

Weekly Perspective

My View

The upcoming Democratic primary election will have far-reaching effects on the residents of Perquimans County, for it will be in that election that the board of education and sherrif are elected, and the county commissioner candidates know whether or not their names will appear on this fall's ballot.

Voting is a right and a privilege which has been fought for for many years in this country. It is one of the bases of our democracy.

Yet, many of our citizens are not even registered, even though the hours for registration were extended on a Friday night by the county Democrats who volunteered to man registration sites.

We forget that it is not only our right, but our responsibility to vote in all elections for which we are eligible. Each individual vote can indeed make a tremendous difference, especially in

our local government.

The people we elect on June 29 will control our law enforcement, our school system, our tax dollars. Care should be taken to vote for the most qualified candidate, shoving aside all prejudices and resistance to change.

Our youth are our most precious resource. We are obliged to see to it that they receive the best education possible, for education can affect the role a young person will play upon his entrance into adult society.

Although funds are scarce and budgets tight, education still deserves our utmost support. Therefore, we must take care to elect those persons who truly believe in a good educational system to the board of education.

Law enforcement affects us all. If we've never had any dealings with the law enforcement officials in our area, how fortunate we are. If we have, we

know the meaning of true dedication and service.

Nationwide, crime is on the upswing. We must elect locally those persons who can best halt local offenders and make our county a safe place in which to live.

The board of county commissioners controls all county tax dollars as well as those funds which come from state and federal grants. Persons who seek a position on this board must be of good character and have the best interest of our county at heart, even if an ordinance they pass may be detrimental to them personally.

Consider the choices carefully. Attend all forums to meet candidates for public office. Ask questions. Be informed. Don't let someone else make the decision of who will govern our county for you. Your vote can make a difference.

Facing South

JUDSONIA, Ark. — Mention local history in Arkansas, and the name of W.E. Orr comes to mind.

Orr is known for his book THAT'S JUDSONIA, his articles in Judsonia's newspaper, the WHITE COUNTY RECORD, and his many talks on White County history.

He's also known for making history. As a teacher, school superintendent, and later as county school supervisor, he helped build strong schools and libraries in the area for about 43 years. One of his accomplishments as supervisor was consolidating a number of weak school districts into 7000 ones.

"A school superintendent was a glorified principal during the 1930s and 1940s," says Orr. His job was to manage the schools, recommend teachers to be hired, teach whatever classes were left over, and coach girls' basketball.

"But what people will remember me for is the South's Most Spectacular tournament," Orr says. In the 1940s, he built the high school girls' county basketball tournament, which had been drawing small crowds, into a lively show that thousands came to see — held in a different town each year.

The first SMS tournament, held at Judsonia, drew about 10,000 Orr says. "There may be some exaggeration," he admits.

He tells about introducing beauty reviews, orchestras, style shows, circuses, vaudeville, fireworks, and even — once — an elephant to pep things up. He rented a bull elephant

from some carnies, and people came to see him fall through the floor, Orr says.

The SMS tournament is still going strong, but side attractions aren't as colorful as they were in Orr's day.

For five years during his service as county superintendent, Orr found time to edit the Judsonia newspaper. He commuted about 30 miles a night or two a week to get the paper out. This involvement sparked his interest in local history.

Some Judsonians born about 1870 were still living, and he interviewed them for the paper. He collected so much material that he began to plan a book.

Orr had the manuscript ready in 1952, but a killer tornado that March blew many town landmarks away. He rewrote part of the book, and didn't publish it until 1957.

Orr had waited until his forties to marry ("I don't rush through life," he says), and the older of his two daughters was born the week THAT'S JUDSONIA came out.

He recalls telling his wife, Bonnie, that they would lose \$300 on the book. He didn't think people outside Judsonia would be interested in it, but he was wrong. "Libraries at colleges I had never heard of bought the book," he says.

Selling THAT'S JUDSONIA for \$3.50 a copy brought in more than enough to cover the printing costs. He still has five copies, and wishes he had more. He's heard of a copy selling for \$25, and he has sold one himself for \$15.

Orr's own evaluation of the book is, "It's the best book about Judsonia." More seriously, he wishes more writers would try local history.

"It's tragic that more is not done," he says. He has a manuscript on White County history ready for the printer. But because "Printing costs are out of sight," he plans to wait awhile to publish it.

Orr wrote features for the Judsonia paper throughout his 31 years as county school supervisor. When he retired from that position seven years ago, he found he wasn't ready to quit working.

