

Knowing The Names Of Things Around You

BY BILL FAVER

I once had a professor who insisted that we should know the names of the plants around us.



FAVER

He said we knew the names of the furniture in our houses, the names of the streets on which we lived, and the make of automobile we drove. We should be as well

educated about the out-of-doors and be able to name the trees and the plants and flowers we encountered almost each day.

From a mother who was a flower gardener and bird enthusiast I was able to know most of the birds and a good many of the more common flowers and shrubs. My grandfather helped me learn about some of the butterflies and trees, salamanders and lizards, and mushrooms and other fungi. Like most of the folks who grew up in rural areas, these were the things around us each day and we did learn their names.

Some of those names were quite exciting, too. Sparkleberry, sumac and sassafras were among my favorites. We could find birds in the sparkleberry and sumac and brew the sassafras roots for tea. Indian pipes, bloodroot, and wild iris were special finds. Toadstools and mushrooms of all kinds were there for a day or two and then were gone. Hummingbirds on the lantana, hibiscus, and althea were always exciting and butterflies came endlessly to the blue of the butterfly bushes and the oranges of the asclepias.

It may not be necessary for us all to know the scientific names of the many oaks and pines but we should know a pine from an oak. We should know a robin from a warbler and a hawk from a woodpecker. So, whether we live on Oak Street, or Pelican Place, or Lizard Lane, we ought to know something about the trees along our street, or the birds in the tree-tops, or the flowers and shrubs in our yards. Our lives will be richer and more enjoyable when we can take delight in knowing something about our close surroundings.



AMONG THE TREES and shrubs we may encounter are some of the sweet shrubs, or sweet Betsy (*Calycanthus floridus*).

A Change In The Breeze, And A Few Less Degrees

Did you feel it? Last Friday night? When the wind shifted; the humidity dropped; the air conditioner stopped clicking on every fifteen minutes?

If you stepped outside a little before midnight, you could have welcomed its arrival. Like an old friend pulling into the driveway.

It's fall! And if you ask me, not a moment too soon.

Not that I dislike summer. The fact is, I really enjoy hot weather: Those searing, steamy days when walking outside is like stepping into a blast furnace. When everything around you shimmers in the heat and the whole world seems to crawl along in slow motion.

There is something incomplete about a summer that doesn't crank up the heat into triple digits, at least for a little while. But not forever.

Let's face it. This summer was relentless. I doubt anyone was surprised to hear that July was the hottest one ever recorded since they started keeping track of such things.

How hot was it? So hot that fire hydrants were whistling at passing dogs to beg for a shower.

(I heard that one from former Governor Lester Maddox of Georgia in his Underground Atlanta souvenir shop, where he sold autographed ax handles and told very bad jokes. Of which he himself was the worst.)

Fall (or autumn, for you sophisticates) is one of my favorite seasons. Along with winter, spring, summer, garlic, basil, thyme and oregano.

Unlike other seasons—which someone always finds too hot, too cold, too rainy or too windy—just about everybody has some reason to look forward to fall. That is, unless you have to go back to school.

Even in my student days, I remember fall ushering in a variety of new adventures. That's when we used to make the rounds of local car dealerships to check out the new models. Back when we were shocked to see the new Porsche 911 display the unbelievably expensive sticker price of SEVEN THOUSAND BUCKS!

Here on the coast, as the tourist season winds down, fall is the chance for locals to get a day off now and then, to take a walk on the beach and to remember why we work so hard all summer.

It's just the opposite in the mountains, where residents have to allow a bit more time to get to work and avoid all roads officially designated as scenic, which will soon be bumper-to-bumper with visiting

Eric Carlson



"leaf lookers."

Lynn looks forward to cooler weather so she can fire up the oven and bake some of her wonderful bread recipes. I must also include this on my list of fall attractions.

For a lot of guys, fall itself isn't nearly as important as the other seasons it brings along with it, like hunting season, fishing season and football season.

Now I haven't been hunting in a long time, but I can remember how much I used to enjoy tramping through fields with a shotgun cradled across my arm, waiting for some rabbit or pheasant to flush from the underbrush in a valiant, last-ditched effort to avoid our dinner table.

Judging from the number of pickup trucks I see rigged with dog cages and deer stands, I imagine this little touch of cooler air has a sizable chunk of the male population thinking about just one thing: opening day.

Although I'm not much of a salt-water angler, I used to make an exception every fall when the blues hit the Outer Banks. During a serious blitz, even an absolute idiot could catch his fill by merely tossing any old lure into the fray. Other times, all you needed was a bucket to pick up the trout that the blues chased on to the beach.

Around here, the favorite fall fish—while just as plentiful—seems to be a lot smaller. But all those hundreds of people lining the piers don't mind. Probably because spots taste a whole lot better than bluefish.

Regarding the third season within a season, I think football games are like oysters. Both are available in August, but they just don't taste right until the weather gets cool. So it's usually October before I get an appetite for either one.

But something tells me this year might be different. After the Redskins scalped the Cowboys, the Trojans sank the Vikings and the mercury dropped ten degrees, I got the feeling I might fall right into this new season...autumn-atically.

