

FUNGUS MATERIALS in the winter woods help break down materials for reuse in the energy cycle. PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

Winter In The Woods

BY BILL FAVER

Just a quick glance at the winter woods reveals an absence of much activity. Most of the hardwoods are bare of leaves and the evergreens seem to stand silently in the winter season. Birds are about, but many of them appear to rest quietly on a bare limb, soaking up the sun. Broom sedge and some seed heads from grasses offer rich brown tones to the gray fields of dead plants.

What we do not see with that quick glance is the miracle of winter in the woods. We do not see what is happening on the moist forest floor as the fungus, molds, and bacteria help break down the leaves and twigs and decaying animal matter from seasons past. We do not see insects and spiders within a decaying log helping to reduce the materials for reuse in the energy cycle. We don't see the small animals in hibernation and the egg cases of insects waiting to emerge in warmer weather.

Sometimes we do see mushrooms and fairy rings revealing where underground stumps are located. Sometimes we see skinks and anoles on a rock outcrop warming in the winter sun. Close examination can show us buds on the bare limbs of trees and shrubs, getting ready for spring when leaves will again form. Toward the end of winter, green basal rosettes form on the ground for some plants and we can expect to see shoots and stems before long.

Winter in the woods is also a good time to find last season's bird nests since they are no longer hidden by leaves. Rabbits, field mice, raccoons, and opossums may have carved out tunnels through the briars, grasses, and underbrush along hedgerows and at the edges of the woods. Fallen branches and even trees can tell us of winter storms and the "pruning" down by nature.

Winter in the woods is a good time for a stroll on a warm afternoon. Though everything may look "dead," there is much more real activity than a quick glance can show. Take time to look for the signs of the coming of spring and enjoy some invigorating exercise in the great out-of-doors!



FAVER

Library

(Continued From Page 4-A)

What if the commissioners decide to build the library somewhere else and sell the land? Or put a dinky building on part of the land and sell the rest?

The restrictions were placed on the land by the previous council to protect the interests of the people of Leland. These restrictions gave the town the right to approve the design and to buy the property back if it should ever cease to be used for a library. We still need to protect the interest of the people of Leland.

I am surprised and disappointed that the new council would act so ir-

responsibly in this matter and give up our rights of protection. I am astonished that the new town attorney, A. A. Canoutas, would let them do it.

Is there no one on the new council who knows how to protect the town's interests in matters of this kind?

Francis B. Jacobs Jr.
Rt. 3, Leland

The Fun Part Is Getting The Door Open

At a recent Carolina basketball game, the public address announcer said there was a car in the parking lot with its lights on. That's nothing unusual.

But this car's motor was also running and the doors were locked, he said. That brought a round of laughter from the tense crowd. Someone was in a hurry to get inside the Smith Center.

No, it wasn't my car.

I am always fearful of locking my keys in the car. I've done it once, and it was a painful experience. I've probably reached the point of being obsessive-compulsive about it—checking for my keys once, twice. I check again before slamming the door shut. I want my hands on the keys when that interior light goes out. I want to know where my keys are at all times.

That's why I can relate to the nervousness and frustration seen on the faces of those we occasionally meet in shopping center parking lots who are the latest victims. The person is standing there, red in the face from embarrassment, as someone jabs a metal bar down the window to try to flip open the lock.

When I was in college, my roommate and I were on our way back to campus in Chapel Hill to return a basketball to the student gym. We stopped to get a Pepsi from a local store and, for some reason, decided to lock the car. It may have been to protect the basketball.

With the gym crowded, we had taken the ball back to the apartment to shoot at a goal in the parking lot. The wrath of the university would have come down on me had I failed to return such valuable sporting equipment. They had my student

Terry Pope



identification card as collateral.

When we walked from the store, I suddenly realized the keys were still in the ignition. Talk about a sick feeling.

Long ago, the automakers got rid of one use for the common coat hanger. It would not work on this Japanese model either, for the lock was a sideways job situated way down on the door panel.

The rear windows were those silly kind that you could push out about two inches. One was open, only, it was about 10 feet from the lock. I tried with a broom handle, but that wouldn't work.

There was this wrecker service in town that came to the rescue, for a fee. Male pride finally gave in and I called the place for help. The guy used one of those illegal devices that slips down the edge of the window to spring the lock free. They are considered illegal when in the hands of the wrong person.

It took him longer than usual, so he said.

"You've got this little rod that it has to catch hold of," he kept saying, reassuring us that he had never failed. He gave us a detailed account of how he had successfully opened Pontiacs, Chevrolets and Fords. It had also worked on some foreign models.

For a while it didn't seem as though it would work. He tried both doors. I started to ask if he had a hammer in his truck. That would at least open the window.

Finally, he found the right spot and the driver's door popped open. Saved, but hold on just a minute.

