

Double Deadlock

Mistrials are declared in two Superior Court cases when juries are unable to reach verdicts. Page 12-A.

One-Of-A-Kind

Legendary picker Doc Watson and the Shady Grove Band come to Williamson Auditorium June 17. Page 6-B.

Little Guy, Big Power

West Brunswick tennis ace Lamarr Hardy finishes the season undefeated in 12 matches. Page 1-D.

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OIB Board OKs Plan Board Rules On Identical Vote

BY SUSAN USHER

All five Ocean Isle Beach Commissioners stood firm Tuesday regarding changes to the town planning board, adopting on a 3-2 show of hands a measure that gives members from outside the town limits the same voting powers as town members.

The vote fell the same as on April 12, with Commissioners Debbie Sioane Fox, Janet Saunders and Bill Benton for the plan and Kendall Suh and Ken Proctor against it. The second vote was necessary because a larger percentage vote is required to adopt an ordinance on a single reading.

Proctor and Suh had favored expansion of the planning board and Suh had said he didn't think town residents would like the idea of extra-territorial area (ETA) residents being allowed to vote on planning and zoning matters within the town limits.

Benton said at an earlier meeting he didn't think ETA representatives would be very interested in attending meetings regularly if they were only allowed to vote on business relating to the ETA. Fox also has said she thinks the town needs to give the ETA a greater voice in town affairs since their futures are interconnected.

Proctor, a former planning board member, had pushed for changes in planning board make-up and operation since his election as commissioner last November, particularly stricter attendance rules and expansion of the board to include a broader cross-section of townspeople.

The board will remain at five members—three from town and two from the ETA, with any three constituting a quorum for conducting business. Members will be allowed to miss up to four meetings a year. All five members will vote on any business coming before the board. In the past ETA members were allowed to vote only on issues involving the extra-territorial area, an area extending up to one mile beyond the town limits in which Ocean Isle exerts planning and zoning controls.

(See OIB BOARD, Page 2-A)

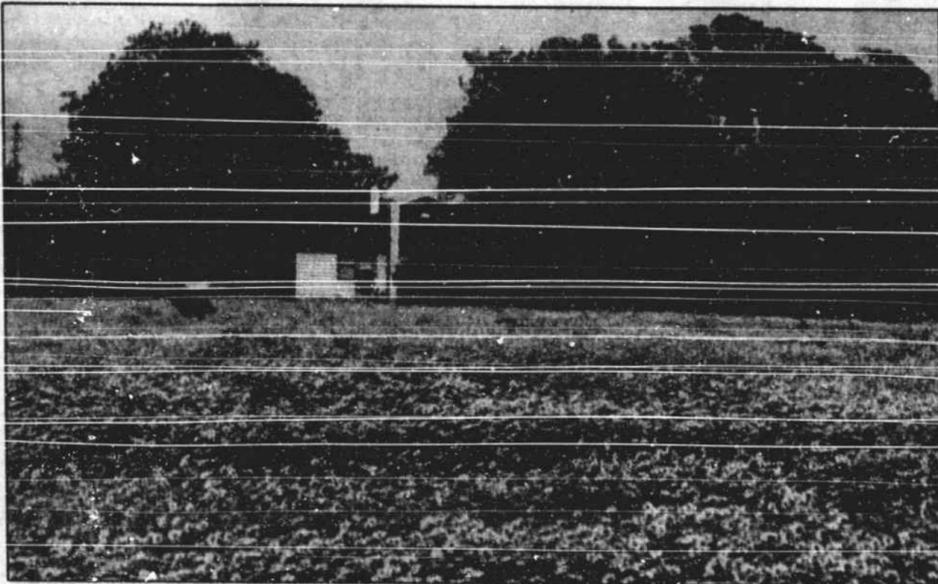
Former OIB Mayor Johnston, 88, Dies

Funeral services were held Sunday for former Ocean Isle Beach Mayor Homer Lee Johnston, one of the island's founding fathers and a major real estate developer there.

Johnston, 88, passed away May 4 at Wesley Nursing Center. He moved to Ocean Isle Beach in 1969 after 33 years with the J.B. Ivey Co. in Charlotte and began developing real estate. He served three terms as mayor and 18 years on the town council and was instrumental in organizing the first "Worship by the Sea" services at Ocean Isle 25 years ago.

For 17 years, he served as church school superintendent at Hickory Grove Methodist Church in Charlotte, where the Homer Lee Johnston Library was named for him. He was an associate member of Shallotte Presbyterian Church.

Johnston's wife Eloise died in 1992. He is survived by son Homer Johnston Jr., daughter Linda J. Little of Matthews and four grandchildren.



