

Group Protests Schools' Hiring Practices; Boycott Threatened

BY SUSAN USHER

A group of 12 to 15 black community leaders staged a protest and press conference Monday night outside a meeting of the Brunswick County Board of Education at Southport to voice dissatisfaction with school system hiring practices.

Among its concerns, the group wants to see Joseph Butler returned as principal of Lincoln Primary School in Leland, more blacks chosen for positions of leadership with the public visibility needed to be role models, and hiring of more Brunswick County residents.

"We have one of the greatest weapons we can have in a situation like this—ADM," said former school board Franklin Randolph of Bolivia as he called for a black boycott of classes when school opens this fall as a tool of last resort. "If they push us we can do it," said Randolph. "All we got to do is get together and keep our kids home for three days."

ADM refers to average daily membership, or pupil population, which is used by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction in determining state funding for local school systems. The allocation is adjusted based on enrollment during the first 10 days of school, and can mean the difference in the number of state-paid teaching slots and affect funding for supplies and school construction as well.

Representatives of the Brunswick County Citizens Association, the group has the backing and support of Thurman Gause, who serves as the BCCA's president and is the only black member of the school board.

"Whatever it takes to get a change made, I'll support them in it," he said. "I feel like we've been mistreated. We shouldn't have to do anything. But I think there are some people who basically don't want to do what is right for the citizens of this county."

He said he's involved because "anytime a Negro parent or family has a problem, then I have a problem."

Fellow school board members took a different view, saying that the school board's personnel decisions have been made with the overall interests of the school system in mind and that a boycott such as that threatened would be short-sighted on the part of parents.



BRUNSWICK COUNTY CITIZENS ASSOCIATION member Franklin Randolph (second from left) Monday night said the group has a sure-fire "weapon" for getting the school board to respond to blacks' concerns about hiring practices: keep black children home when classes begin, which would cut state funding for the school system. Also shown (from left) are Eugene Hewett, the Rev. John Randolph, the Rev. William Joyner and Jesse Bryant.

"That would be fairly short-sighted, sacrificing the good of their own children for political ends," said Bill Fairley of Southport said of the boycott advocated by Randolph, a comment echoed by other members. "That's inexcusable behavior."

Gause also said it is a "disgrace" that there is no longer a black among the system's top three administrators.

School Board Chairman Donna Baxter deplored the proposal of a boycott as "sad" and member Polly Russ said she did not think students should ever be used as "tools."

While acknowledging the need for more black role models for students, Baxter and Russ said that the overall number of blacks holding management positions within the school system has increased in recent years, particularly in the central office.

"The issue is whether we recruit the best people possible in every level of our school system," said Russ. To accomplish both that goal and the goal of racial diversity, she continued, "we need to do much more recruiting and sell Brunswick County, get these people to come to Brunswick County."

Fairley said decisions made by the school board have been made with the "overall best interests of the

school system and its students in mind," and that anyone who thinks otherwise is "mistaken."

Gause differed, saying he thinks fellow members have been "inconsistent," particularly in situations where non-county residents have been chosen over local candidates, or a white hired instead of a black he considered qualified for the job in question.

A sore point within the black

community is the transfer of long-time Lincoln Primary Principal Joe Butler to the central office, where he is to direct migrant education and an expanded parent involvement program.

"What is the biggest bug-a-boo in education today—parent involvement," said Superintendent Ralph Johnston. The role should use to advantage Butler's experience at all school levels, his countywide con-

tacts and his rapport with children, said Johnston. "Kids love this individual."

At the time Butler agreed to the transfer, he and others thought four more principals would be reassigned also. However, those four had temporary appointments and Johnston said he had little time to evaluate their performance, while, "It is my understanding there had been discussions with this principal (Butler) before my coming on board."

The interim principals are remaining in place another year, this time on probationary status, so that they can carry out programs begun last year and be evaluated next spring on school performance tied to their leadership rather than to a previous school administration.

West Getting Tough?

