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South Carolina  
**Consumer Affairs Report**

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SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, P. O. BOX 5757, COLUMBIA, S. C. 29250 1-800-922-1594

Volume 4, Number 3

May/June 1979

New Consumer Affairs  
Commissioner Elected

Senator Thomas Dewey Wise, D-Charleston-Georgetown Counties, has been elected to the South Carolina Consumer Affairs Commission. The Consumer Affairs Commission consists of 11 members of which one each is elected from the House of Representatives and the Senate. The General Assembly elects four other members from outside the legislative body and the Governor appoints four other members whose appointments are confirmed by the Senate. State Treasurer Grady L. Patterson, Jr. serves as an ex officio member and Chairman of the Commission. Although Ralph K. Anderson, D-Florence, serves as the House appointed legislative member, the Senate had not appointed one of their members to the commission and it is this vacancy which Senator Wise has been elected to fill. Senator Wise is an attorney, a graduate of the USC law school and received his Master-of-Law degree from George Washington University Law School. Senator Wise is married and resides with his wife and two children in Mount Pleasant.

Time to be Alert to Food Poisoning

Summer is the season for outings such as picnics, beach parties, and visits to unfamiliar restaurants. Unfortunately, it is also the season when more food poisoning occurs than at any other time of the year. So stay alert for symptoms. Symptoms of salmonella poisoning or staph infection include vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps with or without severe headache, fever and prostration. When accompanied by weakness, blurred vision, swallowing difficulties, or slight paralysis, it may mean a deadly botulism. Onset may range from 1/2 hour to seven or eight days following ingestion of contaminated food. Trichinosis, caused by worms

transmitted in undercooked pork, is even trickier. Symptoms, including weakness, fever, swelling around the eyes, muscle pain, and diarrhea, may develop three to 30 days later. Don't write off suspicious symptoms as summer flu or the 24-hour virus. Call a doctor immediately if you suspect food poisoning. If possible isolate suspect foods for testing and notify the Health Department.

Prescription for Vacation Driving

Use sunglasses. Don't let anyone smoke during a long trip if possible. Smoke causes grogginess. Tuck foam pillow behind small of back to ease strain. Keep snacks and thermos handy. Stop periodically and rest eyes and legs. Wear light support socks. Play tapes on subjects that interest you rather than restful music. It'll help keep you alert.

How I Spent My  
Summer Vacation Department

Vacations don't have to be spent in traveling or resting at the beach, in the mountains, other cities or abroad. They can also be used for self-improvement and further education. Vacation at the college of your choice this summer. Inexpensive lodging, meals, and use of sports facilities are usually available for one-to-two week courses in management, arts, business, and various self-improvement areas. Very few schools limit programs to alumni. Write to colleges you're interested in and ask for summer programs for adults, plus rates and dates.

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Pan for Gold on Your Next Vacation is both a suggestion for an unusual vacation and the name of a new book which describes how and where to go, what equipment is needed, and where to sell the gold you find (if any).

The book is \$2.50 and available from Pilot Books, 347 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

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Traveling with Children in the U.S.A. is the name of a guidebook of unusual trips. It is available for \$4.95 from Morrow, 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

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Unusual vacation possibilities abound such as a houseboating trip on the Mississippi for groups of six to eight people. Details are available from Prairie du Chien Marina, Box 380, Prairie du Chien, WI 53821; Covered wagon trip over old Western trails has details available from Wagons Ho, Box 1878, Quintar, KS 67752; Tour of Unmapped Ecuador, Boston's harbor islands, radio tracking of raccoons on St. Catherine's Island, GA, studying the excavation of Lubbock Lake in Texas has details available from Earthwatch, 10 Juniper Road, Belmont, MA 02178. Details for a three-day fly fishing course in Vermont can be obtained from Orvis Fly Fishing School, 10 River Road, Manchester, VT 05354.

#### Vacation and Trip Tips

Be sure to ask for and keep receipts for all credit card purchases. The request itself should discourage a dishonest merchant from tampering with the amount on the bill.

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Never buy something while on vacation and take advantage of an offer to mail it back home for you. It may never arrive and the store merchant has not only pocketed the price of the item but the extra cost for mailing. If you can't take the item with you or mail it back yourself, make sure you get a receipt. Even that isn't surefire. It's better to buy only what you can manage to carry back yourself.

\*\*\*\*\*

The index to National Park System containing detailed descriptions of over 300 parks across the country is available at \$1.65 from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. Maps and Guide of National Parks of U. S. lists guided tours, picnic areas, entrance fees, campgrounds and other information and is available from the same source at 75 cents.

If you buy an airline ticket well in advance for a specific flight and a fare change goes into effect before your departure date, a recent CAB ruling says the original booked fare will be honored as long as your departure date and flight remain unchanged. However, if you make a change, the new fare will apply. If the fare has gone down and you've overpaid, bring it to the attention of airline personnel at check-in time or send the ticket receipt to the airline for a refund.

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Toll-free vacation advisory service sponsored by the U. S. government provides information on sightseeing, accommodations, bus and airline schedules plus free brochures on travel for senior citizens and the handicapped. Call Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., 800-323-4180.

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A National Directory of Amusement Parks with state-by-state listings of more than 500 parks, zoos, kiddie-lands, animal farms, including a description of facilities and location, is available at \$2.95 from Pilot Books, 347 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

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Carry your medical history with you on vacation. Fold a one-page summary of health data into your passport which includes blood type, allergies, eyeglass prescription, medications currently being taken and any pre-existing health condition.

