

## AIDS Testing Has Slow Start

BY RAHN ADAMS

Five Brunswick County residents have been tested for a virus linked to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) during the first month of a county-sponsored screening program.

According to Public Health Nursing Supervisor Ruth Harrington, free testing for the HIV virus has been underway in Brunswick County since Sept. 3.

Testing is done on Thursdays from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. at the Brunswick County Health Department in Bolivia.

"We felt that it (response) would start out slow," Ms. Harrington said, adding that she does not feel the response will greatly increase, since Brunswick County is largely a rural county and high-risk groups generally are concentrated in larger metropolitan areas.

Persons most likely to test positive for the HIV Virus include intravenous drug users who share needles, homosexual and bisexual men, and people who received blood transfusions between 1978 and 1985, she said.

Ms. Harrington said two confirmed AIDS cases have been reported in Brunswick County—one in 1985, the other in 1986.

"We're more of a rural area, so I feel our incidence (of AIDS cases) is going to be low at this point in time," she said.

She declined to comment on whether or not any of the five persons who voluntarily submitted to testing last month tested positive for the HIV virus.

"I would rather not comment on the tests, with so few having been tested at this point," she said.

Ms. Harrington said the test itself involves taking a blood sample, which is then sent to the N.C. Division of Health Services laboratory in Raleigh for analysis.

The local health department is notified of test results after about 10 days, she said.

She emphasized that persons who receive testing remain anonymous, from the time they first walk through the health department door until after they receive test results.

"There are no names anywhere—we don't ask for names," she said, adding that subjects and their tests are identified only by a number assigned to them at the health department.

Ms. Harrington said she feels the "main part" of the testing program

is counseling, which is done both before the actual test and after results are received.

Pre-testing involves "history-taking and education... to give them the information they need to decide whether or not they need to be tested," she said.

Ms. Harrington said both pre- and post-test counseling "strongly emphasize" the importance of "safe sex," which promotes either abstinence or the use of condoms, since AIDS is a sexually-transmitted disease.

"By practicing safe sex, if they test negative, it would keep them from contracting the disease," she said, "and if they test positive, it would keep them from spreading it."



## Ten To Compete For County Teacher Of The Year Title

Ten nominees for Brunswick County Teacher of the Year will be interviewed Oct. 16 in Southport.

Candidates, by school, are as follows: Hilda Smith, West Brunswick High; Kathy Hill, Shalotte Middle; Brenda Tayloe, Bolivia Elementary; Bonnie Adams, Union Primary; LeVerne Hargrove, South Brunswick Middle; Marie Melville, Leland Middle; Vickie Hawley, Alternative Education; Helen Laughish, South Brunswick High; Faye Lloyd, Southport Elementary School; and Col. Paul Kane, North Brunswick High.

Two schools, Waccamaw Elementary and Lincoln Primary, did not submit candidates for consideration.

The candidates were selected by their respective school staffs, according to Jean Parker, public information officer for the school system. They will be interviewed at the CP&L Visitor's Center by a committee composed of last year's Teacher of the Year, Meg Poe of South Brunswick High School, an outside educator, a

retired teacher, a senior student, and a community person chosen by the Brunswick County Board of Education.

Said Parker, coordinator of the program, "Regardless of who the eventual winner is, we feel that all candidates are winners and grow through their participation in this annual celebration that recognizes the many good qualities that all good teachers must have."

The local winner will represent Brunswick County in regional competition on Jan. 7, 1988, with one finalist selected to advance from regional to state competition.

The North Carolina Teacher of the Year takes a leave of absence for the year and serves as an ambassador for education.

North Carolina is one of two states to date to have three national winners, including Donna Oliver, the 1987 National Teacher of the Year.



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