

# THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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PAGE 4-A, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1991

## In '92, Why Not Make It Truly A 'Big Sweep?'

Bravo, Big Sweepers. The people who love our area beaches them have done a great job once again cleaning them of litter.

Each year the statewide "Big Sweep" campaign seems to turn out even more volunteers eager to sweep the coast clean across the South Brunswick Islands. While those of us who live here often take the nearby shores for granted, volunteers travel hundreds of miles each September to come clean up "our" beaches.

In fact, the type and amount of litter volunteers are hauling off the beaches these days differs from the early years of the program. The volunteers are getting pickier, gathering up tiny items they might have overlooked the first years of the program when there was bulkier debris to be hauled away.

While this annual effort to scour the beaches must be maintained, it's time Brunswick County residents focused their attention on the other waterways we are so fortunate to have—the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and a multitude of rivers.

Surely the banks and even the shallows of the Shalotte River need a good cleaning up—within the town limits and all the way to the inlet.

All or portions of the shorelines of the Calabash, Brunswick, Waccamaw and rivers could also use an annual scouring.

Statewide what was once called Beach Sweep has broadened its focus to include other more inland waterways and is now called Big Sweep. Except for Southport, Brunswick County has generally not followed suit.

It's time. The first year would be the most difficult, when volunteers would be tackling the accumulated debris of several lifetimes, from abandoned tires and appliances to who knows what.

This is the kind of project the dormant Keep America Beautiful program—now supposedly housed in the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department—could jump on, working now with local towns and communities, commercial trash haulers, garden clubs, civic clubs, churches and businesses to plan a massive inland "sweep" next fall. Such a project takes more communication than money.

Of course, there's no reason local communities should wait for leadership from another source. Any of them could start now organizing a cleanup, challenging others to do the same.

## County Plays Stubborn Games With State

Some Brunswick County folks are stubborn. They'll argue with a stop sign. But sometimes it pays to be stubborn, until you at least make a point.

County commissioners recently showed no signs of backing down from a good fight with the N.C. General Assembly.

The guys in Raleigh have mandated that counties reach into the magic hat and pull out money for programs that local governments had no idea they would be funding this fiscal year.

House Bill 37 also forces county governments to increase their building inspection fees by \$5.

For a county that's among the top in annual housing and population growth, the increase is bothersome. Especially when it wasn't your idea, and the local developers and homeowners are already breathing fire over tax increases and user fees.

"What happens if we don't?" asked District 2 Commissioner Jerry Jones at a recent board meeting.

The other board members all

Terry Pope



looked at one another. You could see the wheels turning inside their heads. This board of commissioners likes a good, stubborn fight.

"The state will still want its money," said Doug Ledgett, assistant to the county manager.

When Chairman Kelly Holden asked for a motion to increase the fee, he didn't get one. The county still hasn't raised its inspection fee, apparently in defiance of the bill. So what happens now?

To say that commissioners are still mad over actions taken by the 1991 N.C. General Assembly, and a select few of its members, is putting it mildly. The board is still fuming over how the state passed costs for

juvenile detention services on to local governments, after the counties had already approved their budgets.

Where do we all find extra cash in between pay periods? We don't. Where are counties suppose to find the extra cash in the middle of a budget year? They don't.

Commissioners hesitantly gave in to the fight over funding for juvenile detention services, voting to find the money somewhere should a defendant need emergency medical care.

Under state law, juveniles cannot be housed with adult prisoners, and Brunswick County doesn't have a juvenile detention center. The younger criminals must be kept in a facility in Wilmington, at a cost of \$15 per day for the county with the rest paid by the state.

In 1985, the county signed a contract with the state indicating that agreement for its detention of youths. But as time goes on, the state has budget problems. We've all heard that story.

At issue is the cost of medical care for those youths. The state has

mandated that counties now pay their medical bills.

"Although I may not like it," said County Manager David Clegg, "we have no choice."

A county cannot foresee in June how many juveniles will be held in the center while awaiting trial here in Brunswick County. That number may rise and fall with the moon.

"The amount is up in the air," said Clegg.

Currently, there is one juvenile being held for Brunswick County in the New Hanover County facility. With the cost of today's medical care skyrocketing, one trip to the hospital could wipe out the county's budget for juvenile services.

"If the state would have somehow made it clear to counties during the budget process, we could have lived with it," said Clegg.

But instead, the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing, and perhaps doesn't care or even want to know. It seems stubbornness is a trait found in other parts of this Tarheel state too.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Change Back To Basics

To the editor:  
 The article published in the *Beacon* Sept. 11 concerning the Quest program in our public schools deserves some comments.

I know nothing about the Quest program. However, if it's no better than the rest of the curriculum which has already proved to be a failure, then it should be removed.

Until 1950 we had the best educational system on earth. In the early 50s some organized left-leaning pressure groups led by the teachers union the National Education Association (N.E.A.) began to change the curriculum; social studies and internationalism replaced basic education.

The little red school house became a center for indoctrination. Whatever our children have become it is not their fault. When children are taught that they sprang from monkeys and that their forefathers were brutal greedy men, can we expect them to respect themselves and others?

