

New Holden Inspector Starts Work Next Week

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach's fourth building inspector in less than a year will start working next week, said Town Manager Gus Ulrich.

Claude A. Spellman of Arapahoe, chief building inspector for the Pamlico County Inspections Department since 1990, will begin his new job at Holden Beach next Friday, Feb. 4.

Spellman will be the fourth inspector to work at Holden Beach in the past 10 months. The past two have not stayed on the job long.

Dwight Carroll, now a town commissioner, retired last April due to a back injury after more than nine years as building inspector.

He was replaced by Jim McSwain, who resigned after a six-month stint to run his own construction business. The most recent inspector, Bill Goodman, resigned after five weeks due to personal reasons.

Ulrich said Spellman was one of the people who applied for the job when it was advertised last fall and Goodman was hired.

"He was one of the top candidates before," Ulrich said. "He has good experience. He's worked for Pamlico County for four years and has a very broad range of responsibilities."

In Pamlico County, Spellman is responsible for managing and budgeting for the inspections department, supervising employees and hiring and training new employees.

He also serves as zoning and subdivision administrator, CAMA permit officer, land use plan official, flood ordinance administrator and secretary to the county planning board.

Spellman is a certified building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical and fire inspector.

Ulrich said Spellman has worked with the federal government's Community Rating System, which rewards communities with strong flood damage prevention codes by allowing residents to save money on flood insurance.

Prior to going to work for the Pamlico County Inspections Department, Spellman worked eight years as a general superintendent/construction manager with four firms, according to his resume.

He supervised construction of residential and commercial buildings and renovations with costs ranging from \$10,000 to \$30 million. He has experience in designing, developing, negotiating, managing, constructing and selling.

"He knows the construction business," Ulrich said.

Spellman, 53, studied business administration at Bradley University in Peoria, Ill., and Illinois Central Community College in East Peoria.

He also has taken courses in salesmanship, accounting, law and administration and data processing. He holds general contractor's licenses in North Carolina and Florida, according to his resume.

Spellman is a board representative on the N.C. Flood Plain Managers Association. He also is a member of the N.C. Council of Code Officials, International Association of Electrical Inspectors, National Fire Protection Association and National Association of Home Builders.

Army Plans Control Burning

Control burning will be conducted through March within the forest boundaries of the U.S. Army's Military Ocean Terminal, Sunny Point preserve in Brunswick and New Hanover counties.

Herschel A. (Tony) Gaw, Sunny Point forester, said control burning areas will be along the railroad right-of-way from the port to the Leland Rail Interchange Yard in Brunswick County, and in selected areas of government property used as a buffer zone along Dow Road from the Carolina Beach maintenance shop to the N.C. National Guard Training Center at Fort Fisher in New Hanover County.

Control burning of forest underbrush is used to reduce the possibility of wildfire by reducing available fuel. The burning also releases and builds better habitat for certain endangered species, said spokesman Myrtle D. Meade. It can also help to reduce the tick population, add nutrients to the forest floor and eliminate undesirable vegetation.