"I walked the floor with nothing to do," he recalls. After about nine months, the paper was sold, and the new owner asked Orr to edit the paper.

As editor from 1976 to 1979, Orr worked many 60-hour weeks, and built the paper's circulation to more than 2,000 in a town with 1,600 inhabitants.

Now in his early seventies, Orr currently works as associate editor, responsible for the editorial page, for which he writes editorials and columns about Judsonia's past. He also makes speeches on local history.

"I have 21 speeches on White County history, and any time the Elks Club doesn't have a program, I give one," says the colorful W.E. Orr.

HERBER TAYLOR
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FACING SOUTH welcomes readers' comments and writers' contributions. Write P.O. Box 531, Durham, N.C. 27702.



Editorial assistants turn

By SUSAN HARRIS

With Tom on vacation I finally get my chance to write a column. After six months of thinking about what I'd write if given the opportunity to compose a column, I am terrified now that my time has arrived.

One of the topics I had considered when mulling over possible column subjects was soap operas — the sizzling nighttime versions that tell all.

A conspiracy between Dallas' J.R. Ewing and Angela Channing of Falcon Crest would stop Cecil Colby and Alexis Carrington of the provocative Dynasty in their tracks.

And wouldn't you like to take Lucy Ewing and Fallon Carrington of Dallas and Dynasty respectively to the woodshed for a good spanking — even if it would come 18 years too late?

Mostly these stories make us feel like normal Americans with relatively few problems and good families.

At least we know the nighttime soaps are fairy tales and that's the way they're viewed, but those commercials that interrupt all the juicy parts insult the average person's intelligence.

Victoria Principal takes time out from portraying the sexy but emotionally unstable Pamela Ewing to tell us about the benefits of working out and using her glamour shampoo.

We all know the average person could eat bird seed and move in a health spa and still not look anything like the shapely actress. And if a hairdresser did out hair everyday we'd have a chance at lovely locks, too!

Vickie forgets to remind us to use Coast soap after our workout to "bring us back to life."

Of course we could opt to run, play tennis and swim with Susan Anton and then forget our troubles on a perfect sleeper by Serta. When you're that worn out you could sleep anywhere.

Just make sure you don't begin any of the afore-mentioned exercise plans without first taking your vitamins. These vitamins should contain enough of everything from A-Z so that you won't have to eat for a week and you can endure the physical stress of a marathon.

Even so, don't be a meal skipper. You know, this nation is becoming a nation of meal skippers. The good news is several companies have come out with diet meals that might fool Julia Child.

They won't fool your pocketbook. One little glob of delicious low-cal food costs as much as the rest of the family's groceries for a week!

Alas, food is not everything. There's something else we all need: bathroom tissue. Thank goodness Mr. Whipple has finally stopped squeezing the Charmin.

The man was very obviously ill and hopefully he's getting the professional help he needs.

So much better off he was than the poor butcher who spends all his time directing people to the dog food. And he's truly more stable than the poor woman looking for the pork chops in the dry dog food section.

Another thing I had considered writing about was Jim Kincaid of the evening news and his farm in Elam.

Now I don't know what Jim's definition of a farm is, but it seems to me that the work on his Elam farm

and the work I did growing up on our Bear Swamp farm differs greatly.

Jim speaks of spending his weekends chopping a little wood, walking his dog and sitting by the fireside with his lovely wife, his devoted children and his faithful dog, Murphy.

On weekends we rested, but during the week in the good ole summertime, we chopped peanuts, not firewood, chased the dog out of the garden, not walked him, and sat as close to the air conditioner and as far away from each other as we could, nursing our sunburn.

Don't get me wrong, I never worked myself to death (just ask Grandma. She always told us about her childhood when we complained about working. I think we were supposed to feel like we were on a picnic after her tales of yore, but it didn't work that way. It did, however, shut us up.), but I don't remember chopping peanuts being as much fun as Jim's farming escapades.

Perhaps it's an attitudinal difference, but I think my attitude is positive. I'm positive chopping peanuts was not fun. It did, however, lend itself well to becoming suntanned and the exercise kept me from spreading as I have in later years (we won't go into that!).

When you get right down to it, our farm was probably better than Jim's, because on our farm there was laughter and the taste of homemade ice cream. That was pay enough for the hours we spent working and growing up together.

