

OPINION



FRANK From page 8

and one day, my trapping partner, Terry, and I traveled down that path to check our beaver traps. On the way back down that path, we came upon a big cottonmouth moccasin curled up in the middle of the path. Its head was drawn back, its mouth wide open, fangs showing and jaws puffed up with poison. It was daring us to try to get by him. If you're afraid of snakes, you don't need to have a job like mine. I caught him back of his head and held him up while Terry took a couple of pictures, then I released him.

It is most unusual to hear of the sighting of rattlesnakes in this area, but it does happen. I told Sandy and Willie that I handled a timber rattlesnake just over a year ago. It was discovered by a park ranger on Interstate 85 in Warren County just a short distance over the Vance County line. It had been run over by an automobile, but was still alive.

Many years ago, I was told that, in Vance County, on the western side of Henderson, while clearing land to build Maria Parham hospital, a bulldozer uncovered a nest of several rattlesnakes. And in adjoining Granville County, many residents will attest that there have always been rattlesnakes on Bowling's Mountain.

Sandy said that, back when he was a boy, he had seen joint snakes. These were snakes that broke into sections, or joints when threatened, and after the danger was gone, the snake came together. Sandy said that he had witnessed the breaking into sections, but had never seen one come back together. I said that I have heard the old folks tell of joint snakes, but have never seen one.

One of my favorite tales came from an old man who lived out in the country when he was a boy. Thanksgiving was a few days away, and his daddy bought a live turkey to eat for Thanksgiving dinner. (Back then dinner was the noon meal.) The day before Thanksgiving, they took the turkey to the chopping block and cut its head off with an ax, then plucked and cleaned it, and the next day they served the turkey for dinner. Later that day, one of the children began to holler that he saw a snake. It was a joint snake, and the daddy hit it with a stick. The snake broke into several sections. Knowing that the snake would come back together, the daddy picked up the snake's head and threw it on top of a barn shed, knowing that there was no way for the snake to live without its head.

A couple of hours later, they heard the gobble of a turkey, but that couldn't be possible because they had eaten the turkey for dinner. They went to investigate and soon found the joint snake. The snake couldn't find its head, but had found the turkey's head lying beside the chopping block and had put it on.

Sandy and Willie departed to go home, and I got back to work building bluebird houses. They each took a brand new bluebird house with them.

LETTERS From page 8

Frightening part of the impeachment process is that it has already been mentioned that if they were successful, then the next target would be Mike Pence. If that were successful, then Nancy Pelosi would be president. How scary would that be?

HUGH FOWLER
Littleton, N.C.

Supervisors Vote to Marginalize the Historic Community of Ebony — What's Wrong With This Picture?

Since the vote on Jan. 29, many in the community have expressed how shocked, disheartened, and disturbed they are that the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 to rezone historic, rural-residential-agricultural land at the heart of Ebony, V.A., to become home to yet another Dollar General.

Not only is this not a fit for the Ebony area, but it opens the doors for future commercial development directly alongside Prospect Cemetery/Church — a historic landmark and anchor.

This vote happened despite the fact that 75 percent of the attendees who filled the room were staunchly against it and mirrored broader community sentiment. Speakers provided substantive comments that showed more significant implications, demonstrating how the new store would harm the community and not be a net benefit to either Ebony or the County as a whole. Most importantly, we showed how approval of this rezoning application was not compliant with the zoning governance enforcement for the County legislated in the Code of Virginia.

From the perspective of the Ebony Preservation Group, this vote to approve the rezoning application reflected a blatant disregard of land management governance designed to prevent precisely what has been allowed to happen. Legitimate rezoning decisions must consider all impacts and trade-offs. This decision does not; it only accommodates Dollar General with no regard to the negative impacts on the community and suggests a grim future of the County. In any case, the land use maps do not support any form of Business zoning for the area.

Given the significant negative implications to Ebony associated with rezoning the subject land, and implications for similar scenarios in all A-1 Districts across the County, the EPG was formed to pool and coordinate our time and talent to fight it and to create a communication platform. We are all for business development that is appropriately aligned with location and does not harm the character of rural communities and the overarching authentic rural character and attraction of the County. Dollar General is not a fit for the heart of the quaint Ebony community, and it will be harmful.

It is so sad and disturbing that those who voted for the rezoning — Supervisors Seward (Sturgeon) and Tyler (Powellton), and Chair Harris (Totaro) — seem to have deviated from the responsibilities of their position.

Also notable: they are not supporting the leadership of the district impacted who opposed for all the right reasons. Yet these three supervisors are imposing irrevocable consequences to the Meherrin community and the lives and homes of many people across several generations and all generations going forward.