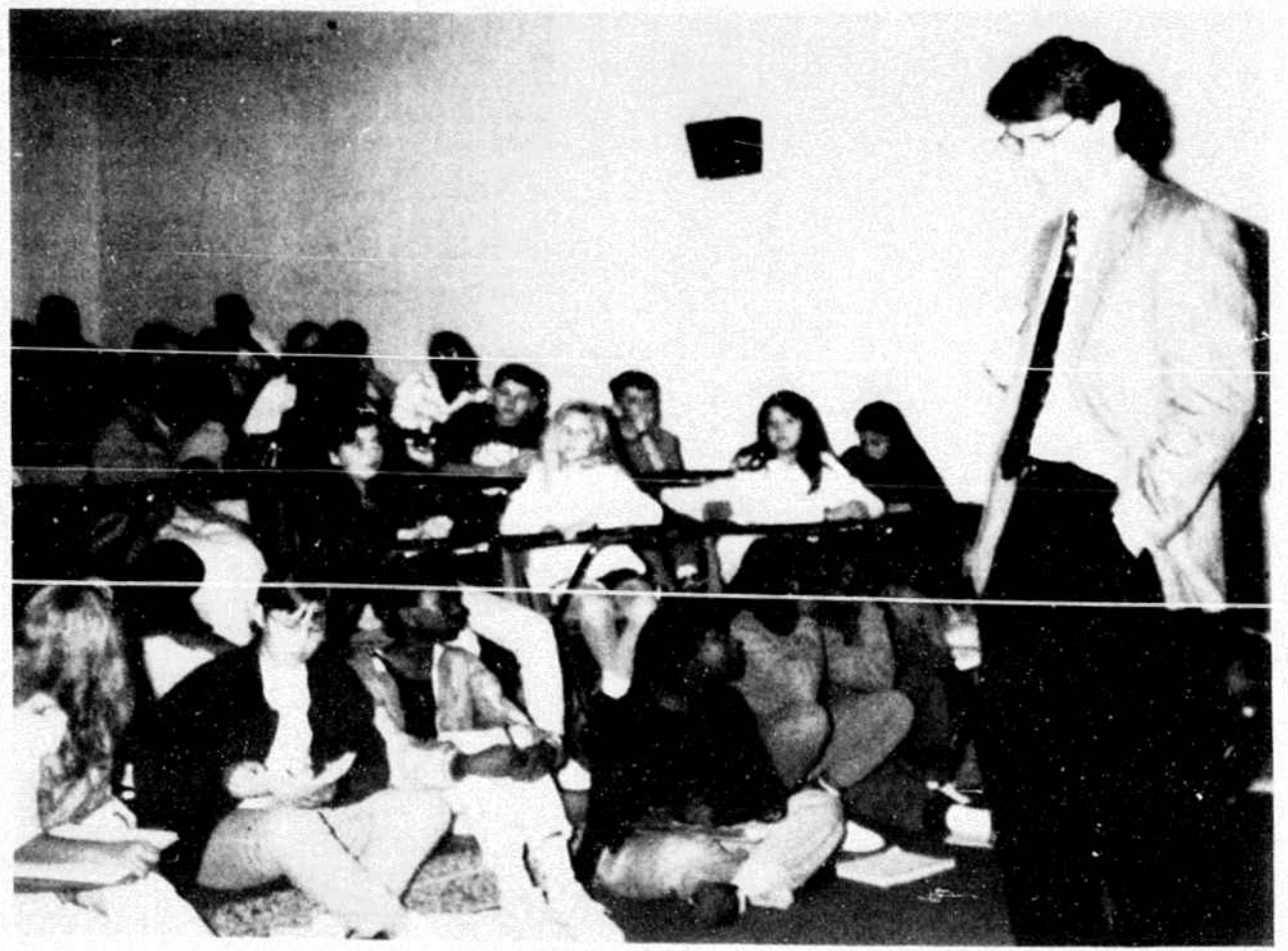


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Judge: Age No Protection

District Judge Napoleon "Poli" Barefoot talked to Shallotte Middle School sixth grade social studies classes last Wednesday, answering questions on the consequences of someone their age getting caught for breaking and entering and larceny; bringing guns or drugs on campus; even murder. Barefoot told students youthfulness wouldn't keep them from serving time for serious offenses in a place like a prison, training school. Barefoot said he automatically gives an active sentence to any student who brings a gun, loaded or unloaded, on campus. "Hearing it from a judge, it's going to sink in a lot more than if a teacher tells them," said sixth grade teacher Jerry Brown, who asked Barefoot to visit.

Young 'Diplomats' Learning To Respect Differing Views

Students from Leland Middle School and nine other middle schools from a three-county area will gather Feb. 3 at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington for the fourth Middle School Human Relations Summit.

From 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the University Union, the 150 student "human relations diplomats" will deal with topics that include cultural loyalty, cleaning up language, the

causes and cures of prejudices, non-violent ways to deal with conflict, and self-esteem and prejudice. In the afternoon students will have their anonymous questions about different races or genders answered in a discussion group.

Participants are selected by a counselor, teacher or their peers and are equally mixed in gender and grade levels. They are to work in their own schools promoting "un-

derstanding today for unity tomorrow."

Two teachers attending from each school will participate in a program on "Diversity and Reflective Teaching" directed by UNCW education professors Judy Hayn, Ann Lockledge and Mahmaz Moallem. Started by school counselors, the summit is scheduled during National School Counseling Week and Human Relations Month.

