

A True Champion

A local educator is named state Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year. Page 8-A

County Grid Title

The Trojans escape the Cougars' den as West beats South 29-20. Page 10-B



Nice Nurse

Carol Newton, R.N., receives a plaque and prize as The Brunswick Hospital's Employee of the Year. Page 12-C

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No Certifying Food Service Managers, Board Rules

BY ERIC CARLSON

The Brunswick County Board of Health on Monday decided that educating restaurant managers about proper food handling techniques is a good idea, but only if they want to be educated or repeatedly flunk health inspections.

By a vote of 5-to-1, the board rejected a set of proposed regulations that would have required all food-handling establishments to have a designated food-service manager trained and certified by the health department.

Under the proposal, the manager's certification would be revoked if the restaurant received two consecutive "C" health ratings. A \$500 fine would be imposed every three months against any restaurant that continued to operate without a certified manager.

Calling the regulations too severe, board members asked that they be sent back to a committee for revision.

This will be the second time the rules have been modified since they were drafted by health department staff. The original proposal, drawn from similar regulations in Mecklenburg and Cumberland counties, required that a certified manager be on the premises of all restaurants at all times.

The plan was loudly opposed by restaurant owners, day care operators and other food handlers who attended a public hearing last January. A committee of restaurant owners and health officials was formed to modify the regulations.

Health board member Patrick Newton said he was opposed to the certification course being mandatory.

"It ought to be an incentive and not a penalty," Newton said. "Instead of jamming it down their throats and saying we're going to fine them, you could give them a nice certificate for passing the course that they could hang on their wall. Then market forces would make restaurants who don't have a certificate follow suit when they see that their neighbor has one."

Board member Don Warren said he felt the \$500 fine was too harsh, warning that "some mom-and-pop restaurants" couldn't afford it.

"It would put them out of business," Warren said.

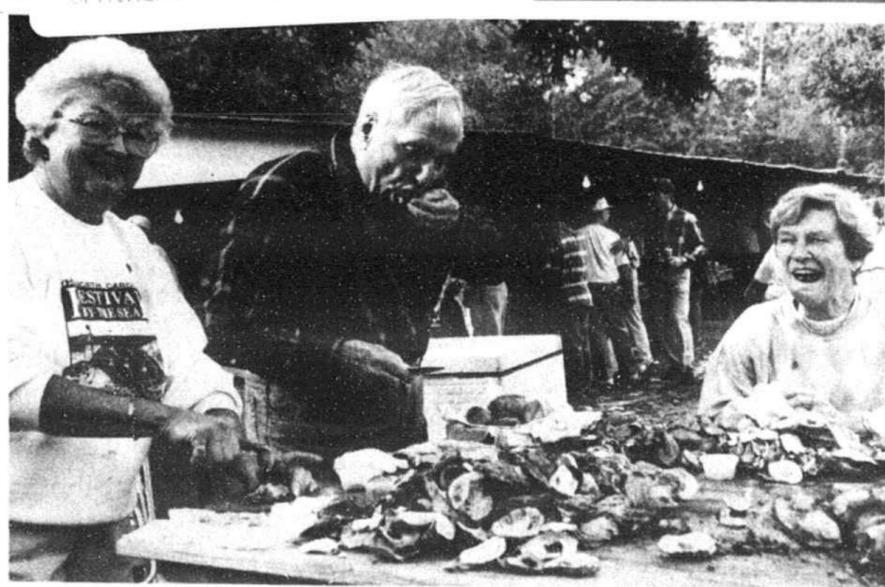
Environmental Health Supervisor Andrew Robinson, a member of the committee, said the proposed penalty was raised from \$50 to \$500 to insure compliance with the rules.

Board member Bruce Quaintance suggested that instead of requiring a food service management course, "you could do it in a book and make these people read and sign that they read it." He said requiring a trained manager would not assure compliance with health standards.

"Just teaching one person is not going to help," Quaintance said.

"It's not going to get to that guy at the end, because the one who took the course is not the one doing the cooking and the wiping and emptying the ice and washing the tops

(See HEALTH, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTOS BY DOUG RUTTER

MORE THAN 600 people enjoyed good food and fellowship Saturday afternoon at the Dixon Chapel Oyster Roast in Varnamtown, which was a huge success despite threatening skies. In the photo above, Rae Maurer of Florence, S.C., (left) and Clyde and Vermelle King of Hartsville, S.C., were among the 520 diners who turned out for the roasted oysters. Below, Herbert "Midget" Varnum offers granddaughter Alexis Varnum a taste of Dixon Chapel's famous cornbread.

