

New Hampshire Man Indicted In 1983 Ocean Isle Drug Case

A New Hampshire man who had eluded authorities since 1983 was taken into custody this week in Brunswick County after his indictment on a charge of trafficking marijuana.

According to the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office, Thomas Vance Chamberlin, 38, of Henniker, N.H., was one of seven persons indicted on drug charges Monday by a

Brunswick County Grand Jury.

In all, the grand jury returned 39 true bills of indictment for 23 persons.

Chamberlin was indicted on charges of conspiracy to traffic in marijuana and trafficking by possession of marijuana, with both counts involving more than 19,000 pounds of the controlled substance.

Special Assistant District Attorney

Bill Wolak indicated that the charges stemmed from a May 1983 drug raid at Lake Wood Estates near Ocean Isle Beach. Federal, state and local law enforcement officers seized more than 14,000 pounds of marijuana and arrested five persons.

Wolak said warrants for Chamberlin's arrest were issued in 1983. However, the suspect remained a fugitive until his recent arrest by

New Hampshire State Police. Chamberlin waived extradition to North Carolina and turned himself in to local authorities Monday.

He was placed in the Brunswick County Jail under a \$200,000 bond, with a court appearance set for Feb. 8, according to Jailer Linwood Gray.

Wolak added that one other fugitive from the same 1983 case—Christopher James Mc-

Cauley—was arrested by New Hampshire authorities and is awaiting extradition to Brunswick County.

Three Florida men also were indicted Monday on cocaine trafficking charges.

According to the clerk of court's office, Larry David Andrews, 32, and Larry Charles Green, 33, both of Starke, Fla., each were indicted on charges of conspiracy to traffic in cocaine and trafficking by possession of cocaine.

Robert Darrell Carter, 24, also of Starke, was indicted on one count of conspiracy to traffic in cocaine.

The three were arrested by the State Bureau of Investigation Dec. 19 in Calabash as part of an undercover drug operation.

All three initially were charged (See INDICTMENTS, Page 2-A)

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Last week's rainy, frigid conditions left almost everything coated with ice. This sign along U.S. 17 seems to indicate that every nook and cranny in central Brunswick County felt the impact.

HIGH-RISE BRIDGES ICY County Fares Well In Winter Storm

Brunswick County "got off easy" in last week's winter storm, say Department of Transportation county supervisor Bill Benton and other local officials, even though it caused hazardous driving conditions on ice-covered roads and bridges throughout the county.

"We led a charmed life during this last (storm)," Benton said of last Thursday's snowstorm—the first since March 1983. "It hit everybody hard but Brunswick and New Hanover counties... We got off real easy."

Brunswick County Emergency Management Director Cecil Logan agreed. "Overall we survived good in the county," Logan said. "There were no major (traffic) accidents or major fires or people sheltered."

Weather forecasters warned of the "well-developed, slow-moving storm" several days before it reached Brunswick County last Thursday morning, bringing with it one-half

inch to two inches of frozen precipitation in different sections, according to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady.

"We got off very, very light," Canady said. "This was not an overly significant snowstorm for the immediate coastal area. It could have been a lot worse."

Canady said the Shallotte area's last significant snowfall occurred in 1983, while an ice-storm hit the area in February 1987.

Brunswick County schools closed at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, just as the snow changed to freezing rain, and did not re-open until 9:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Interim Superintendent John Kaufhold said he delayed the closing so that all buses could be serviced and refueled, the system could get credit for a "legal" day of school by remaining in session a half-day, and the children could be fed lunch. "The earliest we could accomplish all

three was 12:30," he added.

In Shallotte, the N.C. National Guard Armory opened as a shelter Wednesday through Saturday night, providing a warm place to stay, but neither food nor cots. Logan said that to his knowledge, no one stayed there.

Last week, icy roads were the major problem in Brunswick, especially on the high-level bridges to Ocean Isle Beach, Holden Beach and Oak Island, said Benton.

Local DOT crews began preparing for the storm early Thursday morning, by mounting sand and salt spreaders on maintenance trucks. Within hours, the trucks were on the road—where they stayed until early Friday morning, Benton said.

He estimated that the local crews spread as much as 75 tons of salt on roadways last week. "The majority of the salt went on the bridges," he said, adding that "problem areas" on U.S. 17 and U.S. 74 also were salted.

Benton said the maintenance office is restocking with a shipment of up to 100 tons of salt. "We will be prepared within the next several days for a storm of that size or larger," he added.

