

Hewett Proud To Have Worked His Way To Top

BY RAHN ADAMS

Ten years ago Leo Hewett was an ordinary garbage man, hauling trash to the dump every day in one of the county's trash-packer trucks.

Today the 48-year-old Cedar Grove resident is the top solid waste official in Brunswick County, with his time now spent either doing paperwork in his new office at the county complex in Bolivia or supervising his employees in the field—a big change from when he began his career with the county.

As suggested by a hand-lettered sign on his desk which reads, "Have trash, will travel," Hewett is proud of his progress—although the sign itself was simply a good-natured jibe from a secretary in the Planning Building where the solid waste office is located.

"I'm very proud, I guess, because I started at the bottom," Hewett said in an interview last week. "I've worked hard at it ever since I've been here to keep moving up. It does make me



LEO HEWETT

rather proud to reach the top of it."

1988 so far has been a satisfying year careerwise for Hewett, who took over as director of solid waste on March 21, less than three months after his promotion to assistant director.

At the first of the year, Hewett was named assistant director following the retirement of Henry Jenrette. Then Hewett was selected by county officials to replace former director Major White, who resigned at the end of February to devote more time to his private business and to run for District 1 county commissioner.

A Brunswick County native, Hewett and his wife, the former Maybellene Galloway, live on Turkey Trap Road. They attend Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Church, where Hewett serves on the usher board.

"That's about the only thing I do in the church," Hewett said, "because I can't sing."

And outside of church and work, he doesn't have time for much else, except for a little gardening, hunting and fishing.

"I work six days a week, and I go to church on Sundays, so I don't have a lot of free time," he noted.

After graduating from Shallotte's Union High School

in 1957, Hewett moved to Long Island, N.Y., where he worked as a supervisor in an airplane parts factory for 10 years.

He returned to Brunswick County in 1968 and was employed at the Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal until he went to work for the county in August 1977.

In the solid waste department, he started out as a trash-packer truck driver. Then he moved up to driving the tractor-trailer rigs that haul garbage from the county's three transfer stations to the sanitary landfill.

After convenience sites were built, he became a roll-off truck driver. In addition, he did fill-in work wherever he was needed and started filling in as an assistant supervisor about three years ago.

"My experience has allowed me to learn just about all phases of landfill work," he said, "and it was a helping factor, I'm sure, when I applied for this job (as director)."

Over the past decade, he has seen the solid waste department develop to its present status of 20 employees who maintain the county's sanitary landfill between Supply and Bolivia, transfer stations near Ocean Isle Beach, Leland and Southport, and convenience sites in four

areas. He also estimated that almost 200 "green boxes" are located throughout the county.

Hewett said the use of better equipment has been the biggest change in the department over the past 10 years. The worst situation faced by the department occurred about five years ago around Christmas—one of the busiest times for garbage collectors—when the county had only one trash-packer truck in operation due to breakdowns, he remembered.

"I'd have to say that right now things are generally running smoothly," he said last week, although he added that the department needs two additional employees to be up to full strength. Also, he said he would like to see a second employee hired to work at the county landfill.

Expanding the life of the landfill, which is expected to reach capacity in about 3½ years, will be an important objective of Hewett's job. He said he thinks an extra year of use can be gained by skimming the cover dirt on sections that have already been used.

In the meantime, county officials will be searching for a new landfill site where Hewett can keep putting his new motto—"Have trash, will travel"—to work for the people of Brunswick County.

Move Clocks Ahead Sunday

The Easter Bunny will have to hop a little faster this year because he will only have 23 hours to make his annual rounds.

With daylight savings time ending Easter Sunday, everyone will lose one hour of sleep and the generous rabbit will lose one precious hour of egg-delivery time.

While the official loss of time will occur early Sunday morning,

Brunswick County Agricultural Extension Chairman Milton Coleman recommends turning clocks ahead Saturday night before going to bed to avoid arriving late at Easter Sunday services.

For those individuals who are sticklers when it comes to maintaining accurate timepieces, the final countdown Sunday morning will be 12:59:58, 12:59:59, 2:00:00.

Calabash Discusses Possible Lawsuit

BY DOUG RUTTER

Calabash Council this week discussed the circumstances surrounding a lawsuit which may be filed against the town in connection with its building inspections department.

During a 20-minute executive session Tuesday, board members talked about the incident with Building Inspector Frank Adams.

Although no details of the potential lawsuit were discussed openly, Adams said prior to going into closed session that the lawsuit was "just a potential thing."

He said he was concerned for the town and himself and that he wanted to talk to council members before proceeding any further with his personal "investigation."

Mayor Doug Simmons said no action was taken during the closed session. He could not provide further information.

The matter was discussed in the absence of the town attorney as well as council members Sonia Stevens and Ronnie Pittman.

Variance Discussed

In other business this week, council again discussed but took no action on a longstanding request for a variance of the town height restriction.

The variance would allow for construction of a three-story, 43-foot high Comfort Inn within the town limits.

The proposed structure would be located along N.C. 179 between Marsh Harbor Yacht Club and the nearby convenience store.

Town code prohibits the construction of buildings more than two stories and higher than 35 feet.