All we hear from our educators today is more money. We can put all the money on earth into our educational system and we won't get one cents worth of improvement until we change the curriculum back to the basics. There's an old saying, when everything else fails read the instructions.

In the 1940s and 50s we went to school in a wooden building that had fireplaces. We carried our own lunch but we were taught more in four years than today's kids are taught in twelve.

As for Dr. Lee Langston's statement concerning those who disagree with the Quest program, it was very unprofessional, even childish, using words like McCarthyism and schizophrenia. This was a low blow to say the least.

This country was built on the free exchange of ideas. We don't all agree but we should have respect for each other. I think he should apologize to Mrs. Janice Pope and others who may disagree.

William H. Stanley  
 Shallotte

### Stadium Is Lasting Benefit

To the editor:  
 The M. H. Rourk Stadium at West Brunswick High School was dedicated on Sept. 20. This stadium is a perfect example of how local government and a local civic organization such as the West Brunswick Boosters Club can work together for a common goal, resulting in a lasting benefit to the entire community.

Even so, this project would not have been possible had it not been for the gracious generosity of Dr. Henderson Rourk. This stadium is only the most recent evidence of a long and continued commitment of Dr. Rourk, his late wife, Ms. Marie Rourk, and his family to the betterment of our community.

There are many lasting monuments in this community which constantly remind us of the generosity and community spirit of Dr. Rourk and his entire family. On behalf of the Brunswick County Board of Education and as a private citizen I would like to express our deep and abiding appreciation to Dr. Henderson Rourk, his family and the West Brunswick Boosters Club for making this fine stadium a reality.

Douglas W. Baxley, Vice Chairman  
 Board of Education

(Letters Continue On Following Page)

## Savor A Brunswick Islands October

I may gladly retreat to the mountains in mid-summer, but give me October in the South Brunswick Islands.

Basking in the sun at midday, strolling along the beach or through a farm field in late evening. Sleeping without the air conditioner and with the windows flung wide open.

Who could ask for anything better?

Recent days have been perfect for the likes of me, though several of my friends already are getting a little grouchy. These buddies of mine thrive on heat and humidity. You'd

Susan Usher



think they grew up in Mississippi or somewhere in the Deep South. Or without sweat glands.

Me, all I need is sunlight. You can skip the sticky part.

## Lessons Should Be Learned From The Big Sweep

The Big Sweep '91 has come and gone—along with more than two tons of garbage from the Brunswick County coast.

The hundreds of volunteers who turned out last weekend to help clean up trash on our sandy shores did a great job.

I would personally like to thank each and every one of them for caring enough about the beaches to do something about it.

But unfortunately, the job isn't finished yet. It's really just begun. Getting rid of that unsightly litter that accumulated during the busy summer season is only half the battle.

The real reason for The Big Sweep, which is the nation's largest statewide litter cleanup, is to make people aware of the impacts of littering and educate the folks who are causing the problem.

Most people probably won't think about The Big Sweep until next year, when it will once again be held the third Saturday in September.

But before this year's cleanup becomes old news and drifts out of mind, I think it's important to emphasize two of the lessons that were learned this year.

First of all, coordinators saw that coastal communities that provide trash cans in convenient locations don't get as much litter as beaches without garbage cans.

"We seem to see that people

Doug Rutter



don't carry their garbage very far," said Lurdie Spence, who helped coordinate the statewide cleanup. "Where you have more trash depositories you have less trash."

In other words, most people will walk a few feet out of their way to throw out their trash if they see a garbage can nearby.

If the can is too far out of the way or there aren't any cans, some people will leave the trash on the beach.

What does it all mean? It means coastal towns concerned about litter can send a strong message by providing plenty of trash receptacles on the beach.

Instead of just posting a sign asking people to refrain from littering, towns should give visitors somewhere to throw out their trash.

What else did we learn this year? Ms. Spence said the most common types of beach litter found were plastic bags used for ice and bait; plastic, glass and metal beverage containers; and fishing line.

This is my favorite time of year. There's still a good bit of daylight left in which to work or play and you can do either without working up a sweat. There's a crispness in the air that invigorates.

Across the South Brunswick Islands there's plenty to do and see. So much, in fact, my husband and I are juggling schedules like crazy. It seems there's nothing we want to give up or do without.

No one can be bored around here in October. If you hear anyone griping about not having anything to do or any place to go, tell them to call

me. With so much to do, it's good that for a very short while about this time each year I feel like Superwoman, capable of accomplishing deeds of fantastic proportions. Shame it doesn't last very long.

In all the hustle and bustle of fall festival month, take a few minutes and just open up to October at the coast. Take a friend for a stroll on the beach. Take that cup of java or hot tea and sip it on the back porch. Plant a few flowers. Find a reason to get outside and savor a South Brunswick Islands October.

beachgoers have brought from home and simply left behind.

State coordinators estimate that 68 percent of the beach litter that was picked up in 1990 came from recreational users. From all indications, the same holds true for this year.

It's hard to believe, but the same people who would benefit most from clean beaches and waterways turn out to be its biggest polluters.

### THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Established Nov. 1, 1962  
 Telephone 754-6890  
 Published Every Thursday  
 At 4709 Main Street  
 Shallotte, N.C. 28459

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 Shallotte, N.C. 28459-2558