At Ocean Isle Beach, police roadblocks stopped traffic on both sides of the Odell Williamson Bridge last Thursday afternoon until it was sanded by DOT. Even then, only one lane of traffic was allowed on the bridge at a time due to icy conditions, according to Police Chief Bill Ozment.

Ozment said the only weather-related traffic accident at Ocean Isle occurred last Thursday at 3 p.m., when a 1986 Mercedes driven by Elizabeth Kim Powell, about 23, of Route 3, Shallotte, spun around three times and skidded into the side railing of the bridge, doing about \$500 damage to the car. She was not injured.

(See COUNTY FARES, Page 7-A)

Fourth Democrat Files For District 1 Commissioner

A fourth Democrat filed Tuesday for the District 1 seat on the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners.

Parker Stanaland, 55, of Ash, will square off in the primary against incumbent Chris Chappell of Calabash Acres; Major White of Ash; and Harold Hickman of Route 4, Shallotte.

Also filing during the past week were two incumbents from District 3. James R. Forstner, 40, of Southport, filed for re-election to the Brunswick County Board of Education, which he currently serves as chairman. James L. (Jim) Poole, 53, of Long Beach, is seeking re-election to the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners.

Candidates for commissioner and

the school board run from districts, but are elected countywide.

From Columbus County, Judges Jerry A. Jolly of Tabor City, D. Jack Hooks Jr. and William C. (Bill) Gore Jr., both of Whiteville, have filed with the State Board of Elections for re-election to the 13th District judiciary. The district includes Columbus, Brunswick and Bladen counties.

On Monday, longtime Sen. R.C. Soles of Tabor City filed with the Columbus County Board of Elections for re-election from the 18th Senatorial District, which includes Brunswick, Columbus and Bladen counties and Beaverdam Township in Cumberland County.

No Republicans have filed yet for local office.

Bus 61 Discipline Measures Supported By School Board

BY SUSAN USHER

Brunswick County Board of Education members spent more than three hours behind closed doors Monday night discussing personnel, attorney-client and "student" matters.

Afterwards, Chairman James Forstner said the board reviewed "name by name" students disciplined following an incident involving West Brunswick High School's Bus 61 on the last day of school, Dec. 18.

"We made no changes," he added, regarding the punishment meted out, although one parent appealed to the board Monday to review his son's case. School board members reviewed the cases with the administrative staff of the high school during a four-hour meeting at Bolivia Elementary School.

Curtis Bernard of Supply, whose son, Bryan, was one of nine West Brunswick High School students suspended from school following the episode, asked the board to reconsider the punishment given his son after reviewing the case. Bernard said he thought it allowable that his son had to surrender his bus and bus license and be on probation.

But he said suspension from school for 14 days, suspension from riding the bus the rest of the term and elimination from participation in extracurricular activities was "too severe" for a student with no prior violations at that school.

The driver of the bus, charged with DWI, and eight other students all received long-term or 14-day suspensions on Principal David Corley's recommendation. Corley said Tuesday the suspensions are "until exams begin" for the current grading

period, or 12 days given the snow days taken Friday and Monday.

Disciplinary measures taken with each student depended upon their level of involvement in the incident, such as whether they were drinking, had brought alcohol on board the bus.

Bernard said his son had not reported that the driver of the bus had been drinking because he feared reprisal by others. Once before his son had been beaten when he reported misbehavior on a bus. "He's afraid it could happen again."

Also contributing to the situation, he suggested, was the "atmosphere on campus."

He asked for a "prompt, written response" to his request and was advised a decision would be made shortly.

Since the December 18 incident, by executive order, a staff member at each school is to check each bus before its departure, Forstner noted later.

In a related matter, John Kaufhold, interim superintendent, said procedures had been changed for notifying parents of a student's suspension, after one parent said he didn't know his child had been suspended.

In the past a letter was sent home by the student and calls were made during school hours to the daytime "emergency" number provided by the parent. Now, staff is to continue calling after hours at the parent's workplace or home until contact is made, as well as mailing notice by certified mail.

Most households no longer have a parent home during the day, said Forstner. "No one is equipped for this, but we're trying."

The cause of a 25-year-old Calabash man's death last week remained under investigation Monday as authorities awaited a toxicology report from the state medical examiner's office.

Jeffery Lawrence High was found dead by his wife last Wednesday afternoon at the couple's mobile home off Riverview Road in Calabash, according to Brunswick County Sheriff's Capt. Phil Perry.

