

Commission Candidates Conduct Quiet Campaign

Competition for four-year terms on the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners is low-key in both District 2 and District 5.

Benny Ludlum, of the Holden Beach area, gained the advantage of District 2 incumbency when he was appointed in July by the county Democratic Party, to fill the unexpired term of Herman Love, who resigned following his primary defeat by Ludlum. He previously served a four-year term in 1980-84.

The 46-year-old Ludlum is a native of the county, and points to his first term efforts with modest pride. "I worked for the people and tried to keep taxes low," he said, "and I think I represented the people well."

Referring to his reputation as a consistent "no" voter on the board, Ludlum said, "Before, I had a tendency to not explain why I voted certain ways. I'm going to try and explain this in the future."

He sees the water system as the county's biggest issue at present. "I want to keep as much tax money as possible in the water system, and keep it going."

Despite public aversion to the word "zoning," Ludlum said he thinks more planning of land use should be done in the county.

"My four-and-a-half years on the board helped me a great deal, and I can be stronger and work harder because of them. Running for this office is something I don't have to do, but I want to do it," he said.

Ludlum lives on Holden Beach Road with his wife and three children, ages 8, 15 and 19.

Tommy Bradsher, 37, a Republican of Holden Beach, is challenging Ludlum for the District 2 post. Married, the father of five children, ranging from 5 to 17 years old, Bradsher owns East Coast Housing, a Goodyear store, a real estate office and a farm.

With the responsibility of six people and four businesses, why did he enter this race? "I felt I could be an asset to the county, with my business background," he replied. "I have no background in politics, so I don't owe anybody."

Bradsher holds a B.S. degree in business administration from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and has been self-employed since he was 21, he said.

"The county commissioner job is nothing but administration," he said.



TOMMY BRADSHER BENNY LUDLUM
DISTRICT 2



DONALD SHAW GRACE BEASLEY
DISTRICT 5

He believes development is the future of Brunswick County, but "it should be done in stages that will suit all interests in the county."

His complaint about the present board of commissioners is its use of tax dollars. "Are they utilizing them wisely?" he asked. "We have waste that could be trimmed without hurting programs or benefits."

He believes this is the important campaign issue for the public. "People are disenchanted with tax rates, and they don't see more services than in 1972, yet they're paying more taxes."

His one promise to voters is, "I will use good judgment. Anyone who tells you they can cut taxes or this and that, doesn't know what they're talking about."

Education is his favorite topic. "I'm high on education, and our schools are terribly overcrowded," he said.

In considering all these issues, Bradsher said that, if elected, he wanted to meet with people in the district and get their points of view, "and then be man enough to make the best decision for the county. You don't always make everyone happy."

One term is all this candidate says he wants. "If I am elected, I'll serve four years, then won't run again," he said, "because I think I'll have given it everything I had. County government can stagnate with the same people in office."

In District 5 political newcomer, Republican Marvin Donald Shaw, wants to oust Grace Beasley, who is running for re-election to a second term.

The 46-year-old Shaw lives in Leland with his wife, and has a 22-year-old son. He works in quality control for Federal Paperboard Co.

This is his first political experience, something he said he'd been considering for two years.

are paying all they can." He named taxes as the biggest issue facing Brunswick County.

Shaw suggested forming a human relations committee to maintain racial quotas in hiring.

Asked about his qualifications for office, Shaw said, "I love people in this county, and want to help them. I've been married 25 years, and am a Christian. I used to run a TV repair business at home and have talked to lots of people about county problems."

Shaw has a degree from the DeVree Institute of Technology in Chicago, Ill.

Shaw's opponent is Democrat Grace Beasley, who, during her first term as commissioner, has been an independent voice on the board, sometimes outspoken in her opposition to the majority.

The 47-year-old candidate has a rental business in Leland, where she resides. She also has a husband of 30 years, one daughter and one son.

The only woman on the board,

Beasley said, "When I first came on (the board), I'm not sure they knew what to do with me. They now treat me like a full-fledged commissioner, and I look forward to the next term."

She is proud of several accomplishments of the past term of office, especially the construction of a community building for her district last year. "Also, we found a way to allocate funds to fire and rescue squads in the county, and we set up a \$50,000 contingency fund in each district for their use. And I'm really

pleased to see those water lines!"

Beasley is chairman of the solid waste committee and said they have been looking at incineration and other options for solid waste disposal here. "What we'll do about that is an important question for the near future," she said.

"It's so important what decisions commissioners make about our growth. I look for an industrial tract in the north end of the county, but don't want to have environmental problems with it," she said.

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