Local Attorney Seeks Return To Bench

Shallotte attorney Robert Wayne Long filed Jan. 18 as a candidate for district court judge on the Democratic ticket in the May 3 primary.

Long, 45, is seeking a return to a position he held briefly in 1985.

The Columbus County native defeated Southport attorney Elva Jess in the May 1984 primary and was unopposed for election in November 1984. But in

February 1985 was charged in Durham with driving while impaired.

"I resigned because I felt it was the right thing to do," said Long. "I felt it best not to draw attention to the judgeship."

"I can't change the past. I paid my dues and I did what I felt was right. It's not often you get a chance to do something over and do it better. That's the opportunity I have now."

Long ran unsuccessfully once for sheriff and was defeated in 1990 in a bid for the district judgeship, leading the field in Brunswick County, but losing in Bladen and Columbus counties.

Long was valedictorian of his Nakina High School graduating class. He received a bachelor of science degree in agriculture education from N.C. State University and his juris doctorate from North Carolina Central University in Durham.

A practicing attorney since 1980, Long has also farmed, taught school in Columbus and Brunswick counties, worked as a deputy sher-

iff, police officer and probation and parole officer in Brunswick County, and held a variety of other jobs while in undergraduate and law schools.

A single parent, Long has two teen-age daughters, Julie and Angela, and two grown sons, Bob and Jeff.

If elected, Long said he promised to be fair and impartial, as required by the state Judicial Code.

Long is the third declared candidate for the seat now held by Judge David G. Wall of Elizabethtown, who is not seeking re-election. Whiteville attorneys G. Philip David filed Jan. 7. Former Assistant District Attorney Tom Aldridge, who also has a Whiteville law practice, has announced his intent to file.

The 13th Judicial District is made up of Bladen, Brunswick and Columbus counties.

County AD Retiring After 15 Years

BY DOUG RUTTER

Brunswick County Schools Athletic Director Nelson Best, whose position was eliminated by the school board last month, will retire effective Monday after nearly 15 years on the job.

"The incentive to stay on seemed very questionable in view of the board eliminating the athletic director position back in December along with those other positions," Best said Tuesday. "I wasn't sure where we were headed."

The county school board decided to do away with Best's position, along with four others in the central office, effective June 30 because members don't think the position is needed to meet the school system's top goals.

Best, who implemented coaching supplements and helped expand athletic programs at the local middle schools and high schools, has decided not to wait until June 30 to leave.

The 61-year-old will retire after 39 years in education, including the past 25 in Brunswick County. In addition to athletic director, Best also served as director of health, physical education and driver's education.

Asked what he thought his greatest accomplishments were as athletic director, Best said, "I really think getting the coaches supplements started in the county. That and expansion of the sports programs."

When Best took over as athletic director in 1979, teachers received no extra pay for coaching other than money from ticket sales and concession stands. Best acquired county supplements for all coaches.

Also under his direction, athletic programs at the county middle schools have been expanded to include more than boys' and girls' basketball, football, volley-

ball, soccer, softball and baseball have been added.

Tennis, track, wrestling and soccer have been added at the high schools during Best's tenure.

"All these things I played a role in," Best said. "It took a lot of people working at the schools and in the community to get it done."

Best said he is concerned about the school board's decision to cut the athletic director's position.

"There will be good leadership at the schools and on each campus," he said. "I'm concerned there's going to be nobody in the central office to have that as a top priority and help the coaches and be an advocate."

"Evidently my opinion is contrary to the school board here and some other places," Best said.

"It seems if it isn't tested it's hard to get a slice of the pie," he added. "We need a well-balanced educational program, and I think the focus is being narrowed."

A former principal, Best has taught history, science, physical education and health and coached boys' and girls' basketball, baseball, track, football and tennis.

Best, who usually attended a few athletic events every week, said he will miss being around the coaches and players.

"I'm going to miss it a lot," he said. "I'll miss the coaches and kids and everybody I would see at the games."

Best served a combined 10 years as principal of Leland and North Brunswick high schools before moving to the central office.

He now plans to spend more time with his family and play a lot of golf. "I'm going to be able to do things that I haven't done before. I want to attend the World Series and ACC Tournament."

Best also said he plans to attend this year's Colonial Athletic Association basketball tournament in Richmond, Va., and root for his alma mater, East Carolina University.



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