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Lunch with a Cabinet member in Washington can now be arranged for members of the public, about 200 at a time, and can be the highlight of a family vacation. Invitations are on a first-come, first served basis by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope with the request to Public Citizen Forum, 1200 15th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20005.

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If you lose an airline ticket, you will be required to buy another before boarding the flight. But remember to fill out a refund application. If no one uses the lost ticket within 45 to 90 days (depending on the airline), the purchase price will be refunded.

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If your summer vacation involves a lot of

cross-country driving, or sunbathing on the beach and you want to use some of the leisure time catching up on your reading, you might be interested in investigating renting fiction or non-fiction books on tape from Books on Tape, Box 71405, Los Angeles, CA 90071.

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A guidebook is available of hundreds of companies - steel mills, wineries, newspaper plants, TV stations, sugar refineries, missile bases, mines - which offer free plant tours in all 50 states. Guide cost is \$3.95 and available from Walter's Co., Route 4, Waseca, MINN., 56093.

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The best place to sit on a 747 when not traveling first class is rows 11 through 18 which gives you the best visibility and smoother ride. The best place to sit for non-smokers is a seat at least five rows in front of the smoking section, which should give you smoke-free air. The best place for extra leg room is the first row of a section or just in back of exits.

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When having repairs done in a strange garage when on-the-road breakdowns occur, stay with the car. A larcenous mechanic needs only a minute to concoct an engine malfunction. Don't only stay with the car but stay as alert as possible to what he is doing. Ask the mechanic to let you have the old part before he starts putting in a new one. Simply explain that the part is not that old and you are taking it back to your regular service garage. Having it in your possession prevents him from reinstalling the old unit.

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Commonly prescribed drugs such as antibiotics, diuretics, diabetic drugs, tranquilizers, and antifungals can greatly increase sensitivity to the sun. The result can be excessive burning and skin damage. Be warned.

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If you are planning a trip abroad, here are some suggestions for coping with jet lag. Before your trip, especially a long one, adjust eating and sleeping times several days before departure to come as close as is convenient to the schedule of the new time zone. During the trip do isometric exercises to stimulate circulation, especially in

legs. Avoid alcohol but drink plenty of fluids to counteract low humidity in the plane cabin.

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New Civil Aeronautics Board rules allow up to 45 days to report lost or damaged luggage. It's no longer necessary to file claim immediately or use an official claim form.

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Check hotel hot water before showering. A survey of leading hotels shows that a scary percentage have water hot enough to scald.

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When using charter flights, consider trip cancellation insurance. It protects against possible loss if an accident or illness forces you to cancel. Available from travel agents, it costs less than \$25 for each \$500 in coverage but customers must ask for it; travel agents don't supply it.

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Medical researchers have discovered that the primary ingredient in Pepto-Bismol, subsalicylate bismuth, can help to prevent that traveler's ailment commonly called Montezuma's Revenge. A group of new students in Mexico received four tablespoons of the medication four times a day, which proved effective in a large percentage in preventing diarrhea.

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The 1979 Multinational Executive Travel Companion covers currency regulations and rates, local customs, business hours, holidays, government offices and embassies. It also has useful phrases and words in eight languages and worldwide dining and entertainment expense data. It is available from \$20 from Multinational Business Guides, Inc., Box 92, Cambridge, MASS 02138.

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#### Bargain Souvenirs

With our inflationary trend many vacationers are passing by price-high gift shops and souvenir stands and are seeking out bargains by shopping at factory outlets that sell

clothing and home products to the public. A guide for discount outlets is available for five different areas: New York, New England, New Jersey, North and South Carolina, Washington, DC - Delaware-Maryland. Cost of each guide is \$3.45 and available from Factory Outlet Shopping Guide, Box 256A, Oradell, NJ 07649.

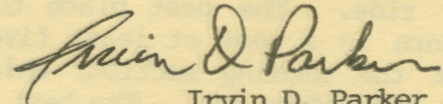
#### Instructional Materials Available

Whirlpool Corporation has designed and printed a new 16-page coloring book containing suggestions and ideas that will introduce children to ways of conserving energy around the home. A limited number of copies are available to interested schools and organizations by writing to Manager, State Government Relations, Whirlpool Corp., Benton Harbor, Michigan, 49022 and asking for Saving Energy.

#### Addenda

It has been said by someone that people can be divided into three groups: Those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened. If the state of South Carolina is ever to have effective consumer-related legislation, it will be not only because consumer-conscious legislators responded to consumer need but also because our consumer citizenry has supported it writing letters and making phone calls to their elected representatives asking them to support such legislation. A key to such an activist role is (1) an awareness of

the existence of such legislation and (2) an insight into the purpose and function of such legislation. Therefore, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs is developing a special mailing list of consumer activists - people who care enough about consumer related legislation to make efforts in behalf of its passage. Our list of activists will receive mailings through the year but especially just before and during the legislative session advising them about pending legislation and asking their support and help. If you consider yourself a consumer activist and would like to participate in this way, drop us a card or letter with your full name and address and the sentence "I am a consumer activist" and mail it to the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 5757, Columbia, S.C. 29250.



Irvin D. Parker  
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