

# BTC Approves New Continuing Education Guidelines

BY SUSAN USHER

Brunswick Technical College trustees last week adopted a plan intended to insure accountability and credibility in the schools' continuing education program. They also adopted a series of recommendations related to the college's ongoing construction program.

### Accountability

Following the revelation in October of alleged ongoing fraud in the continuing education program at Cape Fear Technical Institute in Wilmington, each institution in the community college system was asked to develop its own system of checks and balances.

In anticipation of such a request by the N.C. Department of Community Colleges, in October BTC reassigned Jesse Clemmons, then dean of instruction, to the new position of dean of continuing education. BTC President Joseph Carter assumed Clemmons' responsibilities, with no immediate plans of hiring a successor.

The change put Clemmons in supervision of all non-curriculum programs, previously coordinated by several persons.

Since the CFTI investigation was made public, claims of fraud have been leveled against BTC and

Coastal Community College in Jacksonville.

According to SBI Deputy Director Charles Dunn of Raleigh, that agency's fraud investigation continues to focus on CFTI and will not extend farther this calendar year.

The plan adopted by BTC trustees and submitted to the state department creates steps to verify that courses are meeting as scheduled, that students are appropriately enrolled and that appropriate personnel are being paid for their instruction. Methods include site visits, roster follow-ups and personal contact with students and instructors.

### Under the plan:

- Each continuing education coordinator conducts and documents at least one visit to each course under his responsibility while it is in session;

- The director of continuing education conducts and documents unannounced visits to 25 percent of each coordinator's classes;

- The dean of continuing education conducts unannounced visits to at least 75 percent of all continuing education courses held each quarter, with the sample selected to include courses which by their nature or loca-

tion might be more subject to abuse.

Any observation of a situation of questionable nature is to be immediately reported to the president and dean of continuing education.

Students must sign a roster and list their telephone number. Later, at least three students registered to each off-campus course are contacted by telephone or in person by a designated team of college employees. If the course is adult basic education, general education development or appears to contain a majority of senior citizens, at least five student are contacted.

Students are asked if they signed a roster, paid the course registration fee and attended at least one class session of the course.

On at least one payday each year, all full-time and part-time instructors of continuing education classes are required to appear at the campus business office to pick up their check, with appropriate identification.

This year instructors who received paychecks in November had to pick them up in person. Any first-time instructor must pick up his or her check in person. Instructors must also submit monthly time sheets.

As for the college's role, the dean of continuing

education must approve the establishment of all courses. Without prior approval courses may not earn budget full-time equivalencies.

The course must fit in with the mission of the college, must have a qualified instructor, must meet a need and must meet in an appropriate location.

Also, Carter has set up an internal audit team of employees from the student services and business office to review quarterly for evidence of compliance with the plan and report its findings to him, the dean of continuing education and the board of trustees.

### Work To Begin

Miller Building Co. was to move its office trailer and equipment on to the Supply campus this week and begin grading the site of a new vocational classroom building, architect Jim Pittman of J.G. Johnson & Associates reported.

So as not to slow the pace of construction, trustees also authorized the architectural firm begin preliminary drawings for a facility to house the Brunswick Interagency Program.

When trustees recommended local companies be en-

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# THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Twenty-fifth Year, Number 7

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Shalotte, North Carolina, Thursday, December 25, 1986

25¢ Per Copy

22 Pages



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

## A Sub? No, A Water Bug!

Joe Nolan of Schooner's Pointe subdivision parked his VW "bug" along the street last Wednesday morning while he chatted with a cabinet maker at a nearby house. When he returned, the car had vanished. He found it across the road in a pond, with only its rounded roof still visible. Nolan (third from left above) took the

drive in stride, telling helpers like "Bookie" Taylor (right) "What else can you do?" and recommending use of emergency brakes when parked on a hill. Meanwhile, he planned to disconnect the battery, dry out the car and change all its fluids.

## Bad Weather Mixed With High Tides Could Cause Problems For County

BY ETTA SMITH

Unusually high tides combined with certain weather systems could cause problems for coastal Brunswick County this month.

The gravitational force created by alignment of the moon and sun this week could cause excessively high tides if combined with high southerly winds, said Bob Jenks with the National Weather Service office in Wilmington.

He said the tides are the result of a combination of factors, including the alignment of the sun and moon combined with a new moon.

The astronomical tides are caused by the earth moving closer to the sun in the winter and the alignment of the sun between the moon and Earth, he said.

On Jan. 3, he said, the earth will move closer to the sun than any other time of year. With the combination of these factors, the weather service is only predicting tides one to one-and-a-half feet above normal.

But Jenks said if the right weather system develops either north or south of the area, it could cause problems. "If the weather works with it will be nothing unusual," said Jenks.

"But if we get a high pressure system up in Virginia or even further north, it will pack the water up to the beach area. If it persists the water won't have a chance to drain out into the ocean, and there would be coastal flooding."

Similar tides that occurred early in the month and caused millions of dollars in damage at Long Beach and parts of New Hanover County were a result of the tides combined with gale force winds. That created a wave action that packed the water to the shore and caused the erosion damage, he said.