We want to thank all those who took a stand to oppose this rezoning request and, in particular, Supervisors John Zubrod and Bernard Jones, and planning commission members. They demonstrated the leadership required to achieve the vision and a bright future for Brunswick County and could not be swayed by Dollar General.

We appreciate the love and commitment to Ebony and all efforts to preserve this special place. If you would like to learn more about our group or read a more comprehensive response to the vote, please visit KeepEbonyCountry.org. We aren't going anywhere.

ANNE EDWARDS HARTLEY
Ebony Preservation Group
Ebony, Va.

"This is 'bout the best time of year," said Steve, "to get out and do something fun, like go to a rodeo."

"Awful cold out there right now, Steve," said Doc, who has more degrees than a thermometer. "I guess it's a good thing they have all those building rodeos these days."

"Well, that would take all the sport out of it, wouldn't it?" Steve said. "Dud, pass the sugar please."

Dud passed the sugar. "Don't know what you mean, Steve. Why would it take all the sport out of rodeo if the folks in the stands were comfortable?"

"Cold factor," he said.

"What?"

Now Steve was our resident cowboy here at the Mule Barn truck stop's philosophy counter. He still worked on ranches and lived in bunkhouses and saddled his horses one at a time, but his rodeo days were far behind him. It's a sport with a very short career ... one way or another.

"You see," Steve said, "when it's cold, the rough stock bucks harder ... specially the broncs. Not sure why, but you can see it even with broke horses. On a cold morning, they're liable to hump their backs and hop a few times just for fun, or to shake out the kinks. Same with rodeo broncs. With them, I think it's just more fun, though."

"Well, I can see where watching broncs in cold weather would make it more fun to watch," Doc said.

"That's only half of it," Steve said, grinning. "Those poor cowboys who ride them are cold and stiff, too. Doesn't help much with riding rank stock. And that's the reason it's more fun to watch a rodeo in cold weather. It tends to rain frozen cowboys."

Brought to you by Ol' Jimmy Dollar, Slim's children's book about a happy hounddog man and his "kids." See it at riograndebooks.com.

Calling Young Artists!

Arts & Crafts Day

March 14, 2020 • 10 am to 4 pm
at the Warrenton Golf Club
129 19th Hole Drive • Warrenton NC 27589

As part of this wonderful event, we will be holding a special Youth Artists Exhibition. This is a free opportunity for any young non-professional artist within the broader reach of the event (NC and VA) to experience sharing their creation with the public. If interested, please submit a jpg and description of the art work to phillipseventsmgt@gmail.com by the February 28th deadline and we will reply with a parent consent form and instructions.

For more details go to Facebook: Arts & Crafts Day.

Send your Letter to the Editor to news@lakegastongazette-observer.com

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top 10 movies!

1. **Bad Boys for Life**(R)
Will Smith, Vanessa Hudgens
2. **1917**(R)
Dean-Charles Chapman, George MacKay
3. **Dolittle**(PG)
Robert Downey Jr., Antonio Banderas
4. **The Gentlemen**(R)
Matthew McConaughey, Charlie Hunnam
5. **Jumanji: The Next Level**(PG-13)
Dwayne Johnson, Jack Black
6. **The Turning**(PG-13)
Mackenzie Davis, Finn Wolfhard
7. **Star Wars: Episode IX — The Rise of Skywalker**(PG-13)
Carrie Fisher, Mark Hamill
8. **Little Women**(PG)
Saoirse Ronan, Emma Watson
9. **Just Mercy**(PG-13)
Marcus A. Griffin Jr., Michael B. Jordan
10. **Knives Out**(PG-13)
Daniel Craig, Chris Evans

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Opportunity for Warren County's Small Businesses

Scheduling Film Crew
February 12, 2020
Contact EDC Now

Warren County Economic Development will be filming Wednesday, February 12th, 2020, to highlight our small businesses on our new website.

If you would like your business included, please email StacyWoodhouse@warrencountync.gov and put "filming" in the subject line.

Please provide the name and address of your business and a phone number where you can be reached. For more information call 252-257-3114.

Stacy Woodhouse, Director
Warren County Economic Development Commission
501 US Hwy 158-Bus-E, Warrenton, NC 27589
stacywoodhouse@warrencountync.gov 252-257-3114

The Garden Bug

Soursop

The soursop tree only grows where there are no freezing temperatures. Take some seeds directly from its fruit, soak them in warm water overnight, plant them in potting soil and place in a sunny spot. Keep the mix damp and they should germinate in 2-4 weeks. Plant your soursop seedling in full sun in an area where it is protected from wind. It should produce large, spiky, sour-tasting fruits in three to five years and can grow as high as 30 feet in about 6 years. — B. Weaver

Sources: www.gardenguides.com, homeguides.sfgate.com, davesgarden.com

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