



STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC CARLSON

### Incumbents File

Chairman Don Warren (right) and Commissioner Tom Rabon are the first county board members to officially announce their plans to seek re-election as filing for the May 3 primary opened last Monday.

## Three Brunswick Businesses Busted In ALE Gambling Sting

The owners or managers of three Brunswick County businesses were among the 37 charged with violating state gambling laws in a six-county investigation into illegal poker machine operations, the N.C. Alcohol Law Enforcement Division (ALE) announced last week.

Poker machines were seized and permit-holders were cited at the Market Express convenience store in Shallotte, Boswell's Gas and Grocery in Boiling Spring Lakes and the Shamrock Restaurant and Pub in Southport, according to Tom Hegele at the N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.

Last Friday, ALE agents ended a three-month undercover operation that targeted businesses where gambling on "joker poker" machines was permitted. Members of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department narcotics squad aided ALE officers in the three local arrests.

The investigation also found violations at 12 businesses in New Hanover County, eight in Columbus County, six in Onslow County, five in Pender County and three in Duplin County.

In 1989, the N.C. General Assembly exempted certain video games and coin-operated machines from state gambling laws, allowing

players to receive free replays or paper coupons that may be exchanged for prizes with a value not exceeding \$10. The law also prohibits the replays or coupons from being exchanged for cash.

Working undercover, an officer from the Wilmington Police Department's Career Criminal Unit visited each of the businesses where he operated at least one joker poker machine. In each location, the officer received more than \$10 in paper coupons that were converted to prizes or cash by a store employee.

During the investigation, the undercover officer received cash at one location. At other locations he received an assortment of prizes including motor oil, transmission fluid, battery jumper cables, baseball caps and beer.

All joker poker machines at each location were seized by ALE agents. The defendants were criminally charged at the Wilmington district ALE office Monday. In addition to the criminal charges, reports of the violations will be submitted to the state Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission in Raleigh, which could result in an administrative fine and the suspension or revocation of the ABC permits issued to the businesses.

## NEWTON NAMED Stanley Loses County Health Board Chair

BY ERIC CARLSON  
Maliston Stanley, one of the county's foremost advocates for minority health issues, was removed from his chairmanship of the Brunswick County Board of Health Monday night and replaced by engineer Patrick Newton, one of the board's newest members.

The 5-to-4 vote against Stanley's re-appointment was divided between at-large members and health care providers. County Commissioners Chairman Don Warren was joined in the vote to replace Stanley by the three members named to the board since Warren took office.

Home Builder Bruce Quaintance, who was nominated by Warren to fill the optometrist slot on the board last June, made the motion to name Newton chairman. Former county commissioner Benny Ludlum, who was appointed in October, seconded the motion. Newton, a board member since June, voted for his own nomination along with Warren and former register of deeds Arthur Knox.

Nurse Patricia Nutter, dentist Dr. Jeff Mintz, veterinarian Dr. Brad Kerr and pharmacist Joey Galloway supported Stanley's reappointment. Stanley did not attend the meeting, due to a previous commitment. Nutter was named co-chairman in a unanimous vote.

After the meeting, Warren would not reply to questions about his vote for Stanley's removal.

In an interview Tuesday, Stanley said he was not surprised by the vote and pledged to remain an active member of the health board.

"I'm a team player," Stanley said. "He (Newton) was elected and I will support him 100 percent. I think he will do a good job."

Kerr, who made the motion to reappoint Stanley, said he was disappointed at the outcome and questioned whether it was proper for Newton to vote for himself at a meeting where Stanley was absent. The board of health has no formal bylaws to govern its voting procedures.

"It would have more fair if Moe (Stanley) was there and able to vote for himself," Kerr said.

Calling him "a key member," Kerr said he hoped Stanley would remain active on the board and would "continue to voice his con-

*"I'm a team player, he (Newton) was elected and I will support him 100 percent. I think he will do a good job."*

—Maliston Stanley, Former County Health Board Chairman

cerns about health issues, especially those affecting the black community."

