

Meet Helen P. Laugisch, County Teacher Of The Year

If you teach students to think, says Brunswick County's 1987 Teacher of the Year, they then can learn most anything. Meet her Under the Sun, Page 1-A.



Spots Are Running; Not Always Biting

Net fishermen were racking up early this week as spots began running again close to the beaches. Details are in the fishing report, Page 11-C.



It's Ideal Weather For Festival By The Sea

Perfect weather's forecast for the weekend, when Holden Beach revs up for the N.C. Festival By The Sea. A special supplement inside this issue takes a closer look.

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

HOAG & SONS BOOK BINDERY
12/31/88
SPRINGPORT MI 49284

Twenty-fifth Year, Number 51

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Shalotte, North Carolina, Thursday, October 29, 1987

25c Per Copy

48 Pages Including Supplement, Plus Insert

Calabash Water Referendum 'Fell Through The Cracks'

BY DOUG RUTTER

Because of a mix-up involving state and local forces, Calabash residents won't get to vote on Nov. 3 regarding assessments for a town water system. The referendum was left off the ballots for the town election.

But while the state blames the local board of elections, the local board of elections blames the town and the town blames the state, the people of Calabash find themselves with an issue to vote on and no method of voting.

According to Calabash Town Clerk Janet Thomas, it was the responsibility of the state to contact the local board of elections concerning the addition of the referendum to the general election ballot.

She said that since the referendum came about

through action of the N.C. General Assembly, it was the state's duty to ensure its inclusion on the ballot.

The original assessment resolution, sponsored by State Rep. E. David Redwine, was ratified by both houses of the state legislature this summer, and was later amended to include a referendum after town residents had petitioned for the vote.

"The state was responsible for it, and they failed to do it," said Ms. Thomas.

Brunswick County Board of Elections Director Lynda Britt, on the other hand, said the town was responsible for notifying her office about the referendum.

She said she had never heard of the referendum until a reporter questioned her about it Tuesday morning.

She said, "Nobody has ever contacted us about it. The whole idea of a referendum is news to us."

Britt added that there is no way the referendum can be included on the ballot since it takes about 70 days to process any such request.

She said, "I can only assume the town didn't know what steps had to be taken."

She added that it would be mid-January before a referendum vote could be conducted if the town made an immediate request.

Britt concluded, "It helps if we know what the town wants when we print the ballots."

The state, meanwhile, contends that there is no procedure for notifying the local board of elections concerning referendum votes and that it is the duty of the

board of elections to be informed about such local happenings.

Gerry Cohen, director of legislative bill drafting for the N.C. General Assembly, said similar problems have developed in the past when no one has told the board of elections to include a referendum on the ballot.

He said the town has several legal options, the best of which probably being to wait until next year to hold the referendum.

"It looks like it just fell through the cracks," said Cohen.

The Calabash Town Council will hold a special meeting at the town hall Friday at 4:30 p.m. to decide what to do regarding the referendum.

Calabash Town Council Awaits Election Results

BY DOUG RUTTER

Calabash Town Council members are in a strange situation as the Nov. 3 general election approaches.

While none have filed for reelection to the board, all six face the possibility of serving at least another two-year term.

Mayor Doug Simmons, the only candidate who filed with the board of elections, said, "I was really disappointed that no one filed."

The current board will serve until their terms expire the first Monday in December, but since no one filed for town council and there is no evidence or rumors of last-minute write-in campaigns, their service could continue—either by election as write-in candidates or by appointment.

Board member Linda Roberts said, "I think that if all of us were put back on the board that would be the best thing for the town."

North Carolina Board of Elections Director Alex Brock said that every year approximately 25 towns find themselves in a situation in which no one has filed for office. He added that in all cases, it has been resolved through write-in votes.

He said if a majority of council members are elected (at least three), they will elect persons to fill any remaining vacant seats.

Brock said that he has never seen an instance where a majority was not elected, but said if that rarity should occur, state law does provide for the board to be appointed by state authority.

Although no present board members will be included on the ballot, all told The Brunswick Beacon they would serve again if re-elected through write-in votes.

Mrs. Roberts expressed the views of most of the board last week when she said, "We were fighting a losing battle all along. We were doing a lot of good things, but were always portrayed as the bad guys."

