



PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

MARTIN HOUSES can be purchased or made at home; sometimes gourds are preferable to the boxes.

Getting Ready For Nesting Season

BY BILL FAVER

This is the time of year when it is helpful to get ready for the spring bird nesting season. We still have some time to construct blue-bird nesting boxes, martin houses, and nest boxes for wrens, great-crested flycatchers, and chickadees.

Some authorities say we should have nest boxes in place by mid-February so birds taking advantage of warm spells of weather can begin scouting for a nesting site. This is particularly true for bluebirds for they seem to start house-hunting as soon as there is a hint of spring in the air. They will bypass houses that have not been cleaned out or that are otherwise defective, and may not return to try them later.

Bluebird boxes should have an inside dimension of 5x5-inches for the floor and be at least 8 inches deep. The 1/4-inch entrance hole should be placed about six inches from the floor. Bluebirds do not like a perch and the absence of one on their boxes will discourage sparrows, starlings, and other birds. The box should be placed on a post about five to six feet above ground

and should be in an open area near enough to a utility line or a tree limb for the birds to have a place to perch.

Purple martin houses can be purchased or made at home. Some become architectural marvels, but remember they need to be on a post or pipe at least ten feet above ground and need to be cleaned out after the nesting season. Placement should be in an open area near water where there will likely be an abundance of insects. Martins may not come to a newly-erected house the first year, but the scouts that come to our area in March will find it sooner or later. Don't forget that gourds were the first martin houses and some success has been had using milk jugs and other plastic containers.

Great-crested flycatchers may find bluebird houses to their liking and move in. They also will use a box of slightly larger size, but often get competition from the starlings and sparrows. Wrens will use smaller boxes made especially for them. Sometimes chickadees will nest in the bluebird boxes or the wren boxes.

If you need a good wintertime project, make some bird boxes and put them up for the spring nesters. You'll enjoy watching them and can feel rewarded by knowing you helped in getting them ready for the nesting season.



FAVER

MORE LETTERS

We Face Some Challenging Events

To the editor:
Thomas Jefferson was so right when he said, "If we can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people and the pretense of calling for them, they will be happy." Nothing has changed in 200 years.

In the former Soviet Union, after 70 years of wasting the labors of the people, the people finally became angry enough to throw out their evil masters. The damage done in 70 years cannot be repaired in a single stroke. We can expect much pain and suffering and continued setbacks as the people grope their way toward a free market system.

Surely enough, as they search for the path that leads to freedom and economic growth, a giant step forward has been taken which will benefit mankind.

This week President Bush will address the this country in his "State of the Union." His message should spell out what President Bush wants to do. He may cram more into his plans to salvage our economy by putting more money into the hands of the consumers and let the Federal Reserve continue what it is doing.

It has been said that the Soviets lost the Cold War, but we have not yet won it. Here in "the land of milk and honey" and the "Home of the Brave," we, too, have created within the Washington Beltway a yoke of executive and legislative incompetent bureaucrats who, under the pretense of caring, are now spending three million dollars every minute of every day, each and every day of the year. The big question this election year is whether the American people are angry enough to throw the ras-

cais out. If not now, when?
The first clue will come next month in New Hampshire, whose motto is "Live Free or Die." If George Bush gets a bloody nose in New Hampshire, he just might opt for early retirement. Should he decide to fight on, look for him, before summer, to diffuse the time bomb he left ticking in the Middle East.

Emerging Eastern Europe, the currently chaotic Commonwealth Of Independent States, the eroding Japanese economy—they are trying to buy the Seattle Mariners baseball team—and our wide open election outcome are only some of reasons we are getting ready to face challenging events occurring at ever increasing speed!

Bob L. Johnson
Ocean Isle Beach

Sentences Predictable And Expected

To the editor:
This is in response to Terry Pope's column in the Jan. 16 edition of the *Beacon* concerning the "Hanging Judge." I don't believe I have ever read a more stupid piece.

For Mr. Pope's information, the courts of this state are not for abusing or frightening persons accused of crimes or for pleasing victims. The purpose of our courts is to insure that justice is done, fairly and impartially. Anyone accused of a crime—for which they are presumed to be innocent by the way—should expect that the law will be applied rationally and equitably to them.

Mr. Pope's applauding of the events and conduct as he described them, show a genuine lack of appreciation for these fundamental principles.

Every experienced criminal defense lawyer in Brunswick County is aware of Judge Britt's background and sentencing tendencies. I saw no "quaking" before Judge Britt, or any showing of surprise at any sentence he handed out. On the contrary, Judge Britt's sentences were very predictable and expected by the attorneys appearing before him.

Michael R. Ramos
Shallotte

Support Our Young Adults

To the editor:
I would like to talk briefly about the South Brunswick High School ROTC ball held this past Saturday night, Jan. 25. I was thrilled to see the fellowship and good clean fun had by all who attended. I congratulate the leaders of this group.

I was very disappointed to see that of all the guests that were invited to attend this event, only one high school principal, one math teacher and one school board member attended.

Let's get out and support our young adults when we are invited to.
Jackie Stockett
Yaupon Beach

CLASSIFIED ADS GET RESULTS!

Remembrances Of Winters Gone By

The brief snowfall recently was great.

I love snow, but that's probably because I'm a native Southerner. Most of us have never seen or had to live through the kind of snow people get in Minnesota or Iowa.

For those of us who have never had to trudge to work or school day after day in the stuff, snow creates a rare, glittering, winter wonderland.

Or a day or two off from work and school, since we're such wimps.

It's interesting how severe weather conditions stick in our memories.

Most residents of Atlanta, Ga., remember the winter of 1973 when The Big Ice Storm hit and incapacitated most of the city.

It was right around this time of year, Jan. 9 to be exact. I only remember that date because it's also Richard Nixon's birthday, and please don't ask me why I remember that detail.

All electrical and telephone lines were down for an entire week, so my family got a taste of how television's Walton family got by.

Just like John Boy, we had to sit around and read by candlelight, which my sisters and I were not accustomed to doing.

We put perishables such as milk and eggs on the back porch and congregated to sleep in the living room near the fireplace at night.

It was beautiful the way the ice coated everything in sight with a crystalline glaze, but can you imagine the time my mother had in keeping three kids occupied with no TV, no phones, and no school?

My dad got off easy; he was able to go back to work after a day or two.

When the electricity came back on at the end of the week, it was with sudden, bright and loud fanfare. We had forgotten that the TV, lights and a radio were on when the electricity went off.

All of a sudden, Walter Cronkite's face jumped onto the TV screen to welcome the return of modern conveniences.

Another winter in Atlanta came to mind the other day when I heard a native Brunswick County resident mention the trouble that can be caused by septic tanks during severe winter conditions. Now, I never lived in a community with septic tanks until I moved here, so I don't know what joys are in store for me regarding that.

But I sure know what can happen

Dori Cosgrove Gurganus



Living without water was a real shocker. We had to fill the toilet with water after flushing it each time. A jug of water was kept nearby.

About once every few days, my mom or I would go out and turn the water back on just for the opportunity to fill up a sink full of water to do dishes or store jugs and pans of water for later use.

We would go over to my grandmother's apartment down the road to take baths in the evening and heat up pans of water in the morning to wash our hair in the sink.

Everything having to do with water, which is quite a lot, had to be rationed or done with difficulty.

Just another reminder of how good it is to have the basic necessities sometimes.

So don't tell me that things could get worse here.

Maybe it's best if nobody tells me exactly what happens to septic tanks during a winter storm.

I can only imagine what happens when a hurricane hits, but let's hope that imagining is all I'll have to do for some time.

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