Council authorized the town planning and zoning board to work with Adams and carefully consider the variance before making a recommendation to the town board.

Comfort Inn representative Bill Cockayne said the structure would include 90 units, with adequate parking spaces below the second floor, and a swimming pool.

He added that developers have already received approval from Carolina Biotech for water and sewer service.

Since the Calabash Volunteer Fire

Department has no ladder truck, town council members voiced concerns about fire protection for the structure.

Cockayne said the building would be constructed of concrete or some other fire-resistant material and would meet all state and local fire protection codes. He said it would probably include a sprinkler system.

Town Clerk Janet Thomas added, "The town cannot prevent a building from going up based on fire protection."

Bob Hirsch, project coordinator for the neighboring Marsh Harbour Yacht Club, said variances cannot be granted unless there is a quality peculiar to a specific tract of land which makes development of that property impossible without a variance.

Town council does not have the authority to grant a variance simply because someone wants to develop the land in a manner which violates

town code, he said.

The statements made by Hirsch, who said he has been involved in legal battles on both sides of the variance issue, received strong agreement from Councilman Landis High.

Town Seal Needed

Also Tuesday, council members supported a plan to establish a town seal.

Following the request of Building Inspector Adams, the board authorized him to work with Mrs. Thomas in setting up a contest to select an official emblem for the town.

"It's gotta be a fish," said High. "We're the seafood capitol of the world."

Mayor Simmons remarked that other local towns have their own seals and that it would be nice for Calabash to have one which symbolizes its ties to the seafood industry.

Other Business



Drive Attracts New Donors

Sixty first-time donors helped bring total donations to 98 pints at an American Red Cross blood drive recently co-sponsored by the West Brunswick Health Occupations students and Shallotte Junior Woman's Club at the school library. The drive is an annual project of the health occupations students. Shown with a Red Cross nurse (left) above are students Timmy Evans, Robin Leonard and Aric Meares.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

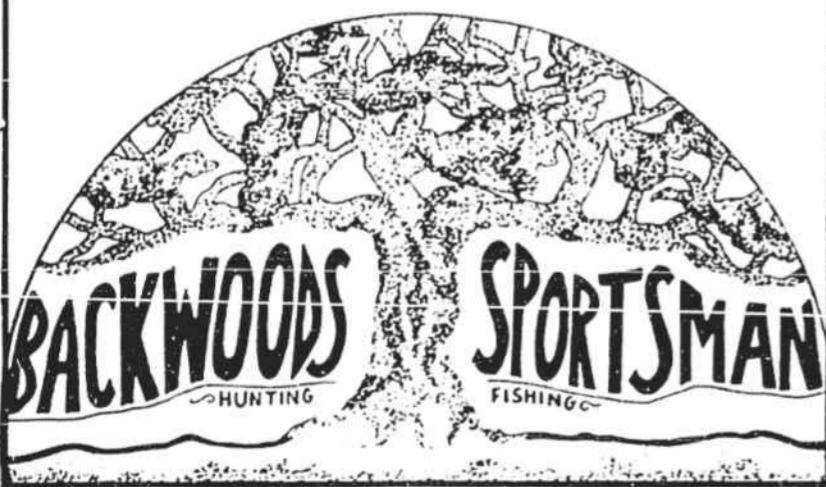
Easter Bunny Visits Early

Courtney Fullwood of Bolivia was one of about 200 children who came to the Brunswick County Government Center Sunday for an egg hunt and an early glimpse of the Easter Bunny. At least two other egg hunts are planned for 2 p.m. Easter Sunday. The Calabash Volunteer Fire Department offers prizes and refreshments at its annual hunt at the firehouse for children through age 11, while Shallotte Township Park will be the site of American Legion Post 247's egg hunt for children through age 10, with prizes to include a tricycle and two bicycles. The Easter Bunny will also make a special appearance.

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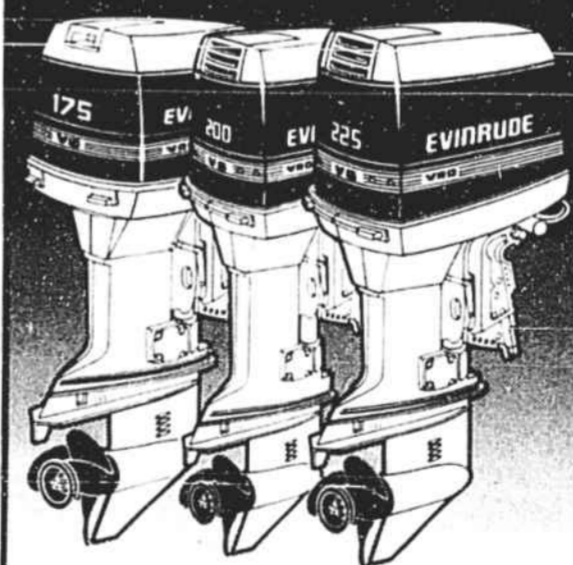
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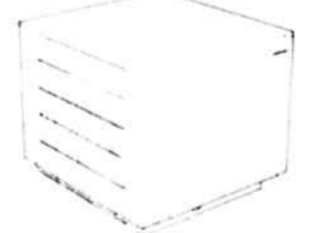
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