Simmons added that the council members were very disappointed with the way people reacted to their decisions. He said residents voiced their opinions enough after the decisions were made, but did not participate when the issues were being discussed.

All board members said the issue of a town water system was the main cause of the public's lack of support. Calabash voters were supposed to decide in a referendum whether to fund a \$160,000 town water system with upfront assessments, but the referendum was never filed with the county board of elections and was left off the Nov. 3 ballot.

Councilman Bob Weber said, "They all wanted water, but nobody wanted to pay for it."

Board members also said they were surprised by the lack of candidates.

Council member Pati Lewellyn said, "That was the real shocker. We certainly thought there would be more people running against us."

Mrs. Roberts said that the lack of candidates reveals the character of some of the townspeople who complained while the current board was in office, but did nothing when the time came to file for council seats.

Board member Suzy Moore said, "I've heard nothing from the town about write-ins. I really thought more people would run."

All board members stressed the fact that the council has worked well together and has accomplished very much for the town.

Most said they didn't file for reelection because of the lack of support the board received while serving.

Ms. Moore said, "I just wanted to give anybody else the opportunity to serve. There were some negative thoughts in the town, and I just wanted to give others the same opportunity I had."

(See CALABASH, Page 2-A)



NARCOTICS DOG "Buddy" is a new addition to the Brunswick County Narcotics Squad that lawmen and school officials want to use in their efforts to insure drug-free schools.

Lawmen, Educators Are Reviewing Drug Dog's Use In Local Schools

BY RAHN ADAMS

"We want the school kids to be warned that we're coming," Det. Sgt. David Crocker, head of the Brunswick County Narcotics Squad, said in August.

Crocker was referring to the sheriff's department's plans to use their new narcotics dog to "sniff out" drugs in locker and parking areas at the county's three senior high schools.

The dog, a golden retriever named "Buddy," arrived here in late August, after it was bought through private donations and was trained in Fayetteville.

But Buddy hasn't stepped on campus in an official capacity yet, due to concerns over exactly how he will be used to fight drugs in local schools.

"I'm sure there's some concern," said Sheriff John C. Davis, "but I don't know who's concerned the most—the people who think the students' constitutional rights might be violated or the drug dealers."

Davis said last week he planned to consult with the district attorney's office about the "legal ramifications" of using the dog in the schools.

"I want to make sure that we're on legal grounds with whatever we do," Davis said.

He added that he recently approached school officials about setting up demonstrations in the schools, to show exactly what the dog

can do and "maybe put a little fear into them (students)."

According to Crime Prevention Officer Don Gates, the dog already has been demonstrated to fourth-grade students at Shalotte Middle School and Waccamaw Elementary School.

"They loved him," Gates said, explaining that the children were amazed to see Buddy find small packets of drugs that had been hidden in their classrooms.

Interim Superintendent John Kaufhold said last week that school officials also want students to "think twice about bringing drugs to school."

"We want to let students know we are monitoring the problem, and that we're doing our best to insure drug-free schools," he said.

Kaufhold said last week he was developing a proposed policy for the school system to follow regarding the drug dog's use on school campuses. He said he asked principals for input on the policy during a staff meeting Oct. 19. The Brunswick County Board of Education is expected to review the proposed policy at its Nov. 2 meeting.

Davis said last week he is waiting to discuss the matter with the district attorney's office and to hear from the school board before using the dog in the schools.

Kaufhold said that after a policy is adopted, the drug dog will be used on (See DRUG DOG, Page 2-A)

Sheriff Calls In SBI To Probe Jail Death

BY RAHN ADAMS

The Brunswick County Sheriff's Department last week called in the SBI to investigate the apparent suicide of a youthful offender who was in jail awaiting sentencing.

Riley Bradford Ridgeway, 17, of Route 3, Shalotte, was found dead in a cell at the Brunswick County Jail in Bolivia last Thursday around 3:45 a.m., according to Brunswick County Sheriff's Capt. Phil Perry.

"Ridgeway had apparently hung himself with his bed linens," Perry said, reading a prepared statement.

Perry said Ridgeway's death was the first to occur in county jail in at least 18 years.

"It's the first we've had in the past 15 to 18 years," he said. "If there were any prior to that, we don't know."