Kerr said he hopes the change in board leadership will bring an end to the "factionalism" he said has hindered the board since it became polarized over the controversial smoking control ordinance. He also expressed concern that "health professionals are under-represented" on the health board.

"It hurts our ability to deal with health issues," Kerr said. "When it comes to septic tank issues, we're well represented. But I'm not sure health issues are going to be addressed."

In its first item of business after the vote, the board heard a complaint from Holden Beach septic system installer Clayton Robinson about a "personal problem with the health department." He asked to speak to the board alone.

Quaintance immediately made a motion for the board to go into closed session "to discuss a personnel matter," after which the public was asked to leave the room.

In the hallway outside the meeting, Robinson said he came before the board to appeal the department's rejection of a septic system he recently installed in the Riverside II subdivision and to protest his treatment by department employees.

He said he built the septic system according to a rough plan sketched by one of the county's environmental health specialists, which did not specify a required setback from adjoining property lines.

When the system was inspected for final approval, Robinson said it was turned down because he had allowed for only a five-foot setback, which he said was the standard for older subdivision lots in that devel-

opment.

Lots platted after 1977 must meet a 10-foot setback requirement, but Robinson said he was not told to comply with the stricter standard before he began work. Instead, he said he was told that the septic system

would have to be moved before it could be approved.

Robinson said that when he asked how to appeal the decision, a health department employee told him "to sue the county."

When the board returned to open session, Nutter told Robinson that the board "cannot change what happened with the permit" and said the decision would have to be appealed to state regulators.

"As for as the personnel matters and the public relations matters, those are going to be taken care of," Nutter said.

In other business, the board scheduled a public hearing at 7 p.m., Feb. 8, in the public assembly hall to discuss a revised set of proposed mobile home park regulations.

### WEATHER FOR THE MONTH

## December Was Cool, Dry

December was cool and dry, according to the National Weather Service's monthly report from its Wilmington office.

The average monthly temperature was 46.1, 2.4 degrees below normal.

There were 11 days with the low temperature 32 degrees or less. The lowest temperature was 20 degrees on the 31st. The warmest was 74 degrees on the 4th.

Total precipitation for the month was 2.67 inches, or .96 inch below normal. The greatest precipitation in a 24-hour period was .60 during the 14th and 15th.

Snowfall was recorded twice dur-

ing the month, .7 of an inch on the 23rd and a trace on the 29th. There were 11 days of measurable precipitation.

The sunshine percentage for the month was only 61 percent of the possible.

The high wind gust was 49 mph from the southwest on the 4th, a record for the month. Records only back back to 1984 for wind gusts. The highest one-minute wind speed was 26 mph from the southwest on the 5th.

Highest sea level pressure was 30.64 inches on the 1st. The lowest was 29.46 inches on the 5th.

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## Legislators Request Ideas On Tackling Crime Problem

Have some ideas on what the state should do to address its rising crime rate and overloaded criminal justice system?

If so, state Reps. E. David Redwine and Dewey Hill and state Sen. R.C. Soles Jr. say they want to hear them before heading to Raleigh for a special session to deal with crime.

The trio of legislators is sponsoring a public meeting 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 20, at Brunswick Community College to hear from constituents. The meeting will be held in the teaching auditorium in the ALS Building on the main campus north of Supply on U.S. 17 Business.

"We want to hear from people what they think we could do—law enforcement officers, educators, anyone who has an interest," said Redwine.

Gov. Jim Hunt has asked the General Assembly to convene in special session beginning Feb. 8 to address crime-related issues only.

By the Jan. 20 meeting here, Red-

wine said legislators will have been briefed by Speaker of the House Dan Blue and Hunt will have outlined his proposal for addressing the issues. Some individual legislators may also be circulating their own ideas by then.

According to Hunt, North Carolina and its criminal justice system are facing a crisis in trying to deal with a rapidly rising crime rate with inefficient and insufficient remedies.

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