations as one of the most significant bills of the legislative session.

This bill provides a modest foundation for more public information about the influences on public law and public policy, and in future years, it will be strengthened. None of this would be possible had it not been for the steadfast commitment of Sen. Soles. His efforts have made government better and more responsive to the people, and all of us are very fortunate to have a man like R.C. Soles in public service.

Rep. Walter B. Jones, Jr.
9th District, Farmville

Support Science Foundation

To the editor:
Much has been written about the failure of our school system and its graduates who are illiterate.

It is apparent why we are not graduating competent future mathematicians and scientists. How many scholars are there among our students? What is being done to rectify this appalling situation?

Each month the *Washington Post* newspaper prints informative articles submitted by the National Education Association. Is the state NEA taking steps to improve the education of our students?

We do have some dedicated teachers. We never hear from them. Is it because they fear political repercussions?

We have tried to make the school board non-partisan but we failed. It isn't often that a member of the Brunswick Board of Education offers innovative ideas that would enhance the education of the children in our schools. The shortsightedness of this board must be apparent to everyone who is concerned.

For this board, it is still business as usual: you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. This board reeks of politics! Some board members have tunnel vision. They fail to see the whole picture that would serve the children. They see only what they have on their personal agenda.

Where is the progress? Certainly not in the CAT, PSAT or SAT scores. Is this a concentrated effort to move as many children as possible on to a technical school? Thank God we do have some students who are capable of self-motivation.

School sports pull people and students together but now is the time for rah-rah academics. We should not be proud of the fact that we have risen from the bottom of the barrel to second from the bottom. Everyone should support the efforts to establish the Science Foundation.

Eileen Kellagher
Long Beach

Do More Than Complain About Things

To the editor:
It's time for those interested to file for public office, and we're certainly off to a slow start. Unfortunately, it's not likely to pick up, either.

That's a shame, considering how many complaints I've heard about the job being done by those in office now. Funny thing, it's rarely about a particular individual. It's usually about the "board" (it matters little which one) or "those politicians," or the big "they."

Well, I've had it. If everyone is so upset with the things "they" are doing to us, why aren't more filing? Too busy? What about those who work full time, raise a family and still try to help our community? They aren't too busy.

Wake up people. We put them there. So if we don't like the way "they" are running the show then we should do something about it.

Those of "us" who didn't even vote should shut up. You gave your right to an opinion; at least until next time.

Don't make excuses and complain. Either do it yourself and file for office or hold your peace and vote every last one of them out of office.

As for me, I'm thinking about doing something about it and in the meantime, at least I voted.

Donna Hughes
Shallotte

Don't Leave Dangerous Items Behind

To the editor:
This letter is directed to the person(s) who carelessly left the remains of a fish, complete with a three-pronged hook and lure, in the vicinity of the beach at Ocean Isle.

My cat Max discovered your little gift and when I found him he had your fish hook firmly imbedded in the roof of his mouth and the lure hanging out. Needless to say, the poor animal suffered greatly and there was some expense involved in having it professionally removed.

My veterinarian tells me this is a common occurrence with dogs and cats alike during the summer months. All pet owners and children with bare feet will deeply appreciate your cooperation in not leaving these dangerous items behind after you have gone fishing.

Pat Loftus
Ocean Isle Beach

Babson Deserved Support Instead Of Being Fired

To the editor:
After attending a board of health meeting last night (July 22) where I was not allowed to speak, I have decided to write this letter.

Zelma Babson has been fired. Anyone who remembers the pound in past days before she was hired knows what a disaster this will bring.

Ms. Babson set standards for the pound at or above the standards of many professional breeders. These standards must be maintained for the animals' sake.

Yes, there are some unhappy employees. When a supervisor sets standards high and expects rules to be followed explicitly there are those who wish to take shortcuts.

Instead of firing the person setting the standards, they should stand behind her. If the employees do not wish to maintain these standards, they should quit instead of trying to lower these standards.

I am sure in her fight for the animals Ms. Babson has stepped on a few toes—probably a lot of toes. In Brunswick County this is a no-no. Instead of blasting Ms. Babson they should have been glad she was there.

Sarah Williamson
Route 1, Ash



Watch Summer Gulls

BY BILL FAVER

During the winter months those of us who choose to feed the gulls on the beach can easily draw a crowd with a loaf of old bread. Summer is different, mainly because natural food is more plentiful for the gulls and because more people on the beach usually mean fewer birds. But we can still enjoy the gulls and terns in their summer attire as they fly along the strand.

Gulls are long-winged, swimming birds with stout legs and web feet. Their tails are square or rounded and this makes a good way to tell them from the terns, who usually have forked tails. Gulls seldom dive into the water, preferring to alight on the water when feeding.

The largest summer gull on our coast is the big Herring Gull. The adults are white with gray back and upper wings with black wing tips. They stand 22-26 inches and have a wingspread of about 56 inches. The feet are pinkish and the yellow bill has a red spot on the lower part.

Immature birds are brownish and take three seasons to reach maturity. Herring Gulls eat fish, crustacea, marine worms, bird's eggs, shellfish, and insects.

The Ring-billed Gull has a 48-inch wing-

span and is about 18-20 inches tall when standing. They are more plentiful in winter but some may be seen in summer, though they probably do not nest here. Adult birds are white with gray back and upper wings with black wing tips. They have yellow feet and yellow bills with a dark ring at the tip. Younger birds are mottled with gray have pinkish feet and a dark-tipped flesh-colored bill. These birds feed on waste grain and insects as they follow tractors in fields. They also feed along the shore for offerings from the sea.

The only black-headed gull in our area is the Laughing Gull. This permanent resident has a white body and tail, a dark gray back and upper wings with a white border on the edge of the wings, and dark feet and bill. The black head changes to white with a dark smudge in winter plumage. The bird is smaller than the other two, about 15-17 inches tall with a 36-inch wingspan. The Laughing Gull gets its name from the high-pitched laughter of the call. This gull catches fish and shrimp in the shallows and eats crabs on mud flats.

Look for these three summer gulls when you are along the shore and enjoy their part in the natural environment. Besides having the role of clean-up squad as scavengers along our beaches, they give us beauty and movement and gracefulness as they soar above the ever-moving water.

PHOTO BY BILL FAVER
LAUGHING GULLS are among the three summer gulls along our coast.

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