The school board approved a tougher attendance policy sought by West Brunswick High School that requires students to make up excessive class absences right away or see a dramatic drop in their grade as a consequence. The goal is to have parents and students assume more accountability and to have students make up the absences right away, when it can make a difference in their learning.

"At the end of the year last year we had superficial eradication of absences that occurred earlier in the year," said Principal Ed Lemon. "The work they were doing did not affect learning."

Students won't have to make up

the first four absences in a class, but will be required to attend Saturday school within a two-week period to make up each additional absence. If not their class grade will drop five points for each violation. Also all work must be made up to the teacher's satisfaction. Appeals will be handled only by the school attendance committee, not by school administration.

With implementation of several new programs, student attendance improved at West Brunswick High from 92.55 percent two years ago to 94.80 this past year, in excess of the state minimum standard of 94 percent.

Pre-K Is Top Priority

Expanding services to developmentally delayed pre-kindergartners is the top priority of a \$1.63 million proposed Chapter I reading remediation program approved by the school board Monday night.

Director Patricia Ward said she expects the program to help prepare approximately 93 students for kindergarten at Waccamaw, Bolivia, Union, Lincoln and Supply schools as well as providing extra help in reading skill development for another 1,000-plus students through sixth grade at those schools plus Leland, Southport and Shallotte Middle, and Southport Elementary.

In other business the board approved a new personnel policy on second reading and met new Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Jan Calhoun.

School Board Said Short On Needed Payroll Funds

(Continued From Page 1-A)

for individuals on its payroll, while the county pays for additional teachers and administrators on its payroll.

The school system revamped its salary schedule for clerical employees this spring, but now doesn't have the money to continue paying the raises and meet the other salary obligations as well, or to review salaries for two other groups: custodians and teacher assistants.

"We're asking them to give us the money," said Donna Baxter, school board chairman. "We've been underfunded for a long time; it's just finally come to a head. We're not going after a great deal more—just

enough to carry out the system and give these people enough to live in this world."

As one means of easing the anticipated shortfall, the school board directed Superintendent Ralph J. Johnston to review central office staffing and identify positions held by persons with short-term contracts.

"We asked him to look at people whose jobs don't touch children and who don't contribute to accountability," said Baxter. These directors or supervisors could be shifted to vacant school-based positions in areas in which they are certified.

There are "70-some" such positions to be filled before the start of the 1993-94 school year, many of

them jobs that were filled during the previous school year on an interim basis when employees took leaves of absence or left the school system's hire.

Warren said he and Finance Director Luthia Hahn would be meeting in advance of the July 23 meeting with Superintendent of Schools Ralph Johnston and Schools Finance Officer Rudi Fallon to review school financial information.

The county budget reflects allocations of a little more than \$1,000 per county pupil, said Warren, which is about mid-range of funding statewide. However, in terms of the county's overall tax base—used by some education watchgroups as a

measure of "ability to pay"—it ranks nearer the bottom, he said. "Not every county has a CP&L plant as part of its tax base," said Warren.

"Overall I think we do a pretty good job of funding per student when compared with surrounding counties."

School boards in Whiteville, Columbus County and Bladen County have made similar appeals for additional funding this year. The Bladen County appeal appears headed for court, while Whiteville and Columbus County boards have dropped their appeals, saying the amount of money involved in their appeals doesn't warrant the costs of a court fight.

Residents, Visitors Faring Well With Heat

(Continued From Page 1-A)

pared to a normal monthly total of 7.4 inches.

At Shallotte Point, local weather watcher Jackson Canady hasn't measured a drop of rain during July and marked a high temperature Monday of 99 degrees.

As for heat, Escude said July temperatures in Wilmington average a high of 89.3 degrees and a low of 71.3 degrees.

"This July we've tied or broken the high three of the last four days," he said Monday, with no break in the pattern expected at least through Friday.

The heat index indicates the combined effect of heat and air moisture

on human comfort level. For instance, an air temperature of 90 degrees combined with relative humidity of 75 percent would create the same level of discomfort as temperatures of 109 degrees.

