



Photo by Bill Faver

COLLECTING LIVE OLIVE SHELLS can deplete this resource along on beaches if we aren't more aware of the damage we do.

The Future For Live Shells

BY BILL FAVER

Some years ago, Loren Eisely, the noted anthropologist, wrote of an early morning walk along the beach at Cozumel, off the coast of Mexico. He encountered scores of shell-gatherers working at low tide to harvest live shells and get them cleaned out and ready to sell the tourists by daylight. He also met one old man he called the "Star Thrower". This man was frantic in his efforts to find sea stars and hurl them back into the sea. Whether his efforts to save them were working or not, he would never know, but he knew he was trying his best to get them back into the water.

Sometimes I feel this way when I find live shells along our beaches. Usually they are washed up on the sand by rough water and when we find them they may be beyond saving. I usually pitch them back into the surf or dig down in the wet sand to bury them deep enough to await the incoming tide.

Several people at Holden Beach have called me recently about people taking live olives in abundance.

These are beautiful shells and are much prettier when the live animal is inside. They are colonial (in that they live in colonies) and can easily be depleted if they are dug from the sand on the ocean floor and carried away for key chains and necklaces.

About ten years ago, we had the same thing happening along the east end of the beach with sanddollars. So many were being gathered we would see people with buckets full heading off the beach. Even one day, I saw two kids in the back of a truck throwing sanddollars like frisbees as they rode down Ocean Boulevard. We went to the Marine Resources people and couldn't get much help because they were only dealing with "commercial species".

So about the only solution to taking live shells is to appeal to those who exploit this resource to think what they are doing. Sure, it's fun to gather and collect. And it's fun to make things from shells. But think what our beaches would be like without the attraction of olives and sanddollars and the variety of other shells we find. I appeal to you to work a little harder and find empty shells. Leave the live ones to live out their lives in this fragile area where land and sea meet. And when you find a live shell, be a "star thrower" and put it back in the water.



FAVER

MORE LETTERS

Library Allocation Applauded

To the editor:
My hat is off to the Brunswick County Commissioners. Their appropriation of \$1.5 million for the county library system, up from a pittance last year, was a wonderful display of vision and courage.

The importance of modern library facilities to our citizens, especially our young people, is beyond exaggeration. That we have leaders capable of recognizing and acting upon that fact makes me proud to call Brunswick County home.

Many of us were deeply disappointed that political manipulation last year forced postponement of the Leland Library. Now it seems the entire county will benefit from the abuse some of us endured at the hands of politicians who apparently believed that winning was more important than honesty.

I take pride in the fact that the Town of Leland contributed \$60,000 in cash and land worth \$60,000 for the library. The Town of Belville gave more than \$20,000, and local businesses and individuals gave additional thousands. I am inclined to believe that the bold action of the county commissioners was inspired by this manifestation of generosity and commitment. It is my fervent hope that the contending forces of 1991 will now coalesce and support the new Brunswick County Library System. A library is more than a building with books. It can become a fountain of culture and enlightenment that will enrich us all.

Russell G. Baldwin
Leland

Game Is For Children, Not Parents, Coaches

To the editor:
Last week there were several letters concerning the (tee-ball) coaches and coordinators. Does anyone really know what happened? I know for a fact that the coordinator was

called over to the coach's dugout, and this coach was threatening to quit because an illegal bat was taken from him. There was no arguing.

About good sportsmanship, I don't think it is bad sportsmanship to pull your child out of the game and off the team when the coach forfeits a game because he doesn't like the other team's coach, or he won't shake hands with the other coach after a game.

I'm sorry, but I don't want my child learning this kind of sportsmanship. This is the kind of sportsmanship Homer Andrews teaches. I've seen it and thought it was in bad taste, especially in front of the children.

Everyone must remember, this game is for the children, not the parents or coaches. Let's make it fun for them.

Edna White
Shallotte

Monthly Pier-Walker Passes Are Suggested

To the editor:
Touche! We'll agree that inflation has raised the cost of living everywhere, making the best things in life often no longer free (June 11 issue).

However, we'd like to offer a suggestion which we've been told has been circulating among other pier-goers since the pay-to-walk fee was initiated over Memorial Day weekend.

How about issuing passes for 1-3-6-12 months similar to those issued to fishermen? These could be at a reduced rate so that the frequent pier-goer, visitor or walker could enjoy walking the pier and feeling as though he or she belonged to a club?

This would also save time and money for pier personnel who would not have to collect a fee each time a pass-owner came to walk. This way pier management and pier

visitors would both benefit.
How about it?
Jacqueline & Edgar Phillips
Supply

Fire, Rescue Workers Thankful For Increase

To the editor:
"Budget time." I'm sure these two words make county leaders sweat. Who gets how much? Who gets an increase? Who gets a decrease? This could be one of the least popular jobs of government.

For years at budget time, I've gone before the county commissioners to ask for a funding increase for our fire and rescue departments, usually with no luck. However, this year was different. After appearing before the commissioners at the recent budget hearing to plead our case, I see in the *Beacon* that we did indeed get an increase. Our volunteer departments now get \$14,500 per year, up \$1,000 from the previous year's \$13,500.

While \$1,000 might not sound like a lot to some, it was needed by us. Every dollar spent toward our fire and rescue departments helps protect the lives and property of all our citizens.

