

# THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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## Working Together Is A Good Idea

On a cold winter's day a woman passing by a pet shop noticed a group of puppies huddled together in the sunshine of a window. She was touched by what appeared to be their efforts to keep each other warm.

Stepping inside, she raised the point with the shopkeeper, who quickly set her straight. That's not why the puppies huddle, he told her. Rather, each is huddled up against the others in an effort to warm himself.

Jake Wicker, semi-retired from the Institute of Government, uses that story as an example of when governments successfully work together: When it's a situation where no one loses and everyone wins.

It's good to see local municipalities trying to work together for their mutual benefit.

Last week representatives of three coastal towns with a common concern—sewage disposal—met to begin discussing their needs and the potential for a regional sewer system to meet those needs. For economic and environmental reasons, more extensive sewer service is paramount to the region's health.

Such a system may be a long time developing, but taking this first step is still noteworthy. For apparently the first time, the towns are talking with each other and with surrounding major developments and landowners on this topic. A joint committee will look more closely at the regional concept. Each party is going to have a better idea of what the others are doing or want to do, and how that might fit into a regional master plan for development.

A regional approach could save everyone involved money by eliminating duplication of expenditures for overhead, equipment and the like.

Moving forward on the project will take a level of cooperation among local municipalities that hasn't been required before, but it could work if each community is willing to give a little in order to gain a great deal. While the county's support would be helpful, that Brunswick County isn't interested in taking a lead role in such a venture shouldn't surprise the the South Brunswick Islands communities or keep from moving forward with the project. The county has its hands full dealing with water service extensions and solid waste disposal.

Methods exist for working out "turf" related questions, such as how the system will be operated and how it will be paid for in a manner fair to all participants.

Whatever happens next, these towns deserve credit for their willingness to sit down with each and explore ways of working together on addressing the area's sewage disposal dilemma. It's to everyone's advantage for their efforts to succeed.

Let us hope they can devise a plan and move quickly enough to stay even with or ahead of the increasing demand for sewer services in our area.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Put The Blame Where It Belongs

To the editor:  
 I don't know if you, or how many people read the letter to the editor in the *Star-News* Aug. 10 from the man criticizing the veterinarians as vampires, the animal control officers as cannibals and the local government as being inefficient.

This all came about as WWAY-TV showed a picture of a dog that had been carried to the pound being put to death.

Even though it broke my heart to see it have to be done, as I am a great lover of animals, I wish to compliment WWAY-TV for trying to make the public and pet owners aware that it happens to thousands of animals that have to be put away every year due to the lack of responsibility of the pet owners.

The Humane Society in Wilmington and the Animal Welfare League here in Brunswick County do everything possible to avoid this situation. Having the animals spayed or neutered is the only solution. If they are never born they don't end up in the pound.

Brunswick County Animal Welfare League has a spay and neuter program to help defray the cost to people who feel they can't afford it.

As for our veterinarians, they spend years in school training to save the lives of animals. I would call them angels of mercy instead of vampires. The only way they destroy an animal is terminal illness or by request of the owner of the pet.

As for the animal control officers, I feel sorry for them as they are forced to do the job on account of the pet population explosion and irresponsible pet owners. It is the pet owners who are the murderers when they allow their pets to have litter after litter, then do nothing about it but dump them out on the neighbors or carry them to the pound. They are not ignorant of the fact that the animal will be killed if not adopted by some animal lover.

Maybe some people here in Brunswick County have criticized our animal control officers. Let's put the blame on the ones causing it. I'm sure the officers hate that part of their job, because two of them have confessed to me how hard it is to make the decision of which one has to die and which one lives to see if it can be adopted.

Thanks to *The Brunswick Beacon* for putting the pet of the week pictures in the paper and for the cooperation given to the Brunswick County Animal Welfare League by publishing our news articles.

Information about the spay and neuter program of the league can be obtained by calling 754-4896 or 754-6323. Wake up pet owners; let's do away with the gas chamber and cut the pet population explosion by being responsible for your animals.

