

Opinion

Wednesday, March 20, 2013, Page 4A

Keep the Sunday hunting ban

Opponents and proponents agree on one thing—the repeal of the Sunday hunting ban was inevitable.

Action taken last week by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) brings that controversial move one step closer.

The commission—which is approves wildlife rules before they go to the General Assembly to be passed into law or set aside—approved a resolution March 14 supporting Senate Bill 224, which would allow hunting with the use of firearms on Sundays on private property. A similar bill allowing archery hunting on both private and public lands went into effect several years ago, with little fanfare.

The commission has, again, chosen to ignore the survey—paid for by hunters' fees—that showed a slim but clear majority of hunters in the state approved of the Sunday hunting ban. Despite complaints that the survey was slanted toward Sunday hunting advocates, the survey still came out against Sunday hunting. The commission followed that up by approving bowhunting on Sunday.

The state says there have been no conflicts between Sunday archery hunters and other stakeholders such as equestrians, hikers, birders, or bicyclists on public or private land since the archery ban was lifted. We would gently point out that the stealth and woodcraft required for bowhunting are far less likely to cause conflicts with others who enjoy the outdoors than a truckload of hounds joyously chasing a whitetail deer.

We have never been fans of state gamelands—which are funded through fees paid by hunters—being treated by many as state parks, which are supported by tax dollars. Hunters can be fined for breaking the same rules non-hunters routinely violate on gamelands; but getting other users of gamelands to follow the rules and pay their share is a topic for another day.

It is true that the Sunday hunting ban served no clear biological purpose (although such motivation has been conveniently forgotten when the subject of a unified state fox plan came up). The WRC's mission is to conserve natural resources and enhance the state's hunting and fishing heritage, not encourage church attendance.

We consider hunting to be a vital, ethical, and necessary pursuit; without proper management by hunting, disease and crop damage would be tenfold what it already is. Hunting is a multi-million dollar industry just here in Pender County. We have centuries of hunting heritage here, and families that can track their outdoors lineage to the 1700s.

State officials point out that "substantial" revenues for Sunday hunting go to other states, such as Virginia. Allowing hunting on private lands is expected to keep those revenues at home. It was a move sought for years by senate leaders with financial and political interests in the large waterfowl resorts of the northeast. Others even go so far as to claim the state is denying people who work full-time jobs the right to hunt, since Sunday hunting isn't allowed.

We don't entirely buy the argument that Sunday hunting will cut down on church attendance—the faithful will have their priorities straight. Whether rural church services will be interrupted by gunfire and hounds and trucks roaring across the parking lot will remain to be seen as well.

Nor do we buy the argument that since fishing and trapping are allowed on Sunday, the state should ban those activities—along with golf, sports and visits to the playground—if hunting won't be allowed. Hunting has a larger impact on the community at large, and while the largest majority of hunters understand the responsibility that goes with this impact, there are a regrettable few who do not care, and care even less about the impact irresponsible hunting anytime—but especially on Sunday—will have on the activity they proclaim to love.

But there is no need for Sunday hunting in Pender County, or North Carolina. Six days a week are enough, since even the animals deserve a day of rest.

The Point

Whether rural church services will be interrupted by gunfire and hounds and trucks roaring across the parking lot will remain to be seen...

NATIONAL MARCH MADNESS JOBLESS RATES

47. NEW JERSEY (9.5%)

#48. NORTH CAROLINA (9.5%)

ANOTHER YEAR WITH A LOUSY SEED!

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The Post & Voice's quotes of the week

"It's all about good, clean economic development. It will provide education and jobs. In bringing that facility here, it will be like a magnet to help bring other things that will complement that college."

Surf City Mayor Zander Guy on the plans to build a CFCC campus in Surf City.

"It's a lot drier than what people think. People need to be extremely cautious right now. We don't want or need another major fire."

Pender County Fire Marshal Charles Newman on the beginning of the wildfire season in Pender County.

Bullies and Barbies

I got right smart agitated at a fellow the other day.

Albeit, he was intoxicated, although that is no real excuse. The reason I got grumbly was because he hurt a friend of mine very deeply.

Now, I have no desire to embarrass her; let's just say she has survived several serious health scares, as well as a couple of real health crises. She has had problems for years; she was never obese, but when her body's chemistry goes offline, she puts on some extra weight. And when she was healthy again, she got back to a "normal" weight and body type. Yet she always dresses and acts like a lady.

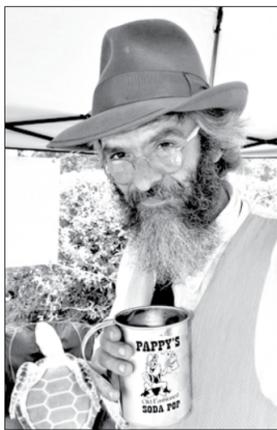
But this—toad, and I of-fend toads by comparing him as such—made a crack about her figure. She's a tough lady, and didn't show it, but it hurt her feelings. Badly.

I thought about her experience the other day when I was forced to visit a big grocery store. Miss Rhonda enjoys grocery shopping; I do not.

The necessities begrudgingly obtained, I found myself in line and a little embarrassed by the mainstream magazines at eye-level. I could imagine some of the questions posed by inquisitive children to redfaced parents, but the precocity of children is a column for another day.

With one exception, all the women on the covers of these magazines were scarily skinny, suggestively posed and stylishly dressed, and surrounded by headlines inviting the reader to "Look HOT in your jeans!", among other things which I will not print here. And that was on a magazine intended for teenagers.