Also, with the start of our new E-911 system, the money was greatly needed to pay for upgrading our equipment to match.

So with all the pressure of adopting a budget, our emergency volunteers would like to say, "Thank you, gentlemen, for a job well done."

Al Nord, Chief
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No Place Like Home For Golfers

Boy, this place is golfer heaven. I'm not much of a player myself, but my dad is. So I've been gathering brochures and information about all the local golf communities.

What a neat idea. You get to live right next to your very own golf course. You can play your favorite game any time you want without ever leaving home. Just walk out the back door and tee off.

Sort of the grown-up equivalent of a two-liter Coke and a bag of chips in front of the Nintendo.

It's like a surfer having a house on the beach at Pipeline. Or a stock-car fanatic with a cottage on turn two at Daytona. Or a Braves fan sleeping in the stands at Fulton County Stadium. Actually, that's pretty common nowadays.

And these golf communities all have such enticing names. Briarwood...Fox Squirrel...Sea Trail Plantation...Lockwood Golf Links...The Gauntlet at St. James Plantation... makes you feel like landed English gentry, in a lowcountry kind of way.

To be fair, I thought that before recommending any of these wonderful spots as the place for the old man to build his retirement dream house, I ought to check out similar communities in other counties. So last week Lynn and I headed north up U.S. 17.

Just above Wilmington we encountered the South's preferred method of controlling population growth.

Every region of the country has one of these. In the Northeast, it's known as the traffic circle. Imaginative road designers rely on this clever solution whenever they have five or six major highways converging in one place. After commissioning countless high-dollar studies, they simply run all the roads into a circle and let the drivers sort out which way they want to go.

Veterans of these "circles of

Eric Carlson



bound passing lane and suddenly find yourself playing "chicken" with an 18-wheeler flying along in what he assumes to be the southbound passing lane. Mad Max would love it.

We eventually survived this mayhem and arrived in beautiful downtown Jacksonville. It seems that instead of golf, the big sport here is chess. You can tell because everywhere you look there are pawn shops. They must spend an awful lot of time sitting in uncomfortable chairs bent over those chess boards, because the other big activity seems to be getting a massage.

The golf community in Jacksonville is called Camp Lejeune, a French summer-sounding name that really misrepresents the place. Instead of the usual flashy outfits most golfers wear, the residents of Camp Lejeune all dress in drab olive. I hadn't seen so many short haircuts and guns and Jeeps and camouflage since I left the mountains.

We never did find the course or even the pro shop. Just a lot of people following each other around in little groups with some other person yelling at them. Not very attractive.

The one in Havelock wasn't much better. It also had a cheerful French name—Cheri Pointe—but not much else to offer. I did like the F-4 Phantom jet parked at the entrance. And the guard wore a really snappy blue jacket and white hat.

But the course at Cheri Pointe is in terrible shape. The turf is as hard as asphalt and every time you try to tee off, some joker in an attack fighter comes zipping by. The noise is terrible and the houses all look the same. I really can't recommend it.

So all you golfers who might be feeling a touch of wanderlust, don't expect to find greener fairways on the other side of the hill. Brunswick's got the best.

death" look like losers at a demolition derby. The preferred strategy is to floorboard the accelerator as they enter the circle, careening wildly toward their desired destination and scaring the cheese dip out of other less aggressive motorists, who can be seen circling for hours before finally running out of gas.

The California approach is to let unsuspecting tourists decimate the bloated population with a rule that says pedestrians have the right of way at crosswalks. Drivers are expected to watch everyone walking along the sidewalk and to slam on the brakes the moment a foot touches the marked pavement.

Naturally, outsiders know nothing of this law and routinely plow into crowds of trusting locals at every traffic light. Especially drivers from Manhattan, where a red light means "stop if your feel like it," and where pedestrian hunting is a time-honored tradition.

Here in the South we have the three-lane highway, along which the center of the road is commonly referred to as the "suicide lane." Main Street in Shallotte on Friday afternoon is a good place to observe the consequences of this sadistic little gem of highway planning.

This design is carried to extremes along U.S. 17 in Onslow County, where only a faded yellow line offers any hint of who belongs in the center lane. You can be flying along in what you assume to be the north-



ROBERTO'S PIZZERIA

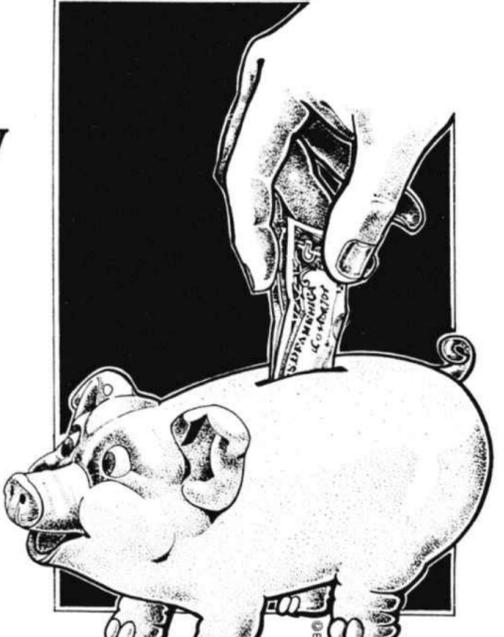
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