

# Holden Report: Real Estate Office Too Close To Ocean

**BY DOUG RUTTER**  
It's up to the state to decide what action, if any, should be taken regarding a Holden Beach office building that the town allowed to be built closer to the ocean than regulations allow.

A town committee reported Monday that the Coastal Development & Realty building exceeds 5,000 square feet, and therefore, should have been set back at least 120 feet from the oceanfront dune instead of 60 feet.

Commissioner Jim Fournier, chairman of the fact-finding committee, said the total square footage of the three-story commercial structure at 131 Ocean Blvd. West is 5,874.

N.C. Division of Coastal Management regulations say any building with more than 5,000 square feet must be set back at least 120 feet from the first line of vegetation.

"My understanding of the situation concerning square footage is that our people did not realize that total square footage in the building was a factor, only the footprint," Fournier said in a written report.

Commissioner Dwight Carroll, who was building inspector when the office was constructed in the fall of 1992, said Monday there was no intent on his part to violate any rules.

"I had no knowledge of it whatsoever until a month ago," Carroll said of the setback

*"It was a goof and now it's in CAMA's hands."*  
—Dwight Carroll

violation. "It's just in CAMA's hands. It was a goof and now it's in CAMA's hands." Said Commissioner Sid Swarts, "We were wrong. We approved that building for more than 5,000 square feet and it's a violation. It was wrong. We can't shrink it."

The town committee was appointed last month at the request of Coastal Manage-

ment district manager Bob Stroud after his agency received a complaint from Holden Beach homeowner C.H. Osborn.

Osborn, whose house is next door to the Coastal Development office, raised several concerns about the commercial building in a Feb. 28 letter to Coastal Management.

Fournier said Brunswick County Health Department officials are looking into Osborn's allegations that the septic system is overloaded and pavement was illegally placed over part of the septic tank area.

Regarding Osborn's other complaints, Fournier said town records indicate the homeowner was notified prior to construction.

Also, Fournier said there was no violation of the town's five-foot side yard setback requirement and no violation regarding contractors used to build the office.

"All I tried to do was present the facts as we found them...We are presenting facts. We are not calling for any assumption of blame or anything," Fournier said of the two-page committee report.

"As far as any enforcement authority we have, I don't know what it is. We don't enforce CAMA regulations and we don't enforce health department regulations," Fournier said.

Commissioners asked Town Manager (See P.5B, Page 2-A)

# THE WICK BEACON

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STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC CARLSON

## Making Friends

Fred Karger of Southport feeds a carrot to Charlie, one of three horses who entertained residents at the Autumn Care Nursing Home in Shalotte Friday morning. The show was organized by Charlie's owner, Autumn Care Administrator Terri Hill (center), to recognize National Nursing Home Week. Residents also enjoyed a Mother's Day tea, a quilt show, a wheel chair parade, cookouts and bingo games as part of the week's festivities.

# Schools Encouraged By 4th Grade Writing Test Results

**BY SUSAN USHER**

Brunswick County's younger students are writing more and, judging from the latest state assessment results, expressing themselves better.

Fourth grade students were asked to write the same kind of composition as last year's fourth grade, a personal narrative. This year 36.9 percent of the students received average or better scores, compared to 21.4 percent last year. This year's scores are above the statewide average of 34.3 percent.

"We were very pleased with the fourth grade results; they indicate growth," said Gloria Talley, director of staff development and assessment. "These are children who have been exposed to print since kindergarten."

"I think it's what we've been doing in the classroom. This is reaffirmation that the things we are doing are paying off. I hope it will filter on up."

"Students are writing more—I would say every day—and teachers are creating an atmosphere in which they are willing to take risks with their writing," said Talley.

She said the State Board of Education feels that if students can read and write well they can do well in other areas. That philosophy is reflected in administering the writing tests. Teachers cannot read the prompt to any student.

Generally, Brunswick County eighth grade students are showing improved or steady performance from year to year in their ability to express themselves through the various types of writing tested by the state.

Local scores generally reflect statewide trends. "Our scores tend to go up when the state's go up and down when the state's go down," said Talley.

Since 1985-86, the first year eighth graders were tested, eighth graders achieving standard (2.5) scores on persuasive writing have increased from 13.9 percent in 1985-86 to 75.1 percent in 1989-90, 55.7

Grade 4 <sup>o</sup> Personal Narrative	
State	34.3
County	36.9
Union	34.1
W. Brunswick	40.4
Supply	45.8
Southport	42.2
Leland	41.3
Grade 6 Clarification	
State	48.3
County	48.8
Stanly	44.8
W. Brunswick	39.4
Leland	33.3
South Brunswick	37.6
Grade 8 Persuasive	
State	57.4
County	54.1
W. Brunswick	53.7
W. Brunswick	56.7
Leland	75.3
South Brunswick	57.7

*Scores are reported as the percent of students tested who scored 2.5 or higher on a scale of 1-4.*

The state curriculum focuses on teaching personal or imaginative narrative writing in fourth grade, clarification and descriptive writing in sixth grade, and the more complex point of view and persuasive writing in eighth grade.