The high temperatures and high heat have not sparked a corresponding increase in emergency cases, said Earl Tamar, chief executive officer of The Brunswick Hospital. The emergency room has dealt with only two to three heat-related cases in the past week or so, basically treating for heat exhaustion.

Doug Ledgett, head of Brunswick County's Emergency Medical Service, said Tuesday that there has been no increase in calls on heat-re-

lated injuries, and that the number may actually be down a little.

"There's been so much publicity about the danger associated with heat. It may be that people are very aware of what heat can do and are taking care accordingly," said Ledgett. "I think the media is doing a good job getting that message out."

While summer heat is sometimes associated with increases in crime, Major John Marlowe of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department said Monday that hasn't been the case here. "I don't see any difference. Our reports are about the same," he said.

Brunswick County Utilities Director Jerry Webb also hasn't seen a corresponding increase in county water usage. On average the system is pumping two million gallons more a day than this time last year, which Webb said generally reflects growth in the water system.

A scattered thunderstorm Monday afternoon caught a Carolina-Dickerson paving crew by surprise at the intersection of U.S. 17 and N.C. 211.

"It's feels pretty good," said flagwoman Rhonda Isenberg. "It's been so hot, it needed to rain."

With at least seven woods fires burning across the county and a ban on open burning in effect, Brunswick County Forest Ranger Miller Caison is keeping one eye on the sky.

"It's so dry now, it's going to take a lot of rain to bring any relief," he said Tuesday.

D.A.: Hewett Made 'Reasonable Choice' To Shoot At Stolen Car

BY ERIC CARLSON

District Attorney Rex Gore has found no evidence to suggest that Lt. Ronald Hewett acted improperly when he shot the tire of a stolen station wagon to prevent it from fleeing after being stopped on U.S. 17 near Supply June 14.

Two Wilmington teenagers were injured, one critically, when the speeding vehicle flipped and crashed after passing two tractor-trailer trucks on the grassy shoulder of the highway.

The driver, Darrell Lee Washington, 19, was discharged from New Hanover Regional Medical Center where he has been kept for treatment of serious head injuries since the wreck. An unidentified 14-year-old passenger in the vehicle was treated for less severe injuries at The Brunswick Hospital after the crash.

The State Bureau of Investigation was immediately called to look into the shooting. Its findings have been reviewed by the district attorney's office, which issued a press release concerning the incident last week.

"I have carefully compared the statements by Lt. Hewett and the 14-year-old defendant in this matter," Gore's release said. "I am convinced that the response of Lt. Hewett to the provocative actions of Darrell Lee Washington and his cohort were not inappropiate."

The release said Hewett "found himself in a potentially life-threatening situation" and made a "split-sec-

ond decision" to disable the vehicle. Gore called the action "a reasonable choice under the circumstances."

Hewett said he was relieved by the report, but could not go into detail about what occurred during incident. He referred inquiries to Gore and the SBI.

"I did only what was necessary in the performance of my duty as a law enforcement officer to protect the citizens of Brunswick County," Hewett said Monday.

In a prepared "summary of findings" regarding the incident, Gore said Hewett fired into the Suburban's left rear tire after Washington made "a sudden movement" and reached toward his right after Hewett approached the driver's side window and told Washington to keep his hands in view.

The district attorney's statement gave the following chronology of events on June 14:

■The Suburban was reported stolen by Mary Katherine Lambert of Carolina Beach at about 11:45 a.m.

■Shortly before 1 p.m., the Brunswick County 911 center broadcast the vehicle's description and license tag number and told authorities to be on the lookout for it. A few minutes later, the communications center reported that a cellular telephone in the stolen vehicle was in use somewhere between Wilmington and Bolivia.

■Hearing the broadcast, Hewett drove his unmarked patrol car to the

intersection of N.C. 211 and U.S. 17, where he saw the Suburban travelling south. Hewett activated his blue light, siren and headlights and followed the vehicle south on U.S. 17 at 50 to 55 miles per hour for about two miles before it pulled into an access area near the Comprehensive Health Care office.

