

# Drug Awareness Classes Inform Parents, Students Of Dangers

**BY TERRY POPE**  
Brunswick County Sheriff's Detective David Crocker holds up a pack of cigarette rolling papers for the audience in Calabash to see. The narcotics officer then explains how the papers are used to roll joints, or marijuana cigarettes.

"Almost every time I speak to a group at school," Crocker said, "there will be some kid to raise their hand and say, 'Daddy's got some of those on his dresser.'"

Crocker's expression turns sour, and members of the Calabash chapter 3640 of the American Association of Retired Persons mumble to one another in dismay. For Crocker it is a routine demonstration he performs for groups throughout the county, sharing his knowledge and ideas about drug use to anyone who is interested.

A similar drug awareness class will be presented by Crocker and members of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department Monday night, March 18, at Waccamaw Elementary School at 7 p.m. The school's Parent-Teacher Organization invites all interested parents to attend. Demonstrations are available to groups in the county by calling the sheriff's department for more information.

Crocker recently completed a drug awareness class for all fourth-through eighth-graders at Waccamaw Elementary School to explain the North Carolina drug laws and the effects different drugs have on youths.

"You would be surprised at what they already know," Crocker said. "Those kids know the drug language, and they're upgrading their language each day."

One message Crocker tries to in-

still into the students is to go to their parents with questions about drugs before experimenting on their own. But sometimes that doesn't work, especially if daddy's got a pack of rolling papers on his dresser.

"They see their parents do it, so they think it's okay for them, too," he added. "I'm not saying everything starts in the home, but everything can be stopped in the home."

As part of the demonstration, sample drugs and drug paraphernalia are shown to the audience and explained how they are used. Cocaine free basing kits, "pink hearts," or legally-obtained caffeine pills laced with formaldehyde or angel dust that have been confiscated throughout the county are also shown to the group.

A burlap sack that once held a bale of marijuana from the Brixham II drug case is shown to explain the routes drug smugglers used to ship marijuana into the county. At one time, inside the sack was 62 pounds of marijuana, Crocker said.

When the marijuana was harvested in Columbia, it had a value of \$80 a pound, or around \$4,960 for the burlap sack full, he said. The price jumped another \$20 at the dock, or up to \$6,200.

Once it arrived along the coast of the United States, its value reached \$12,400 per sack. Provided it reaches the drug pusher without being caught, it will cost the supplier \$21,700, or around \$320 per pound, Crocker said. After it is broken down into individual ounces for sale, it will create \$138,800 per sack for the supplier.

"That's why we are seeing drug smugglers getting more and more into automatic weapons and assaults on officers," Crocker said. "These people are getting very serious about

the business."

Crocker said since the crackdown on drug smuggling along the coast began drugs are still entering the county, but only in smaller amounts. The cocaine trafficking has also picked up in Brunswick County, he said.

"That way, there's less chance of anyone getting caught," Crocker

said. "The less people that are involved, the less people there are to talk about it and the less chance of getting caught."

Marijuana plants as tall as 18½ feet have been found growing in Brunswick County, he added. When caught with the plants, no one ever takes responsibility.

"Marijuana does not grow wild," Crocker said. "Everytime we arrest someone, they always say it just sprouted up."

Officers also inform parents of the signs that their child may be using drugs, such as glassy eyes, a sudden loss of appetite, restlessness and a need for money. A youth who needs

money to support a drug habit often ends up in deeper trouble, said Detective Lindsey Walton.

About 50 percent of the juveniles arrested in Brunswick County for breaking and entering and larcenies are searching for money or items to sale to support their drug habits, Walton said.

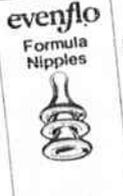
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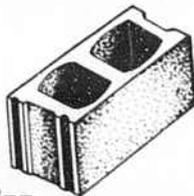
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STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

FLO COOK, left, secretary of the Calabash chapter 3640 of the American Association of Retired Persons, inspects marijuana samples with Brunswick County Sheriff's Detective Lindsey Walton. Detectives sponsored a drug awareness class at the AARP meeting last Thursday and will hold another class Monday night at 7 p.m. at the Waccamaw Elementary School PTO meeting.

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