

**Wednesday
December 5,**

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Is this the wisdom that comes with age?

I had a birthday this past week, and as I reflected on the occasion, I realized that I have reached that awkward age in life in which I am too old for ice cream and cake but not yet old enough to feel overly grateful for surviving yet another cycle of the earth around the sun.

GUEST COLUMN: Don't worry about being 'Awake'

A new movie, *Awake*, is scheduled to be released Nov. 30. Recent television commercials and Internet sites give sensational and sometimes misleading information. Alarming statements include "one in 700 people wake up during surgery" as well as "... is awake but paralyzed during surgery." The producer has stated that the movie "will do to surgery what *Jaws*" did to swimming in the ocean."

GUEST COLUMN: The impact of impact fees in Chester County

What are impact fees? When are they appropriate? Based on the recent N&R article, "County looks at impact fees" (Nov. 28, 2007), I would like to take a moment to answer these two questions based on my professional commercial and residential real estate

GUEST COLUMN: The impact of impact fees in Chester County

By Liz Odum

What are impact fees? When are they appropriate? Based on the recent N&R article, "County looks at impact fees" (Nov. 28, 2007), I would like to take a moment to answer these two questions based on my professional commercial and residential real estate experience.

An impact fee is a county tax charged to the developer/builder of new residential, commercial, and/or industrial development. In new residential construction, the tax is added into an increased sales price and passed onto the buyer. Impact fees for industrial and commercial projects are calculated differently and can create enough of their own negative impact to turn away business opportunities. Calling an impact fee a "financial contribution" as stated in the N&R article sounds quite warm, fuzzy and optional. However, this tax is typically created and forced only when growth and new development is rapid and massive -- at a critical and immediate imbalance of supply and demand.

For comparison purposes, let's take a look at our neighbor. York County implemented impact fees in the Fort Mill/Tega Cay areas because of an overwhelming level of new single- and multi-family development. This instantaneous growth created a high demand ("impact") to the rapidly dwindling supply of classroom space within Fort Mill Township. Contributing to the problem was an aggressive "war" against commercial and industrial development? a valuable tax source for offsetting residential tax increases.

Chester County hasn't been "impacted" by new single- or multi-family development at this level whatsoever. In fact, our schools have been constructed and expanded in welcoming anticipation of new growth