Looking back

By VIRGINIA WHITE TRANSEAU
JUNE 1944

SIX WHITE SELECTEES ORDERED TO REPORT FOR NAVY ON JUNE 22: Six Perquimans County young men, James Baker, Quinton Stallings, McMullan White, Charles E. White, Jr., Lloyd Bagley and Vernon Perry, have been ordered to report for induction into the Navy on June 22. These youths were accepted

for service from the contingent of men who took examinations during April. ERNEST A. PHILLIPS WINS OAK LEAF CLUSTER: Staff Sergeant Ernest A. Phillips, son of Mr. and Mrs. E.A. Phillips, armored gunner with a 15th Air Force liberator squadron based in Italy, has been awarded the first Oak Leaf Cluster to his Air Medal, "for meritorious achievement while participating in

sustained aerial operations against the enemy in the Balkans, Austria and Northern Italy". FORMER COUNTY BOY WOUNDED IN ACTION: Pfc. Julian L. Thatch, former Perquimans County boy, son of Mr. and Mrs. B.W. Thatch of Norfolk, was slightly wounded in action in Italy on May 24, according to a telegram received last week by his mother, from the War Department.

Early leaders able

For three centuries prior to 1966 Perquimans County was entitled to send one or more representatives of its own to the North Carolina General Assembly.

During the colonial period it sent five members to the House of Commons at each election.

From 1777 through 1835 Perquimans had one Senator and two Representatives in each legislature.

In 1836 it was limited to one Representative; at the same time it was placed in a state senatorial district with adjacent counties.

In 1906 the county lost its single Representative and has since relied upon district representation in both houses of assembly.

Many able political leaders sat in the legislature for Perquimans.

Foremost among them was Col. John Harvey, whose assembly career began in 1746 and continued until his death in 1775. He served with great ability as Speaker of the House of Commons 1769-1780 and 1773-1775.

It was Harvey who led the General Assembly into defiance of the royal governor, calling upon the people to establish a provincial congress.

The congress gave rise to the legislature of the independent state of North Carolina.

Except for George Catchmaid in the 1660s, no other resident of Perquimans has held the speakership.

For many years only landowners were allowed to sit in the Assembly, so eighteenth century Perquimans tended to elect men from the dominant plantation families.

There were few sessions from 1731 through 1804 to which Perquimans did not return a Harvey, Skinner, or Blout.

Such great planters as James Leigh, Jonathan H. Jacobs, and Josiah T. Granbery — whose mansions still stand — served a few ante-bellum terms, but nineteenth-century representation generally came from the middle class.

The record for consistent service in the Assembly for Perquimans was set by Col. Willis Riddick. He sat in the House 1805-1807 and the Senate 1808-1821 and 1823-1829.

Perquimans' choice of representatives was occasionally inflammatory. A newspaper blasted the election of John Clary in 1808: "That man, who have been guilty of the basest seduction should be chosen to represent us, is a disgrace to all the moral civil and religious rights of our country."

Sometimes the county's choice was unusual. In the legislatures of 1879 and



Ray Winslow

1881 sat Ira S. Blaisdell, a Vermont-born lumberman who lived in the county for a very short time.

In two periods Quakers dominated Perquimans' legislative delegation.

The controversial first decade of the eighteenth century produced such friendly legislators as those of 1708, namely Isaac Wilson, Timothy Cleare, Thomas Peires, Samuel Nicholson, and John Barrow.

Then in 1863 a Republican majority sent Ellhu A. White to the Senate and his brother-in-law Jephth White to the House.

Perquimans legislators have included lawyer Jonathan W. Albertson, doctor David Cox, and merchant William S. Blanchard.

In 1906 Senator J. Emmett Winslow and Representative Archie T. Lane were the last of this county's particular members of the General Assembly.

Avoid water accident

More than 300 people die while swimming or boating in North Carolina each year. Many of these deaths occur in the state's 68,000 farm ponds and small lakes.

The Division of Soil and Water Conservation in the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development offers the following tips which could save your life or the life of a child:

- *Never swim without a buddy.
- *Always wear a life preserver in a boat.
- *Always check for good footing on the bank of the pond before you start to fish.
- *Always use a life line or long pole to rescue a drunken swimmer, unless

the swimmer is a small child. If you don't have a life line or pole, use an item of clothing.

*Put a fence around a pond if you have small children to protect.

Most citizens recognize farm ponds and small lakes as attractive places to spend time on a hot summer day.

They offer great fishing, swimming, boating, plus water for livestock, irrigation, game and trees. Using these safety tips and good judgement can make them even more enjoyable this summer.

For technical assistance in planning a pond, or to check out the performance of an existing pond, call the office of your Soil and Water Conservation District.

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