Dixon Chapel Oyster Roast Is A Success Despite Weather Threat

BY DOUG RUTTER

All of the weather forecasters said it was going to rain Saturday, and the steel-gray skies over Varnamtown looked like they would indeed open up any second and drop buckets of water on the crowd below.

But not on this day. Dixon Chapel United Methodist Church was holding its oyster roast, an annual event that had never been rained out since it started some 35 years ago. It still has never been rained out.

"The Good Lord was looking out for us again," a relieved Marlene Varnum said Saturday afternoon, when more than 600 people flocked to the church for oysters, fish and fellowship.

"The rain kind of threatened a little bit but it went on," she said. "It just threatened all day long, but it never rained enough to put out the fire. It was a good cool day."

Varnum said she was up at 4:30 Saturday morning, praying for oyster-eating weather. "When your husband's got 200 bushels of oysters on hand for a roast, you pray," she said.

Her prayers were answered. It turned out to be just the right temperature for people who love their shellfish cooked over an open fire.

Church members had considered calling off the roast two weeks ago when Lockwood Folly River was temporarily closed to shellfish harvesting because of pollution.

But the river re-opened four days before the roast, allowing the church to stockpile about 150 bushels of local oysters. Another 50 bushels were brought in from Florida.

"Most of them came from Lockwood Folly and a we had a few to supplement from Florida," Varnum said, adding that the saltier Florida oysters went over well with some people.



"I think all in all it was a good day and good fellowship," she added. "I think the people enjoyed themselves. I know some of them did cause they ate a lot."

Although the roast attracted 100 people less than it did in 1992, turnout was still pretty good. Five hundred twenty people consumed 173 bushels of oysters, while another 100 opted for fried fish dinners.

New picnic tables added this year provided extra elbow room for diners, who didn't face any lines all afternoon.

The cloudy skies may have been a blessing for the church. "If we had sunshine we probably would have run out of oysters," Varnum said.

With the crowd thinner than normal, church members who are usu-

ally too busy working had time to take a breather and enjoy the food themselves.

Varnum estimated that 75 to 80 volunteers helped put the roast together, including 25 youngsters who carted off the empty oyster shells, shoveled fresh oyster onto roasting grates and served cornbread, pickles and sauces.

"We appreciate all the help. We get so many people that don't attend our church that help out," she said. "It's not just a one-day thing. It takes a couple of weeks to get ready."

After the roast, Varnum said the church held a special memorial service for Roland Varnum and Chris Caudill, two members who had died since the last roast. "They were missed at our oyster roast very much," she said.

ROSE CALLS MINE 'A DISASTER'

Foes Claim County Gave 'Preferential Treatment' To MM With Septic Permit

BY ERIC CARLSON

Mining opponents launched another salvo against Martin Marietta Aggregates on Monday by asking state environmental regulators to overturn the Brunswick County Health Department's "unlawful" decision to issue the company a septic tank permit at its proposed limestone quarry site near Southport.

The county's same-day approval of a permit request "is unavailable to the general public and indicates that Martin-Marietta received preferential treatment," opposition leader Robert Quinn said in an overnight letter to the N.C. Division of Environmental Health.

On another front, anti-mining forces enlisted a powerful ally last week when Congressman Charlie Rose (D-7th District) called the proposed quarry "an environmental disaster for Brunswick County" in a strongly worded letter to the man whose state agency will rule on Martin Marietta's application for a mining permit.

The congressman told Charles Gardner, director of the N.C. Division of Land Resources, that the project will harm "wildlife, estuaries, surface water, drinking water or ground water quality" and could have a "devastating and irreversible effect on marine hatcheries, ecosystems and indigenous species, especially those unique to Brunswick County's coastal ecology."

In an interview Tuesday, Quinn said he recently met with Rose in Fayetteville and gave the congressman a fact sheet on the mining proposal along with copies of resolutions from the eight towns that have gone on record in opposition to the mine.

"He said he was very much aware of the effects of Martin Marietta's mines from their Castle Hayne operation," Quinn said. "He was alarmed and said, 'They'll destroy your water table.' He told me he'd have his staff look into it immediately."

Martin Marietta has applied for a permit to extract and process limestone from a 1,000-acre tract the company recently purchased between Bethel Church Road and the entrance to Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point in Smithville Township.

Opponents fear the company's plan to pump 10 million gallons of day from a fresh-water aquifer will dry up wells and ponds and create sinkholes that could endanger operations at the nearby ammunition terminal. They are also concerned about traffic from heavy rock trucks and worry that regular blasting could trigger problems at the neighboring Brunswick Nuclear Plant.