■The vehicle finally stopped and Hewett opened his driver's door and crouched behind it with his weapon drawn, the customary felony vehicle stop position," Gore's statement said. "He yelled commands toward the Suburban but got no compliance."

■He then noticed movement in the passenger area of the vehicle, indicating that at least two people were inside. The windows of the Suburban were tinted, making it difficult to see into the passenger area, the report said.

■Hewett yelled, "Stop! Let me see your hands! Turn the vehicle off! Do it now!" the statement said.

■The driver failed to comply. Instead he quickly turned the vehicle around and drove toward Hewett, according to the report. As the Suburban came at him, Hewett repeated his commands to "stop" and "let me see your hands."

■Hewett kept his weapon aimed at the vehicle as it approached and stopped with the driver's door "just over arms' length away." As Hewett reached toward the door with his left hand, Washington "quickly reached to his right," Gore said.

■Hewett reacted to the sudden movement by firing four rounds from his service weapon at the driver's-side rear tire of the Suburban in an attempt to disable the vehicle," the statement said. "The juvenile passenger verifies that there was sudden movement inside the vehicle as Washington reached for him, preventing him from getting out."

Hewett says he did not fire into the vehicle and neither Washington nor the passenger was wounded by gunshot. The passenger said Hewett was "right beside the vehicle" when the four shots were fired, according to the report.

"While most of the windows were broken during the wreck, three on the drivers side—including that one nearest the rear tire—showed no signs of being hit by gunfire," Gore said. "Three of the four fired slugs were recovered from the driver's side rear tire."

Rain Expected For Area

The South Brunswick Islands area may get rain over the next few days, while temperatures are expected to remain above average, Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady said Tuesday.

Canady predicted temperatures ranging from the mid 70s at night into the low 90s during the day, with about three-fourths inch of rainfall.

That would be a welcome switch, as Canady hadn't recorded

any rainfall at his Shallotte Point residence through July 12.

For the period of July 6-12, Canady recorded a maximum high of 99 degrees on the 12th, and a minimum low of 71 degrees on the 6th.

A daily average high of 95 degrees combined with a nightly average low of 75 degrees, for an average daily temperature of 85 degrees, which Canady said is about 5 degrees above normal.

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE TO

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

POST OFFICE BOX 2558
SHALLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA 28459

NOTICE: Reliable or consistent delivery cannot be guaranteed since this newspaper must rely on the U.S. Postal Service for delivery. We can only guarantee that your newspaper will be submitted to the post office in Shallotte on Wednesday of the week of publication, in time for dispatch to out-of-town addresses that day.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES BY MAIL:		Sr. Citizen
In Brunswick County		
N.C. Sales Tax	06.30	05.30
Postage Charge	3.68	3.68
TOTAL	10.36	9.30
Elsewhere in North Carolina		
N.C. Sales Tax	06.30	05.30
Postage Charge	8.18	8.18
TOTAL	14.86	13.80
Outside North Carolina		
N.C. Sales Tax	06.30	05.30
Postage Charge	9.65	9.65
TOTAL	15.95	14.95

Complete And Return To Above Address

Name
Address
City, State
Zip

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Established Nov. 1, 1962
Telephone 754-6890
Published Every Thursday
At 4709 Main Street
Shallotte, N.C. 28459

SUBSCRIPTION RATES IN BRUNSWICK COUNTY

One Year\$10.36
Six Months\$5.55

**ELSEWHERE IN
NORTH CAROLINA**
One Year\$14.86
Six Months\$7.90

ELSEWHERE IN U.S.A.
One Year\$15.95
Six Months\$8.35

Second class postage paid at
Shallotte, N.C. 28459. USPS 777-
780. Postmaster, send address
changes to:
P.O. Box 2558,
Shallotte, N.C. 28459-2558

little type

BIG RESULTS

Use the Classifieds
whether you're buying or selling.

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

754-6890