After leaving there, we stopped at a hamburger place and locked the car doors again. Boy, were we dumb.

"Have you got the keys this time?" my roommate joked.

Yes, I had the keys. However, when we returned to the car the key wouldn't open the door, either door. The device the wrecker service had used knocked something loose inside. He was apologetic, but it took another hour for him to find the right spot again. Later I had to take the door panels apart to fix the locks.

It took about five hours to get that basketball back to the gym.

A lot of police officers carry those handy devices around to help out stranded motorists. I don't know if that was true or not when I needed help, but it may be valuable information to remember today.

Hearing of how that car was left locked and running in the parking lot made me think of the afternoon I learned my lesson.

If the driver heard the announcement, I wonder how he reacted. I wonder if he gave up the game to attend to his mistake. Or whether he waited for the game to end and the cars to clear so no one would see him in the parking lot shaking his head and hoping like everything that the man with the illegal device would find the right spot.

ALL STAR FLAGS

1-800-868-FLAG

•Flags •Banners
•Flagpoles •Pennants

A Variety Of Flags
Desert Storm • Yellow Ribbon
POW-MIA Flags

Mail Orders
FREE Catalog & Delivery

101 Aviators Lane
Burgaw, NC 28425

Catherine Moore, Owner



Next Medifast
Classes
Start
March 5



Call today to sign up.

Marilyn J. Boehm, M.D., Ph. D.
Village Pines, Shalotte

919-754-5581
919-754-9949

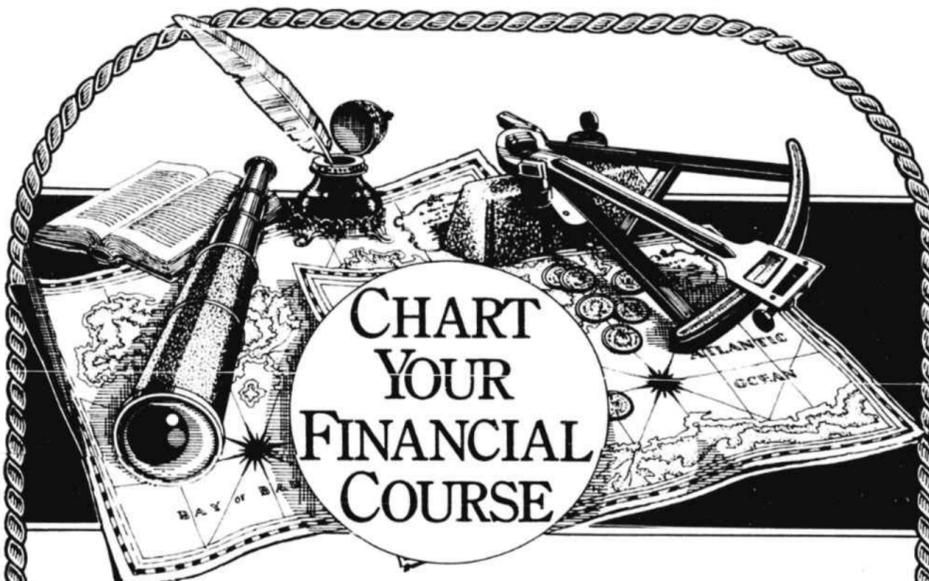


CHART YOUR FINANCIAL COURSE

There's a whole new world of savings and financial options out there. Our experienced personnel will steer you right and help you weather unexpected storms. They'll lead you through the unfamiliar waters of these services:

- Interest-earning checking
- Savings accounts
- Certificates of Deposit
- Direct Deposit
- Home mortgages
- Home improvement loans
- Drive-up facilities
- Consumer loans
- Safety deposit boxes
- Traveler's checks
- Investment counseling
- IRAs

Don't set off by yourself. Set sail into our offices today.

Security

SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION



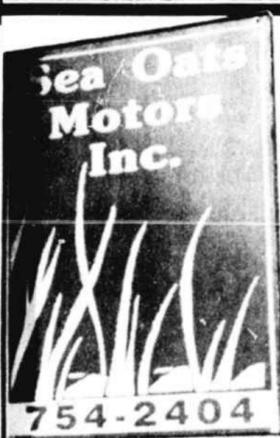
- Southport 457-5246
- Leland 371-6546
- Shalotte 754-4371
- Calabash 579-3595
- Long Beach 278-6022

We're here to serve you...

with a selection of quality pre-owned cars and trucks. If we don't have it, we'll try to find the one that fits your needs.

Our commitment is and always will be reliable transportation at a reasonable price.

Billy Gibson, Angell Craft & Tim Gibson



Sea Oats Motors, Inc.

Specializing in pre-owned
autos and trucks.
Business Hwy. 17 N., Shalotte

754-2404