## Planning Board Defends Update; Questions State, Media Response

BY SUSAN USHER

Brunswick County Planning Board members spent more time last Wednesday night discussing news coverage of their land use plan update than they did the plan itself.

Seven members attended the meeting, held at the Brunswick County Library in Southport in advance of the board's Christmas party.

The land use plan update will be on the agenda again, at the board's Jan. 21 meeting. At that time members propose to discuss an 18-item list of "substantive" comments drawn up by Planning Director John Harvey from comments received on the land use plan. They delayed a joint meeting with county commissioners until after they can address the needed revisions.

A draft of the update was criticized severely by the staff of the N.C. Office of Coastal Management and Coastal Resources Commission members at the CRC's last meeting.

However, Harvey has defended the update as a "very rough" draft and said the basic plan is good.

Board members agreed last week with his assessment. "It was clear to me it was a preliminary plan; I don't think the press was justified," commented member Michael Schaub.

"The planning director and his staff have done a tremendous job,"

said Chris Chappell, the county commissioners' ex-officio representative on the board.

Chairman Gore stressed that an update is a "refinement" of the existing plan, not a total redo of the plan. "You don't start from scratch again."

Member John Barber said it appeared to him the state wanted to tell the county "what the plan should have been."

The draft of the update was originally due to the state in March. The county received extensions, but was finally asked to go ahead and submit whatever it had ready in time for the CRC committee review. It was later criticized for lifting entire sections from the 1981 plan.

Last Wednesday night, Harvey told planning board members there is no deadline stipulated by law for submitting a revision of the draft or penalty for not submitting it on a timely basis.

"As a courtesy, they ask for a final draft to be returned in six months after December," he said. "Some local governments have turned in their plans up to two years late, but I haven't read about them."

He said the Office of Coastal Management has asked the county to provide as quickly as it can a timetable for completion of the up-

date, including an ending date, a plan regarding opportunities for citizens to participate further in the planning process and how those opportunities will be publicized.

### Comments Criticized

In turn, Harvey criticized the comments package received from the state as "hastily slapped together" and "uncoordinated." Of the 258 comments, more than half came from the state and numerous others from a single member of the Coastal Resources Commission Advisory Council.

Of all the comments, he said only the 18 on his list related directly to the Administrative Code and had to be addressed by the plan. Another 41 he termed "absolutely irrelevant," adding, "and I can prove that in court." Others, he said, were strictly editorial in nature.

He cited several errors in the plan—including a request to include county data from SLOSH, a hurricane surge prediction model designed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for areas north and east of the Cape Fear. Instead, Brunswick County's data is included in SLASH II, a simpler model run by the National Hurricane Center. According to Allan McDuffie, the Corps' project manager for the Eastern N.C. Har-

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## Seat Belt Enforcement Begins Jan. 1

BY ETTA SMITH

It's time to start taking those bumper stickers that read, "Buckle Up—It's The Law," seriously—because beginning Jan. 1 failure to do so could cost \$25.

According to Sgt. Douglas Deacon of the N.C. Highway Patrol, any driver stopped Jan. 1 or thereafter without a seat belt will be fined—and no more warnings will be issued.

"We have to start issuing tickets then," said Deacon. "We're not holding checking stations to see if people are wearing them, but if we do stop someone and they are in violation of the law they will be charged."

The N.C. General Assembly passed the law in October 1985, but approved the use of warnings until Jan. 1, 1986. Exemptions were granted for pro-

ple with medical conditions and rural letter carriers.

Deacon said the \$25 fine is a civil penalty, and no court costs will be assessed against violators.

The law specifies that front-seat passengers as well as the driver must be wearing seat belts. If the passenger isn't wearing a seat belt, he will be charged with the violation unless he is under 16. If he is under 16 the driver will be charged with both violations.

"It's a good law," said Deacon. "You have to be in the position we are in to know how good—when you go into accident sites and see people who would have been hurt a lot less seriously had they had a seat belt on."

Deacon said there is no doubt seat belts reduce the chance of injury in

some accidents, and increase the chance of survival in some.

Chief Deputy John Marlow with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department said he assumes his department will also enforce the seat belt laws.

"If we stop someone for any violation and they are in violation of that law also, we'll enforce it," he said. Shalotte Police Department Chief Don Stovall said his officers will also enforce the law if they stop anyone.

According to the N.C. Highway Safety Research Center in Chapel Hill, highway patrol officers have been issuing an average of 25 warning tickets per week in Brunswick County since the law was passed. More than 9,500 per month statewide were issued within the first nine months after the law's passage.

## Longwood Man Charged In Friday Shooting

BY ETTA SMITH

A Longwood man is being held in the Brunswick County Jail on \$50,000 bond following a Friday night shooting.

Rex Lee Bell is charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, and inflicting serious bodily injury, after he allegedly shot

Harlee Daniels twice in the chest with a .22-caliber revolver.

Daniels was shot at close range, according to the warrant, and sustained internal injuries.

The victim was treated in the Brunswick Hospital emergency room, then transferred to New Hanover Memorial Hospital, where

he underwent surgery. He was listed in fair condition Monday, according to Sheriff's Captain Phil Perry.

Bell's trial has been set for Jan. 12 in Brunswick County District Criminal Court.

Perry said the motive for the shooting is under investigation.