Donations will be appreciated to help continue the program—P.O. Box 1965, Shallotte, N.C. 28459.

Alma Tolson  
 Shallotte

## It's Time For Sleeping America To Wake Up

Sorry folks, but I just can't let one of the year's juiciest news stories out of Washington pass by without throwing in my two cents of commentary.

In case you haven't heard, some of our esteemed Congressmen have been somewhat negligent lately in the area of personal finances. House members have bounced thousands of dollars in checks at the House bank, without penalty, and it was recently disclosed that lawmakers owe \$300,000 in unpaid food bills at the House and Senate restaurants.

I can't even stand calling them lawmakers anymore. So for the sake of argument, let's just call them law breakers.

Anyway, the response in Washington has been typical. Instead of getting rid of the real problem, the Congressmen decided to do away with the House bank and make everyone pay cash at the restaurants.

Gee, what a novel idea. Who would have ever thought of requiring the people who are trying to deal with a three trillion dollar national debt to have money in the bank to cover their own checks.

And what a wonderful idea it was to make those Congressmen pay for

Doug Rutter



their meals when they eat. That's just what the rest of America has been doing all along.

Is it any wonder this country is so fouled up? Most Congressmen are so out of touch with the average American citizen, there's no way they can be adequate representatives. First of all, they make \$125,000 a year. I'm not sure what the average American earns a year, but it doesn't even come close to six figures. You can bank on that.

Besides the comfy salary, Congressmen get a lot of perks. They have their own tennis courts, swimming pools and gyms. And they have free doctors, nurses and medical technicians on call in the Capitol.

The medical treatment is free to members of Congress, but you can

bet somebody pays for it. If you want to know who, try looking in the mirror.

Congressmen also have special license tags so they can park in no-parking zones around Washington. If they do get a ticket, the House sergeant at arms quietly helps take care of it.

They even get the best parking spots at airports, for crying out loud. Think of that the next time you go to the airport and have to walk six miles to the terminal.

I don't know any other Americans with those kinds of perks. You'd think the members of Congress were royalty or something.

I like what a spokesman for the National Taxpayers Union had to say about all this horse manure. "If they were all subjected to private sector performance standards, they'd all be out of a job."

I think it's sort of ironic that Congressmen are bouncing checks and failing to pay restaurant bills, yet have no problem grilling someone like Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas.

How can Congress judge anyone when House members have been writing rubber checks without pen-

alty and House and Senate members have been sneaking out of restaurants when the cashier isn't looking?

All of this heat over the way Congressmen handle their money and the money of taxpayers has breathed new life into a proposal to limit the terms of House and Senate members.

The president of the United States can only serve eight years, but there are no limits on how long someone can serve in Congress.

Some think this creates problems, because it sets the stage for people to become "lifetime politicians." Once somebody gets into office and gets strong financial backing, it can be very hard to get them out of office.

The United States Congress may have gone one step too far this time. They may have done just enough damage to wake up some Americans who have been sleeping for too long.

However, limiting terms isn't going to solve any problems in Congress. If the people don't care enough about who is representing them in Washington to vote, they deserve whatever they get.



## It's Like Stepping Into The 'Fast Lane'

"Get ready to enter another world," my brother turned and said to me.

The loaded pickup rolled toward Charlotte. The sun had already set, leaving just a trace of orange sky in the West.

We used flashlights to find our way around in the dark, driving tent stakes into the brittle clay on a sloping hill along the back side of the Charlotte Motor Speedway, our home for a weekend.

It was another world. It was my first NASCAR race. We joined the 200,000 or more people who watched as Geoff Bodine narrowly coasted in on fumes to win the Mello Yello 500. It was more than just cars zooming around a racetrack. It was an educational trip.

I was told a person has not lived until they've been to their first National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing competition. To call yourself a Southerner, they said, you have to experience it at least once, but I had never cared a lick for racing.

Terry Pope



It took some adjusting. There were Confederate flags flying around the campsite along with Old Glory and ones of different colors with numbers on them. It took me a while to figure out what they represented, the numbers on race cars of their favorite drivers.

