

Well it's getting to be that time again. The political season is upon us. I've been enjoying it very much so far and am just getting warmed up with regard to posting about my favorite issues and candidates on YACKon.com.



Grant Sanders

YACK on: Truth in Advertising

Recently we've been discussing the 'Sconset Beach Preservation Fund's idea of "nourishing" the beach from Sesachacha Pond to Codfish Park. It appears that the SBPF has been gearing up to wage a massive media blitz to counter the small vocal minority (or is it a majority? I keep forgetting) local opposition to their plan. I know a thing or two about media campaigns. I've been an advertising pro for over two decades. I owned an ad agency off island for a while. I've worked for some of the top brands in the world. Kodak. Disney. Liberty Mutual. Virgin. Turner Broadcasting. Anheuser Busch. H&R Block. NBC. And I have a bunch of industry awards under my belt, which explains the unsightly bulges.

I have to say, that these SBPF people are going about it all wrong.

Oh, they started out okay. They began by gathering data, which is always a good thing to do before spending a lot of money on ads. They conducted a massive telephone survey. I'm sure some of you got the phone call and answered the questions of the nice poll taker from Iowa. I know I did.

Then they sent people door to door to talk to the citizens about the plan. They got a list of registered voters and they hired some nice young people with clipboards and literature to hand out and discuss the benefits of moving a pile of sand that's a football field long and wide and two football fields high from a shoal off of Sankaty to the beaches of 'Sconset. No one has knocked on my door yet, as far as I know. Although I've been busy meeting with clients and writing taglines, so I might not have been home.

The other day, an observant YACKer noticed that the SBPF has a couple of new mailers on their Web site. One postcard has a picture of a man and a boy running on a beach in the waves with the headline: "I want my kids to enjoy 'Sconset Beach ... just as I did. That's why I'm voting [check mark] YES on April 15th." Another features a woman lifting an infant up into the air with the same headline. The first question I have about these postcards is, who are these people? They can't be residents. The only time I run on the beach is when the wind blows my umbrella out of the sand and I have to grab it before it impales a couple from New Jersey. And who is this woman tossing an infant into the air? She looks too skinny to be the mother of that massive baby.

Another question I have about these headlines: Is the beach, per se, really in danger? I'm guessing that the natural forces of erosion and accretion will continue to supply that beach with sand forever. What we are talking about saving here are the multi-million-dollar houses on the bluff, no? A handful of lovely monuments to wealth and prosperity. The American Way. Saving the beach sounds like a false and misleading advertising claim to me. And I should know. I'm an expert.

The copy on the backs of these postcards is pretty entertaining. One reads: "How much evidence do we need?! Already the Lighthouse has been moved, and erosion is advancing fast. Something has to be done."

Uh, yeah, like moving your massive summer homes, maybe? Just a thought.

Another snippet of copy on the other mailer reads: "To hear some people talk, the privately funded plan to Preserve 'Sconset Beach hurts the environment. Nothing could be further from the truth!"

One thing my old advertising professor at Boston University, Walter Lubars, told me a long time ago: "Never use an exclamation point unless you are declaring war. Exclamation points make your client look a little desperate and unbalanced." Thanks, Walter. Words to live by.

Because I am a professional advertising practitioner and because these SBPF people obviously need my help, I've decided to help them out by crafting some ad ideas for them.

And the best advertising tactic that I know of is to use the truth to get your point across. Don't talk about the beach when you're really out to save your own homes. That's disingenuous. Tell it like it is and sell it well. People on Nantucket appreciate honesty and integrity. They can smell a fake a mile away. The truth is much better. I humbly offer these ad ideas for the SBPF's approval:

Visual: A man holding a massive striped bass.

Headline: Fish are bad for you. We can help.

Copy: The SBPF project will likely disrupt fishing, pour sand over the habitat of a multitude of bait fish and create a plume of silt that will send all of the stripers and bluefish — with their flesh laden with PCBs and mercury — away from Nantucket, perhaps forever. And that's good for you and your family. Vote yes on April 15th.

Logo: SBPF. Have a burger instead.

Visual: photos from the recent lighthouse move at Sankaty.

Headline: The 'Sconset Trust decided to move Sankaty Light away from the bluff.

Subhead: Wimps.

Copy: It takes guts to undertake and fund the largest construction project in Nantucket history. And we're just the people to do it. We're not going to cut and run because Mother Nature and a whole island full of worry-wart locals say so. No way. Vote yes on April 15th.

Logo: SBPF. Hubris. It's good for America.

Image: A boardroom full of lawyers

Headline: We have money. We have lawyers. And did we mention we have money?

Subhead: Resistance is futile.

Copy: Give up now, Nantucket. It's just a matter of time before we get our way. We always do. Vote yes on April 15th. Actually, who cares how you vote? It won't matter one bit either way. Mwahahaha!

Logo: SBPF. Because we want it.

TV Ad for PlumTV

:30 seconds

Open on a tranquil beach scene. The quiet is disturbed by the sound of rumbling which grows to a massive roar.

Voice Over (yelling over the roar): Hear that sound? It's the sound of a 350-foot hopper dredge, one of Man's most amazing inventions. A hopper dredge literally strip mines the ocean floor, destroying all of the habitat in its path. And it's a rare thing around these parts. We think hopper dredges are so amazing and fascinating that we'll be bringing one to the shores off Sankaty very soon. And we'll be operating it around the clock from June through October, every three years. Maybe more. And best of all, you and your family can come down to the beach and see this amazing man-made miracle of engineering, first hand. For free. It's just one more reason to vote yes on April 15th.

Super: The SBPF. Nature is overrated.

I've got a few more ideas that I'm keeping in reserve in case the SBPF wants to hire me to really make their ads great. And who could blame them? I am, after all, an expert.

YACK on. ■

Grant Sanders is the host of YACK, the Nantucket Online Community at yackon.com and he is currently working on ads for one of the world's largest aircraft manufacturers. And several insurance companies. His views are his alone and do not reflect the editorial stance of The Nantucket Independent. Or his wife.



Our Island Waves Honor Roll Students will appear in the Nantucket Skating Club's Ice Show at Nantucket Ice Rink on Saturday, March 29. Two Shows! 1:00 pm & 5:00 pm

Honor Roll ad Sponsored by

**THE NANTUCKET
Independent**



**Please join us
as together we**

Meet the Candidates

The candidates running for contested seats on the Board of Selectmen, HDC, Planning Board and the School Committee will be questioned

by a panel of representatives from the local media.

Members of the audience will have an opportunity to participate.

Let's learn where candidates stand on the issues so that we can cast informed votes on April 15.

Saturday, March 29

1:30 PM in the Great Hall of the Atheneum

Reception following the program.

Everyone welcome.

The annual Meet the Candidates Community Forum is hosted by the Nantucket Civic League in partnership with PLUM TV, Channel 22.

For further information contact the NCL at 508 228 0025

or go to www.nantucketcivicleague.org.