STAFF PHOTO BY LINDA BRIGHT

Outstanding In Their Field

A sea of brilliant Black-eyed Susans is the view from Madie Roach's home on Holden Beach Road this time of year. Mrs. Roach started with a few plants "a long time ago. Later her husband disked the property and the seeds spread. Charles Roach died in January, but the wildflowers he helped spread serve as an annual memorial to him.

S.C. MAN TO BE CHARGED

Local Man Fatally Shot While Trying To Make Peace At Bar

BY ERIC CARLSON

Those who knew "Jet" Puckett say he was a friendly, peaceful man with a broad smile and a big heart—the sort of guy you'd be far more likely to prevent a fight than to get into one.

Which is why so many people who live around the Seashore Road area of Holden Beach were shocked to learn that John Houston Puckett had been shot to death Sunday morning at the neighborhood tavern where he worked as a part-time bartender.

Witnesses say Puckett, 36, of North Tanglewood Drive, was one of the few people at the Gator Lounge who wasn't drinking Saturday night. He was playing darts, practicing for an upcoming tournament, when a pair of South Carolina men started causing trouble and were asked to leave the bar.



PUCKETT

Brunswick County Sheriff's detectives on Tuesday were continuing efforts to piece together what transpired next, in the minutes leading up to Puckett's fatal shooting.

"These were a lot of people there who had a lot to drink and we've got a lot of conflicting accounts," said detective Capt. Phil Perry. "We're still conducting interviews to determine what happened."

Late Tuesday, a warrant was issued for the arrest of one of the two South Carolina men, John Allen Martin, 28, of Latta, on a charge of murder, Detective Gene Caison said. Other charges could be added as the investigation continues.

"These two guys got to drinking and one guy got real obnoxious and started running his mouth. The owner asked him to leave," said Caison.

His friend got the man outside, but he insisted on returning to the bar. The disturbance continued inside, where another customer says the man pointed a small

(See MURDER WARRANT, Page 2-A)

Baxter Drops Bid For Third Term On School Board; Barnette Out Of Commission Race

BY SUSAN USHER

Though only one of five incumbents will be standing for re-election in November, Brunswick County Board of Education members say they don't plan to be a "lame duck" board the remaining seven months of their term.

Incumbents Polly Russ (District 2) and Thurman Gause (District 1) were defeated in last week's primary.

After six years on the board Chairman Donna Baxter has withdrawn as the Democratic candidate for the District 4 seat. Her formal letter asking to be removed from the ballot arrived at the Brunswick County Board of Elections Monday, along with a similar letter from Republican Bill Fairley of District 3.

The executive committees of the Brunswick County Democratic and Republican parties have until Aug 25—75 calendar days before the Nov. 8 election—to certify the new nominees with the county elections board.

Baxter's replacement will be running against Republican Pat Purvis Brown of Ash, a retired educator. Fairley's replacement will compete against Democrat William D. Carter of Caswell Beach, a former county manager.

"I feel I have lost my effectiveness," she said in an interview Friday. "Instead of someone who can lead, I'm held up to be the problem. People are using me to get away from the real problems we have. I don't want that."

Dot Worth of Ash, a Democrat who served on the board from 1986 to 1990 from District 2, called *The Brunswick Beacon* Tuesday to an-

nounce that she would be seeking the Democratic nomination for the District 4 seat and changing her voter registration. Though she moved to Ash in 1990 while still on the school board, Worth has continued to vote in Shallotte.

Baxter was first elected to the board in 1988 and was re-elected in 1992. She is serving her third consecutive term as board chairman and said she typically spends the equivalent of two days a week away from her job on school-board-related business.

She was unopposed in the primary because the man who would have been her opponent, Liston Hawes, died in March at a point too late for his name to be removed from the ballot. He still received 41 percent of the vote. Baxter said the vote wasn't a factor in her decision to withdraw.

"I ran for the kids, thinking if I worked hard, listened and learned, I could represent the children of Brunswick County. But at some point you have to ask if you are bringing the system forward. At first I thought I was moving the system forward, but now I've become a lightning rod. People are allowing issues not important to education to polarize the situation."

"Everything I did, I did it because I thought it was best for the kids."

"I would like to thank the people who did support education in Brunswick County and tried to push the system forward. I think time will show these boards have advanced education in Brunswick County."

Baxter said a school board mem-
(See SCHOOL, Page 2-A)

Supply's 'Miracle Boy' Is Youngest Heart Transplant Recipient At UNC

BY LYNN CARSON

Logan Pottorff came into the world February 17; so far that world is limited to the two hospitals where he has spent the first 12 weeks of his life.

