

# Perspective

## English declared official language

The story appeared on page 5 of section C in the newspaper, so it is doubtful many readers saw it. But it is a very important story, and should have received better placement.

A state Senate committee voted unanimously Tuesday for a bill that will make English the official language in our state. While some may wonder exactly what kind of English we speak, there never seemed to be any doubt about what we were saying.

State Sen. Franklin Block, a Democrat from New Hanover County, wants to make sure there will be no problems in the future as to what language we speak. He doesn't want the state to be forced to teach foreigners in their native languages. Block says his bill isn't intended to discourage foreigners from immigrating to North Carolina.

"On the contrary, it's intended to do exactly the opposite," Block said. "The purpose of the bill is to ensure that people who do come to North Carolina who are not able to speak English are brought into the mainstream of the state, both economically and socially as rapidly as possible, so they'll be able to participate in all the good things which the state has to offer."

Block thinks we must act now to prevent "the kinds of things that are happening in certain parts of the country where driver's license tests are given in 13 dialects of Chinese." He wants to make sure taxpayers' dollars aren't spent to accommodate people who don't speak English by having to print state documents, road signs and other items in different languages.

It is doubtful North Carolina would resort to such measures even if efforts were made to accommodate those who are unable to speak English. But the state shouldn't attempt to meet the language needs of the various groups that decide to make North Carolina their home.

It wasn't so many years ago that it was uncommon to find a variety of nationalists in nearly every part of



the state. While many of these individuals speak English as well or better than we natives, economic and political conditions in other in other nations are bringing hundreds of foreigners to our state. Many of these will have little knowledge of English.

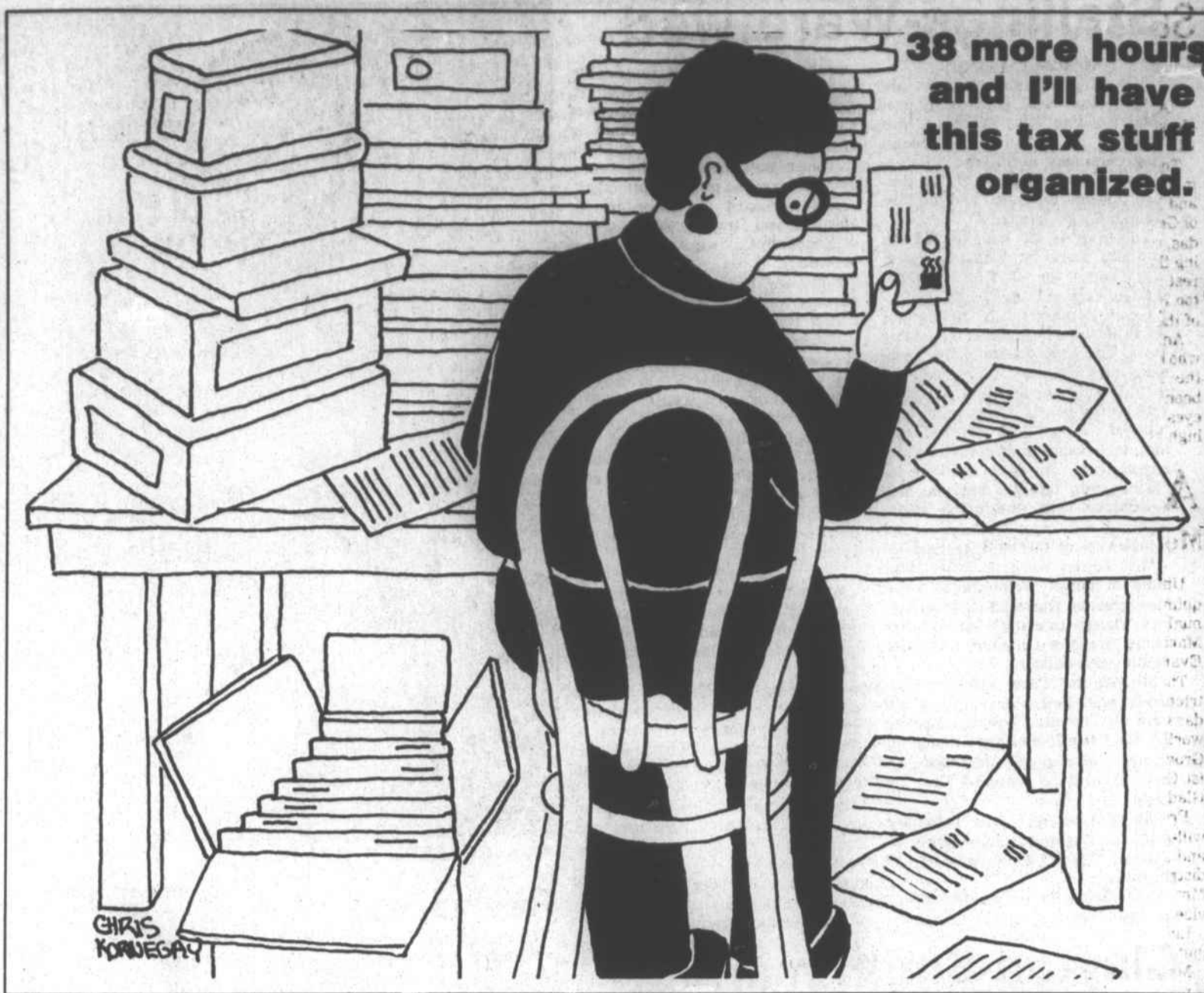
Some states have developed policies aimed at helping those who don't speak English. Government documents, school books, and other items are printed in a variety of languages.