"Make Barbie hate you!" another headline implored. Indeed. As if the ever-pleasant, ever-plastic doll beloved by wife and sisters could hate



Jefferson Weaver

anyone.

I was bothered as well when I heard a mother fussing at her daughter one day that she was "going to be fat as a cow." The girl, a teenager, was celebrating a warm day with an ice cream sandwich. At the risk of sounding like a pervert, I saw nothing wrong with the girl's figure, nor did her mother's give any indication of bovine tendencies in the family. Shrew, maybe, but not cow.

I have never been a fan of the culture that makes young women think they must be skinnier'n an August poor possum to be attractive. It's not natural.

At the same time, while I recognize there are a lot of men and women with legitimate health-related weight issues, I know from personal experience that personal responsibility plays a major role in maintaining a healthy weight. Most of the 100-plus extra pounds I lost years ago came from beer, food and laziness.

The drunken toad to whom I referred earlier had an idea that my friend was supposed to be shaped a certain way, without a clue about her mind or heart or what she has gone through, whence she has been, and

not even received a T-shirt for her trouble. In his own way, he was a bully no less than the ones who gave me nightmares when I was a big little kid, a child some adults thought cute and pudgy whilst the older kids considered a target.

I have always been fond of my vittles, but I have not always had a metabolism where I can eat the horse, gnaw the saddle, and be hungry enough to chase the rider. When you are a first grader the size of a fifth grader in height and weight, you will be picked on. While I do not condone violence, it took my big black lunchbox, the shadow of my brother Mike, and the cooperative efforts of fellow bullying victims to make the threat go away. Wolves ain't quite as prone to picking on goats; unlike sheep, goats have horns and understand safety in numbers.

I ramble and wander on the topics of bullies and Barbie simply because we can't let kids be kids anymore.

Young'uns will fight amongst themselves; such has been the case since pre-history. It's human nature. Trying to counteract thousands of years of genetic coding will only make matters worse—especially when we tell kids violence is bad, but allow them to play video games where people who are shot, stabbed, blown up or otherwise spindled, folded and mutilated are resurrected by the reset button.

Little girls and little boys, for that matter, will try to emulate parents they respect and love; like the country song goes, a man whose little boy wants to grow up just like him should drop to his knees in thanks—and ask for help, too. I don't know of a single little girl, no matter how tomboyish, who doesn't

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On Island Time



Gail Ostrishko
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Insuring excellence

I had the pleasure and privilege of speaking at I Day recently: All Industry Day hosted by the CPCU Society of Eastern North Carolina. Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU) is a professional designation, equivalent to earning a Master's degree in insurance.

They invited me to speak on my signature topic: Engaging Excellence; ideally inspiring them to effective action within their industry and beyond. I got more education on insurance in one day than I have in my entire life.

I now have a better understanding why rates continue to rise, and how and by whom that is determined. Not that there is anything I can do about it, it was interesting to learn how our state compares to others in administering this significant service we all secure, hoping we never need it.

A professor from ECU, my alma mater, (go Pirates) brought along some students to enlighten us with their perspective on preparing as professionals in the insurance industry.

I was impressed with their enthusiasm for this opportunity, especially considering it was during their spring break. Their understanding of the industry and passion for potential in the profession was powerful.

When I was at ECU, I was studying Greek Life, inter-generational interaction and the impact of social life on study habits. In reality, my Master's degree is in understanding people, which by no means are any less complicated than insurance, but somehow seem a little simpler to understand and interpret.

Engaging Excellence involves identifying and acknowledging unique abilities, talents and interests in ourselves and others, synchronizing them to synergy. Insurance is certainly a relationship-based business, anchored by integrity, as no average person could possibly understand and interpret the intricacies of these professional policies we purchase.

An interesting entity indeed, as it is something we all invest in, hoping we never need, and agents sell it, hoping the same, yet planning for a positive experience either way.

Though I would never say it, several speakers cited the stereotype of insurance beings boring. I found the opposite to be true. While not something I have chosen to study, I got an amazing education in the short time I was surrounded by these experts.

And they were engaged in excellence as well. Not a new topic, I trust, but perhaps a new perspective on the process and power of engaging excellence in themselves and those around them. We all invested in new knowledge, insuring a high rate of return.

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Hampstead Stories



Bill Messer

Ernie Bryant firefighter

Ernie Bryant remembers the Hampstead stores and the early fire department.

"I was born in Fayetteville, but raised in Wilmington. "In 1947 I was workin' with NBC Bakery and the boy that had this route up here ran out of bread, and he had to go back to the bakery to get some and I rode back up with him to deliver the bread. Kye Howard had a store, and Mrs. Opal Batts, where the ABC store is now, had a little store, and I saw my wife in there – didn't even speak to her – but when I went home told

my mother and daddy I saw the girl I was gonna' marry, Juanita Sanders."

"I didn't know her name. Her and Mrs. Opal's daughter were jitterbuggin'. They had a little jukebox in there and they were jitterbuggin', in 1947.

"Was it love at first sight?" I asked.

"Six months later we were married," he laughed.

"It was just a little country village. Mr. Horace Handley ran a store, right where Atlantic Seafood is now, and a Gulf Station that Raymond Hughes, the one that developed Washington Acres ran. And there was McKinley's on the corner there. McKinley's store sold Venus' flytraps, cypress knees, stuff like that, and cut hair, too. And there was a little streetcar diner on the corner, right there where the bank's at.

"Mr. Wier's store was there but it was closed. The railroad was operating – it would go up one day and back the next. And sometimes there was troops, movin' on a extra one.

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Public Opinion

Letters to the Editor

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