MORE LETTERS

After 24-Year 'Review' Period, State Agency Allows 90 Days For Landowner's Response

To the editor:

In 1965, the North Carolina Legislature enacted a law, NCGS 113-205, requiring that all citizens of coastal counties file claims to ownership of marshlands with the state on or before January 1, 1970, or all private rights and titles would be declared null and void and the marshlands would become the property of the state. The legislature imposed a four-year time limit during which citizens had to learn of the law and file claims. The legislature also placed the burden of proof on private citizens. No such time limits were imposed on the state. I feel certain many people lost their property to the state because they did not file claims.

In 1969, my great-aunt filed such a claim and documentation. A few days later she received a letter from the state acknowledging receipt of the items and stating that they would be forwarded to the Attorney General's office for "review and retention." She heard nothing further and died 19 years later thinking her claim was secure. She bequeathed the property to me in 1988.

Then, out of the blue, on August 26, I received a letter from P. A. Wojciechowski, Director, N.C. Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources, stating that it has "...taken several years to reach review of your claim." My claim? Several years? That claim was filed 24 years ago by a woman long dead! Twenty-four years to respond to the timely-filed claim of a citizen. This is utterly absurd!

Even more absurd is that after 24 years of inaction, Mr. Wojciechowski gave me 90 days to document ownership of the property back to the Creation, or ... "your claim may be denied." Actually, he said to document ownership back to a "source instrument." Here is his helpful definition of a source instrument:

"A source instrument is a grant, deed, or other similar instrument issued by the State of North Carolina, its agencies, or earlier governments for the parcel or right claimed pursuant to G.S. 113-205. Under the entry and grant statutes in effect from colonial times, the sovereign had no authority to convey fee simple title to lands beneath navigable waters. Therefore, a Lords Proprietor's Grant, a Crown Grant, a State Grant or a Board of Education Deed are insufficient to convey fee simple title to submerged lands."

Is this contradictory and nonsensical, or what? A source instrument is a Grant by the State of North Carolina? No, it clearly states that a State Grant is insufficient. A deed from a North Carolina agency? No, a Board of Education Deed is insufficient. A grant from an earlier government? No, a Lords Proprietor's Grant or a Crown Grant is insufficient.

It does appear that a title exam back to the Creation might be sufficient, but I'm not certain. It clearly states that it has to be an instrument issued by the State of North Carolina, its agencies, or earlier governments. God may not qualify as an earlier government, although He did issue "governmental laws" in the form of the Ten Commandments.

It has been 28 years since NCGS 113-205 was passed by the legislature. That is 14 percent of the 204 years North Carolina has been a State. And the review of claims drags on...

Men have been to the moon seven times, and we have explored the outermost planet in our Solar System. And on... We have had the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Persian Gulf War, the War on Poverty, the War on Drugs, and Star Wars. And on... We have had the Civil Rights Revolution, the Women's Revolution, the Cultural Revolution and the Sexual Revolution. And on... We have had seven governors and seven presidents. Our current president was 18 years old at the time. And on... A generation of children has been born, matured and borne children of its own. And on... The sun has risen and set more than 10,000 times. And the review of claims drags on, and on, and on. How much longer?

Time constraints are routinely and arbitrarily imposed on ordinary citizens by both legislation and employees of state agencies. I suggest that time constraints should also be imposed on state agencies. If I respond to Mr. Wojciechowski within his 90-day mandate, how long does he have to respond back? Another 24 years? When will this insanity end? Years ago, failure of the state to respond should have barred the state from any claim it may have had.

I urge all citizens of Brunswick county who have received such untimely letters, or who filed claims but have had no response to call or write Sen. R.C. Soles Jr., Rep. David Redwine and *The Brunswick Beacon* urging legislation imposing time constraints on state agencies to respond to citizens. It is the only way to correct the inequity.

State government has become worse than the federal government.

Susan Kelly
Ocean Isle Beach

Ferry Workers 'The Best' At Helping Passengers

To the editor:

On Thursday, Sept. 2, I, along with my husband, daughter and son-in-law arrived at the Southport-Fort Fisher ferry in order to cross on the 12:10 p.m. ferry. Since we were a bit early, we sat down at one of the picnic tables for a short while.

That is where I carelessly left my

pocketbook containing money, credit cards and keys. I did not discover what had happened until after the ferry had departed. Needless to say, I was frantic! My husband spoke with one of the crew, Sandy Mitchell, who was more than willing to assist. He phoned the office at Southport, where Cynthia Rabon so kindly went out to find my purse. It was brought over to me on the very next ferry by another cooperative employee, Joe.

My sincerest thanks to all who willingly helped and gave such prompt service and attention.

Of course I was happy to have my bag returned, but would like you to know how greatly impressed we were with the sincerity and kindness of these employees. We can be proud of them. They are the best!

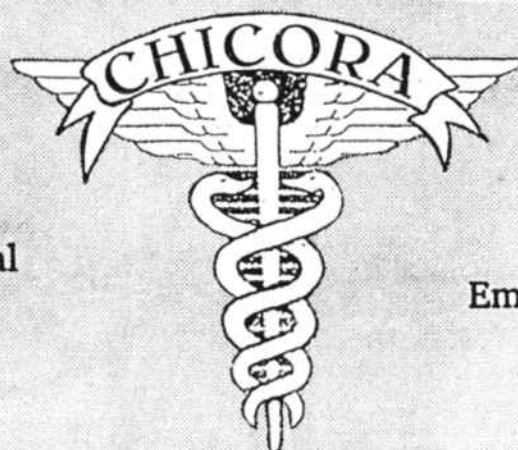
Delores Vulpis
Calabash

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