A group called the Brunswick County Anti-Mining Awareness Committee, co-founded by Quinn, has gathered the signatures of more than 2,000 mining opponents on petitions and rallied large crowds at re-

cent meetings of the county commissioners and planning board.

Quinn has asked to be put on the agenda for the Nov. 15 commissioner's meeting. He wants the board to ask the state to delay consideration of any permit requests for mining, hazardous waste disposal, incinerators or animal slaughterhouses until the county decides whether it will permit such uses in its zoning law.

The planning board will hold a public hearing Nov. 17 to consider Quinn's request to eliminate those uses, which are permitted in the H-M (heavy manufacturing) zone around the proposed mine site. A public hearing on Martin Marietta's mining permit request is scheduled for Nov. 30.

At the request of mining opponents, the county commissioners last week agreed to suspend enforcement of the zoning law. But they did not go along with the request to delay permitting after County Attorney Michael Ramos advised that the wording of the proposed resolution would have prohibited the issuance of building permits throughout the county.

"We want our county commissioners to be part of what we're doing, as is Charlie Rose," Quinn said. (See MINE, Page 2-A)

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Some Papers Early, Others To Be Late

Beacon subscribers served by the Shallotte, South Brunswick, Supply, Ash and Longwood post offices should receive this week's edition a day early.

Newspaper and postal deadlines allowed delivery to those nearby post offices ahead of schedule in order to avoid a delay due to the Veterans Day postal holiday on Thursday, Nov. 11.

Other subscribers' papers were delivered to the post offices according to our regular schedule, but will be in their mailboxes a day late because of the holiday.

Forum To Explain, Get Feedback On Three Calabash Sewer Plans

BY ERIC CARLSON

Now that the dust has settled in Calabash's election of a mayor and three new commissioners, citizens of the town have another decision to consider—one that will affect their lives and the health of their town for decades to come.

Wednesday (Nov. 10) at 7:30 p.m. in the Calabash Volunteer Fire Department building, a public forum was scheduled on three proposed methods of establishing a central sewer system in the town.

Town commissioners, representatives of the town's engineering and accounting firms, along with Billy Burnett, owner of the Carolina Blythe Utility Co., will be on hand to explain the three proposals and to answer questions.

There will be presentations and discussion periods on three plans for building the system: the joint effort with Sunset Beach, the purchase and expansion of Carolina Blythe and the creation of a Calabash Sanitary District. Those who attend the forum will be asked to register

at the door, said Jon Sanborn, the town commissioner who suggested the public meeting. Hand-outs summarizing each of the proposals will be available.

There will be a separate presentation on each of the three options. Each will be followed by a discussion period during which members of the audience can submit written questions, Sanborn said.

"At the conclusion of the meeting, we may have a period of public comment, with each speaker limited to a three-minute statement," he said.

For more than a year, Powell and Associates of North Myrtle Beach, S.C., the town's paid engineering consultants, have been studying various sewerage proposals and presenting their findings to the Calabash Board of Commissioners.

After considering numerous options presented by the engineers, the board has backed a plan to join the town of Sunset Beach in building a joint sewerage system designed to serve both towns and their outlying areas. Together the two towns formed a South Brunswick

Water and Sewer Authority to manage the system.

Formation of the joint venture is expected to allow Calabash to qualify for about \$15 million in state and federal grants and loans to construct a sewage treatment plant and collection system. Under the plan, debt service on the loans would be paid back by users of the system through rates and impact fees.

The town's tax base would not be used as collateral for the loans, so residents of District 2 who are currently provided sewer service by the Carolina Blythe would pay nothing for the new system, according to the engineers.

Utility owner Burnett has proposed an alternative plan under which the town would pay him \$4.5 million for his company and expand the collection system to areas not currently served, beginning with the downtown restaurant district.

Burnett has offered to finance the entire purchase at a rate he says will allow the town to expand the system and pay back the loan through user fees, without raising

taxes.

The option of creating a sanitary district was suggested by Sanborn, but has not been discussed by the board of commissioners.

In a fact sheet prepared by Sanborn, he said the district can only be formed after 51 percent of land owners in the proposed service area sign a petition supporting the idea. The petitions would be submitted to the Brunswick County Commissioners, who would set a public hearing on the plan.

If the sanitary district is approved, the county board would appoint three to five members to a district board, which would "basically operate the same as a town, except their scope of activities are related to water and sewer," Sanborn said.

The sanitary district board would also have the power to levy taxes and condemn property.

Sanborn said the public forum was scheduled both to educate residents about the three proposals and to "get feedback" on which way the town should proceed.