In some schools, teachers are hired to teach foreigners in their native languages. Such policies do very little to encourage the people to speak English.

America has always been known as the land of opportunity, a place where everyone was welcome. We should continue this policy of open arms, but in return for sharing in the opportunity that is America, these individuals must be able to communicate. There are too many different nationalities represented in America to attempt to communicate in all the different languages. We must have a common language.

English isn't the most simple language in the world, and it's true we natives often have trouble understanding each other. But at least we are all attempting to speak the same language.

Perhaps there is nothing to really worry about, but just in case, it is a wise move now to tell those interested in coming to our state, while we are glad to have them, we want to be able to understand what they are saying. Welcome to America and North Carolina, and feel free to say what you want. But say it in English.



## T-shirt translations

Read a book? Shoot no. I can have twice as much fun reading the fronts of people's T-shirts. I am fascinated at what some folks are now wearing on their clothing. Words. Of any combination, style and subject matter.

If you happen to be shopping in one of those big malls where there are rest areas every few feet, just do like I did recently and get comfortable with a soft drink and some chocolate and enjoy reading the philosophies of life stretched across the fronts, or backs, or your fellow shoppers. Better yet, stand on the street, attend a tractor pull, or go to a church social for that matter. It doesn't make any difference. The things are everywhere. And they range from offensive to religious, and from funny to philosophical. There seems to be something for everyone. Farmer or doctor. Intellect or imbecile.

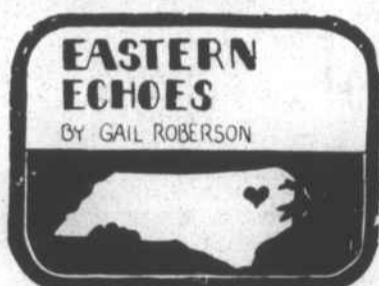
It has always been said that much can be determined about someone by the way they dress. There is more truth in that today than ever before. T-shirt translations tell it all.

My first subject was a gentle looking woman pushing a baby in a stroller. Her shirt read, "Get even. Live long enough to be a problem to your kids." And the child's read, "Princess under construction."

Not far behind them walked two women who apparently shared some similar feelings about the men in their lives. On one's shirt was written, "A husband is living proof that a woman can take a joke," while the other's read, "A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle."

A rather "seedy" looking character purchased something from a store and then came out and sat down next to me. But, when his shirt proclaimed him, "I'm the person your mother warned you about." I moved right along to the next bench and wondered what would happen should he stumble into the two women above.

Among one group of slim and



healthy looking ladies, I found, "Pushing 40 is exercise enough," "enough," and "I might as well exercise...I'm in a bad mood anyway," along with "No pain, no gain." Without a doubt, sit-up and sauna freaks, on break.

I figured the little blond working the candy station was most likely also working her way through school in on her red shirt there were written the words, "I is a college student."

And, I discovered a few people whose thought about the universe rung true to my own: "Beam me up Scotty."

There's no intelligent life down here," and "All things considered, insanity is the only alternative," are as fittingly descriptive as "Onward through the fog."

It would seem that people are now using their shirts as calling cards to attract someone of the same opinion, or for conversation openers. I would imagine much dedicated to that particular cause or opinion, or else they wouldn't be wearing it in the first place. So, a shirt that "talks," is in all reality, speaking for the person inside of it.

Once, there was an air of mystery and excitement about getting to know who they are, the fender or bumper stickers to see where they've been, and their T-shirts to find out how to translate their personality. It has its benefits, I guess...knowing so much so fast. But it sure takes away from the thrill of the hunt, don't you think?

## Diana White widowed for the third time

When Governor Thomas Harvey presided over the General Court of Carolina in February 1696, the assembled judges, litigants, jurors, and spectators might have had more to talk about the business of the law. Their meeting place was the house of Thomas White near Muddy Creek in Perquimans.

Their host had turned his own wife out of doors after selling much of her property. Marital discord was more shocking in this case because the wife was Diana Harris Foster White, the house was actually hers, and the public had long known her as an ordinary keeper and friend of the establishment.