In sports, athletes are usually called by their last names—Jordan, Montana, Barkley, Nicklaus. But in auto racing, the fans are on first name basis with the drivers—Cale, Kyle, Rusty, Darrell, Mark, Dale. Arguing over Fords, Chevrolets and Pontiacs is the best way to make small talk around the track.

There were campers pulling small cars painted like the ones on

the racetrack, with numbers and wild orange and lime colors, the whole works. Some had hauled golf carts to Charlotte painted like their favorite race cars. These people were serious about racing.

A live band set up on portable generators and started playing country favorites in the camping area past midnight, until a storm breezed through and rain fell for about an hour. When the rain stopped, they kicked back up again.

I was told that things could get rough before the night was through, from people who had drunk one too many and would want to show their tail, but that never happened on this night.

When you go to a place for the first time, you don't know how to act. I kept asking about things that were happening across the field and was told, "Racing isn't done on a field, it's a track!" Excuse me, but I'm just more used to football.

When the engines start and the drivers follow the pace car around the track, that's when you realize that it's not the same as watching it

on television. I reached for a Kleenex to plug up my ears and spent the afternoon with them carefully stuffed, for the noise of 20 or more engines speeding more than 170 mph on a track in front of you can be deafening.

You can feel the rumbling inside your chest from these powerful machines before they reach you. They turn into colorful blurs as they speed past.

A while back I wrote an article on District 2 Commissioner Jerry Jones. In the process, I found out that he is a Richard Petty fan from way back, having named his son, Kyle, after Petty's son.

One fan walked the track with a banner that said, "Petty—201 Before Your (sic) Done," hoping that the king of racing can slip in another win before he retires next year.

Most people, including my family, can't believe that I actually gave in and stepped into the other world. But I was able to leave it all behind. I don't have a crazy urge to buy a Ford, chewing tobacco or Lite beer.

I'm back in Brunswick County.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Quest Does Not Meet State Requirements

To the editor:

Known in our local schools as A/A, advisor/advisee, Lions-Quest International, Skills for Adolescence (SAF) (6-8) was initiated in Brunswick County schools by Jeff Cumbie, drug and alcohol program coordinator.

Begun three years ago, '89-'90, the pilot school was Shallotte Middle grades 6-8. All teachers were instructed during the summer that they were to attend, no exceptions, in August, a three-day, 25-hour intensive training by Quest from their workshop guidebook. Thus they would then be qualified, certified Quest facilitator/advisor/therapists.

Even a casual review of this guidebook will reveal to any interested citizen that the techniques employed are quite similar to those used previously by many of our former enemies (North Korea, Red China, Cuba, etc.)—techniques with one central purpose—to bring each person's thinking in

line with what is perceived as politically correct.

This course was funded locally, state and federally, and begun as a drug and alcohol deterrent program. It is definitely funded by our county, our state and especially the federal government as a drug program in accordance with the President's Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and amendment 101-226.

This law mandates that all schools receiving any federal monies, which includes all public schools, must teach that illegal drug use and illegal possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful and that this must be a clear and consistent no usage message. If a school district is not in strict compliance with this law, all federal monies received are in imminent danger. This is the imminent danger to which I referred at our September school board meeting.

Quest International insists, as do our principals, assistant principals, counselors, many teachers,

Jeff Cumbie, P. R. Hankins and other administrators, our board of education and the local Lions Club, that Quest SFA (6-8) is in absolute compliance with all laws, standards and requirements.

There are, however, a number of concerns and questions on the part of not only myself, but many parents; more each day judging by the growing group of children being removed from A/A at Shallotte Middle School.

Two of our middle school principals, Shallotte and South, have told parents requesting to move their children from Quest that actually it is not so much a drug program, but really more a self-esteem building course.

As a curriculum implemented as a drug program, isn't it strange that out of seven units of study only one, unit six, even addresses that issue for which it is funded? Is it any wonder many are beginning to question why all the other six units

(See LETTERS, Following Page)