But Brunswick County Sheriff John C. Davis said there have been several attempted suicides, including attempted hangings, in the jail during that same period of time.

Davis asked for an SBI investigation of the death since his department was involved, he said. "I think it's proper when anything like this happens—to keep it from being called a 'tainted' investigation—to have an outside agency investigate it."

Ridgeway, who was classified as a youthful offender, was alone in his cell on the night of his death, said Davis.

"They (youthful offenders) are not allowed in with the general jail

population," he added.

Jailer Darryl Marlow was on duty at the time of the incident, Davis said, noting that no disciplinary action was taken against the jailer.

"I think he (Marlow) followed proper procedure," Davis said.

He said no procedural changes would be made in handling inmates as a result of the apparent suicide.

Davis added that closed-circuit video cameras monitor activity in cellblock passageways and in the jail dayroom, but do not monitor individual cells.

SBI Supervising Agent Dave Marshall of Jacksonville said Friday his office would make a written report to the 13th District Attorney's office and an oral report to the sheriff following the investigation.

Ridgeway's body was taken to Onslow Memorial Hospital in Jacksonville for autopsy last Thursday. Results were "consistent with hanging," according to a state pathologist.

"I did the autopsy. I didn't find anything else wrong with him. I was told he had hanged himself, and the results were consistent with that," Dr. Charles Garrett said Friday.

According to Perry, Ridgeway was awaiting sentencing on a felonious larceny conviction and was serving a 90-day jail sentence for escape.

Ridgeway was one of three inmates to flee the Brunswick County Jail on Sept. 19, only to be re-captured three (See SHERIFF, Page 2-A)

Voters Elect Town Officials Tuesday

Voters in 13 towns across the county will elect 11 mayors and 37 governing board members Tuesday, Nov. 3, when polls will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Calabash, the only town which was supposed to have an additional referendum included on the ballot, was also the only town without council candidates (see related stories this issue).

Profiles of many of the candidates can be found inside this issue of The Brunswick Beacon.

In all cases, candidates had the opportunity to respond to a Beacon questionnaire concerning their background and the issues facing their respective towns. They also had the opportunity to include a recent photograph or have one made by the newspaper's staff.

Candidates were advised that if they did not respond only their names would appear in candidate profile stories preceding the election.

From Holden Beach, where a lively campaign season is underway, all candidates responded to the questionnaire. And from the tiny, quiet

towns of Belville and Bolivia, no candidates responded.

Seeking office in Bolivia are incumbents Mayor Ina Mae Mintz and Aldermen Steve Robbins, Deborah H. Stanley and Ella Jane Westcott, as well as first-time candidate Robert S. Willetts. All are unopposed.

In Belville, former Mayor Mildred S. Boney has filed for election to a two-year term as mayor, challenging incumbent Kenneth D. Messer Sr. Seeking election to two seats on the town board are Sidney Boney, an incumbent, Trindalyn Boswell and Tim Schedler, who were appointed to fill vacancies on the board, and Vickie L. Gooch. Board members serve four-year terms.

Also on Nov. 3, two trustees will be elected to the J. Arthur Doshier Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees.

The only Brunswick County municipality not holding an election Tuesday is the offshore community of Bald Head Village, where the developers and property owners' association appoint the governing board.

Mayor Tandy Appoints Annexation Committee

Holden Beach Mayor John Tandy recently appointed seven area residents and businessmen to a town committee to study causeway annexation.

Representing the town council on the committee are Gay Atkins and William Williamson, with Alan Holden representing the planning board. Causeway merchants named are Carvin Robinson, Lyn Holden, Cletis Clemmons and J.W. Robinson. Holden is a town commissioner now, but will go off the board the first Monday in December, when commissioners to be elected on Nov. 3 take office.

Tandy has asked the committee to decide what area, if any, should be considered for annexation and com-

missioned the members to do the following:

- Decide if the time is right for annexation.
- Read the law together concerning annexation.
- Identify and tour any potential annexation areas.
- Tabulate proper statistics concerning annexation including the number of people and businesses affected.
- Appoint one other committee member if needed.

Tandy also said that the annexation plan should be approved according to law by both the town council and the people being annexed.

Tandy and Town Administrator Tom Birmingham will serve as ex-officio members of the committee.