His family and medical team is hoping for all that to change Tuesday, when he may come home to Supply for the first time, the youngest patient ever to have received a heart transplant at UNC Children's Hospital in Chapel Hill.

The day after his birth in Wilmington, Logan's doctors discovered he had hypoplastic left heart syndrome. The left side of the heart, which pumps oxygen to the body, was not developed. The only option was a heart transplant, contingent upon a tragic but miraculous coincidence—the loss of some other child whose parents could cut through their grief to allow one baby's death to save another's life.

His second chance came March 24 from a two-year-old donor whose identity will remain unknown to Eddie and Alicia Bates Pottorff, Logan's parents, unless the donor's family chooses to contact them.

"We are blessed," Alicia Pottorff said Monday, back in Brunswick County for a few days to kick off a fundraiser for Logan sponsored by the Children's Organ Transplant Association.

(See FOUNDATION, Page 2-A)



LOGAN POTTORFF, shown with his mother, Alicia Bates Pottorff, was the youngest heart transplant patient ever at UNC Children's Hospital in Chapel Hill.

Brunswick Jailer Accused of Rape Resigns

BY ERIC CARLSON

An 11-year veteran Brunswick County jailer has resigned in the midst of an SBI investigation into a female inmate's claim that he and another prisoner raped her while the woman was in custody last week.

Deputy Sgt. Thomas Gore turned in his resignation to Sheriff John Carr Davis Monday, according to District Attorney Rex Gore. The two men are not related.

The prosecutor said Sgt. Gore's resignation should not be taken as an indication of guilt.

"I don't think we should read that much into it," the D.A. said. "There is a criminal investigation and an administrative side to this situation. Regardless of what happens in the criminal investigation, the sheriff has to consider how it should be handled administratively."

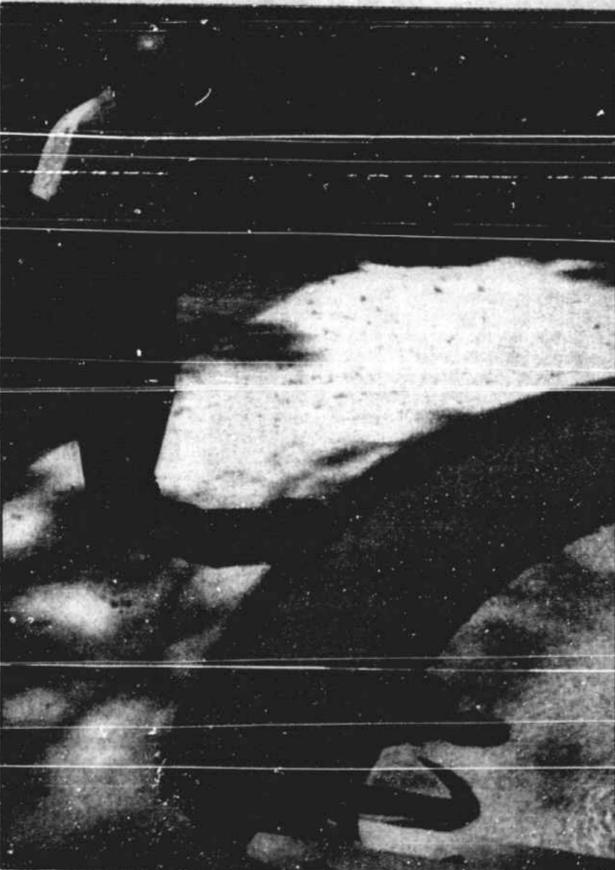
A 23-year-old jail inmate has charged that she was

lured from her cell and forced to have sex with Sgt. Gore and another prisoner at about 4 o'clock Wednesday morning (May 4).

She was moved to New Hanover County jail later that morning, where agents of the State Bureau of Investigation began looking into her allegations. That inquiry is continuing and a final report is not expected until early next week, Rex Gore said. No charges have been filed in the incident.

"As in any rape investigation, among the issues to be examined will be the question of whether or not there was force and a lack of consent," he said.

The inmate who made the accusations was being held in Brunswick County Jail in lieu of a \$4,000 bond awaiting trial on several charges of forgery and uttering. She also faces additional charges in New Hanover County, Rex Gore said.



STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC CARLSON

Uninvited Guest

All Cambria sidles up to a young alligator which helped itself to a swim at the Sea Trail Plantation home of his neighbors, Dr. and Mrs. David DeFeries. The alligator slipped into the DeFeries' pool about lunchtime on Monday and entertained a couple dozen of their neighbors until it was removed late in the afternoon by state wildlife officials and relocated in the Green Swamp. The little gator didn't leave without a fight, DeFeries said; it took a bite of a metal deck chair as it was being taken away.