"There is no sign of foul play at this time," Perry said Monday. The case

was under investigation, pending autopsy results.

Perry added that Sarah High told investigators that her husband had been ill since Dec. 31 and had gone to the doctor two days before his death.

According to Perry, Ms. High returned home from work last Wednesday around 1 p.m. and found her husband dead. She reported the death from a neighbor's residence.

The sheriff's department responded to the call at the request of Calabash Volunteer Rescue Squad.

Capt. Sonny Padgett, who was one of the officers to respond, said High's body was found on the floor of a bedroom. Prescription medicines were found at the scene.

An autopsy by Regional Medical Examiner Dr. Charles Garrett last Thursday morning at Onslow Memorial Hospital in Jacksonville did not determine the cause of death, according to Brunswick County Coroner Greg White.

No signs of foul play were evident in the autopsy, White noted Monday.

"Nothing looked unusual. He (Garrett) couldn't tell anything from the autopsy itself until he sees the results of the toxicology tests... He said to leave the cause of death as 'pending' until we hear from the toxicology report."

The toxicology report, which was being done at the State Medical Examiner's office in Chapel Hill, is expected to take at least two weeks to complete.

"Until we hear from that, we're not commenting on it," said White.

Pigotte Pleads Guilty, Gets 40-Year Sentence

A Shallotte area man received an active prison sentence this week after pleading guilty to the July 1987 rape of an elderly local woman.

Tuesday morning in Brunswick County Superior Court, Terry LaSalle Pigotte, 29, entered a guilty plea to second-degree rape in a plea-bargaining arrangement, according to Assistant District Attorney Tommy Hicks.

As part of the plea agreement, charges of first-degree burglary and common law robbery against Pigotte were dismissed.

Judge Samuel T. Currin sentenced Pigotte to 40 years in prison—the maximum sentence for second-degree rape, Hicks said.

"We felt we could get a substantial sentence on him with a plea to second-degree rape," Hicks commented Tuesday, noting that Pigotte had been facing a first-degree rape charge. "I think it's an appropriate sentence, with the kind of acts he performed and the age of the victim."

According to the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office, jury selection began late Monday afternoon in the case. Hicks told The Beacon he was prepared to continue with jury selection and the trial on the first-degree rape count if Pigotte had not agreed

to the plea arrangement Tuesday morning.

The defendant was represented by Southport attorney Stephen Yount.

Charges against Pigotte stemmed

from the July 15, 1987, sexual assault and robbery of an 84-year-old Shallotte woman at her Main Street residence.

Pigotte was taken into custody in

Florida on Aug. 1, 1987, by Brunswick County Sheriff's Det. Lindsey Walton and Shallotte Police Lt. Rodney Gause on an unrelated warrant for felonious larceny.

Calabash Appoints Fifth Council Member

BY DOUG RUTTER

After a month-long search for a fifth and final council member, Calabash has decided on a board veteran.

Town council Monday appointed John High, who served three terms on the council during the late 1970s. High, 45, is owner of Beck's Restaurant and a life-long resident of Calabash.

He fills the seat vacated on Dec. 7 by former Councilwoman Patti Lewellyn, who cited business and personal reasons in declining to serve a second consecutive term on the town board.

With all eyes in Calabash on the proposed town water system, High said, "I think it's a necessity. It's the first step to really becoming a town."

He added that the proposed assessments, which could run restauranters such as himself about \$3,000, appear to be the only way to establish a town water system.

High said that the previous town council members, of which only one remains, did a very thorough job of researching the possibilities for grant monies.

"I really don't think it can be done any other way," he said. "Water is going to be beneficial to the town and

certainly the restaurant owners."

Looking toward the future, High said that town water may pave the way to a town sewer system. "It's definitely a step in the right direction."

Another important issue currently facing the town, he added, is planning and zoning.

He said that poor planning has been the downfall of many other towns and that "tomorrow's planning must begin before the town has grown out of proportion."

High also said that due to the number of populated subdivisions within the town's extrajurisdiction area, the town must take a careful look at annexation.

Although the town can essentially govern these areas without allowing residents to vote, he said the people deserve the right to vote if they are willing to become part of Calabash.

High is the first cousin of Councilman Landis High. He is expected to take office at the Jan. 25 town meeting.

"I was sort of surprised to be nominated," he said. "It's gonna be a peculiar feeling being back on the town board after eight years off."