A strange thing happened the third

day of the court's session. The court adjourned itself suddenly to the house of Thomas Nichols some miles up Perquimans River, abandoning Diana's house which had been their meeting place for upwards of ten years. Could the fact that Thomas White was dad within a matter of days have prompted the courts' leaving?

Death had finally released Diana from her unfortunate third marriage. It kept her schedule of being widowed about every tenth year. With White out of the way she could regain full use of her property free of the control a husband had under law. She may have continued her tavern business.

During this period of widowhood Dianna undertook numerous respon-

sibilities. She sought by litigation to recover unpaid debts from her old customers and business associates. Further, she became executrix of the last will and testament of Richard Bentley.

A bad marriage and a period of independence evidently did not dissuade Diana from a further venture into matrimony, nor was she deterred by the fact that her intended had been publicly designated a "person of evil fame" in 1697.

On February 17, 1704, Diana Harris Foster White married Thomas Mercer. Perhaps he was a reformed character, because the following October the Perquimans Precinct Court appointed him an overseer of the highways.

This fourth marriage for Diana would not last three years for Mercer died on November 21, 1706. A problem created during her first marriage would surface to plague Diana's fourth.

When Diana and Thomas Harris, her first husband, had purchased land there had been a defect in the title. By escheat and patent, Major Samuel Swann laid claim to the Harris property on Muddy Creek and obtained a court decision in March 1705 accepting his claim.

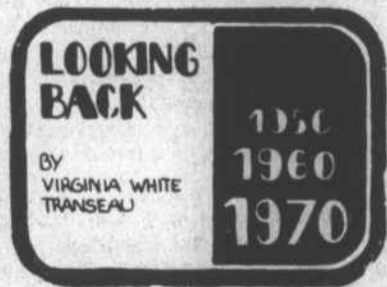
With judicial authority saying the land where she lived, where she had kept an ordinary, where she had hosted the courts—that very land was not hers, Diana disappears from the records of Perquimans.

## Winfall to have hearing on annexation question

18 YEARS AGO

**Winfall To Have Hearing On Annexation Question:** A Public Hearing will be held by Mayor Elijah White and the Commissioners of the Town of Winfall at the Municipal Building on May 5th at 7 o'clock p.m. regarding the annexation, and including within the town limits of the town of Winfall and property beginning on the easterly side of N.C. 37, at the southwesterly corner of W.B. Miller property and running south east to a corner, and north along the line of Perquimans County Central Grammar School.

**Cleanup In Progress:** The big clean-up is going on at the end of Church Street in Hertford with the



demolishing and cleaning up of the old frame houses that have stood at the South end of town for many years. They were occupied for years by many Negroes that were employed at Major Lomis Lumber Company and Suthern Cotton Oil Company when the two businesses were

## Letter to the editor

Editor  
The Perquimans Weekly,

The James Adams Floating Theatre (later known as "The Original Floatig Theatre") once frequented the Tidewater area and coastal rivers from Maryland to Georgia. The showboat, as it was commonly called, is the subject of my research.

I have been able to document its existence through personal recollections of many who lived along the shores of the Chesapeake Bay and

the rivers which flow into it. I am interested in corresponding with persons who remember the showboat's visits to North Carolina. I am also collecting old photos, newspaper clipping, etc.

Your assistance in helping me to locate persons who remember the showboat will be very much appreciated. I will respond to persons who are kind enough to write.

Sincerely,  
Ann Wilmer  
645 North Paca Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

here.

**Suffers Accident:** Mrs Katherine Nelson, manager of Roses Store here suffered a cut on her left hand last Tuesday while dressing the window of her store for Easter. A finger on her left hand was cut to the extent of four stitches were required to close the wound.

**"Treasure Isle" Is Theme For Junior-Senior Shindig:** 1969 Junior-Senior Prom most picturesque in years. This year's theme for the prom was

"Treasure Isle" and the junior class did a super job on the decorations. A seven foot Pirate cut from plywood and painted by Martha White and her helpers showed talent as well as the other decorations. The banquet began at 8:00 p.m. in the Perquimans High School gym and ended at midnight. Many students then went to an all night party held at the Hertford Lions Den. There was music, fun and something to do for the teenager's, for a while last Friday night.

## NEWS COUPON

The news and editorial staff of the Perquimans Weekly would like you to tell us what kind of stories you like to see in the paper. If there is something or someone you feel is important — or some provocative issue you would like us to examine — please, let us know.

Just clip and fill out this coupon. Include as many details as possible (Names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc.)

It may not be possible for us to use some of the stories suggested but we are always looking for new ideas.

So, next time you think of something you feel would make a good story, send it to: News Coupon, Perquimans Weekly, P.O. Box 277, Hertford, N.C. 27944.

## STORY IDEA:

## COMMENTS:

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