Students do not know which of the two types of writing they study that year will appear on the writing test and are expected to be proficient in both.

In the writing process taught in the county schools, students are taught to concentrate on getting their ideas down on paper, then editing.

On the annual tests, students at all grade levels were expected to write in complete paragraphs and use good sentences, with correct grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Students weren't penalized on their composition score for errors in mechanics, but received a separate proficiency rating.

On the 1993-94 test, fourth grade students were asked to write a personal narrative exposition, telling a story "about a time you enjoyed with a friend." They were directed to make sure the story had a beginning, a middle and an end.

Sixth graders were asked to "think about a time when you felt 'proud' of yourself. Name the time and explain why you felt proud of yourself." They were to write a clarification composition, giving at least two reasons why they felt proud and explaining those reasons.

Eighth graders were given this persuasive writing prompt: "The manager of the mall is considering a mall policy which will state that teenagers under the age of fifteen may not be in the mall without an adult chaperone. Much of the shoplifting and property damage has been attributed to teenagers.

"Write a letter to the manager of the mall telling him/her whether you agree or disagree with the policy. Persuade the manager to take the action you want taken." They were to give at least two different reasons in (See GRADE 4, Page 2-A)

## YELTON RETURNS TO HOSPITAL

# Brunswick Hires 'Professional Temp' As Interim Manager

**BY ERIC CARLSON**

With little fanfare and a sigh of relief, Brunswick Commissioners Monday voted unanimously to hire a professional temporary administrator to oversee county government until hospitalized County Manager Wyman Yelton can return to work.

The new administrator, Charles Donald McGinnis, is a North Carolina native and former manager of Cabarrus, Catawba and Gaston counties who has worked as a replacement manager in government and business while under contract with a Boston, Mass., administrative temporary service.

The commissioners agreed to pay McGinnis \$270 a day for a minimum of 30 days, after which he will serve at the pleasure of the board until Yelton is well enough to resume his duties.

Commissioners Chairman Don Warren told the board at Monday's meeting that he visited Yelton in Rex Hospital in Raleigh Sunday. Yelton had been recovering at a skilled nursing facility, but had to be returned to hospital care due to a fluid buildup in his lungs, Warren said.

Yelton was seriously injured in an Easter Sunday head-on collision on Interstate 40 in Durham that claimed the life of his wife and a University

of North Carolina coed. He is expected to be out of work at least until late summer.



McGINNIS

McGinnis began work as Yelton's temporary replacement Tuesday morning. He said he plans to meet with county department heads this week and to begin reviewing proposals for the 1994-95 budget, which is scheduled for presentation to the commissioners early next month.

"It's going to be a cram course," McGinnis said. "I'll be trying to find out as much as I can as quickly as I can." It's a task McGinnis has undertaken many times under his contract with Project and Interim Management Executives Inc. (PRIME). His most recent assignment with the company was a seven-month stint as interim manager for the City of Mount Holly.

McGinnis has also worked for

PRIME as temporary manager of Anson County and a management consultant for Lee County, Va. His private industry assignments have included work as an interim administrator for Anson Memorial Hospital in Wadesboro and as a sales representative for the Gastonia firm of Megathon, Inc.

Before going to work for PRIME, McGinnis was the permanent manager of Cabarrus County for 11 years. He has also worked as county manager of Gaston and Catawba counties.

## Assault Suspect May Be Serial Rapist: Detectives

**BY ERIC CARLSON**

Local detectives believe that a man arrested on rape charges in Onslow County recently may be a serial rapist who sexually assaulted and mutilated a Wilmington woman earlier this month and who may be responsible for at least one other rape in Brunswick County.

The suspect, Russell Lee Kirk, 33, of Chadwick's Mobile Home Park in Leland, has

charged here with four counts of first-degree sexual offense and one charge each of first-degree rape, first-degree kidnapping and assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury, Brunswick County Sheriff's Detective Steve Mason said Tuesday.

Kirk is accused of picking up a prostitute at her home in Wilmington, driving her to Navassa and forcing her to perform multiple sex acts while threatening to kill her with a razor knife, Mason said.

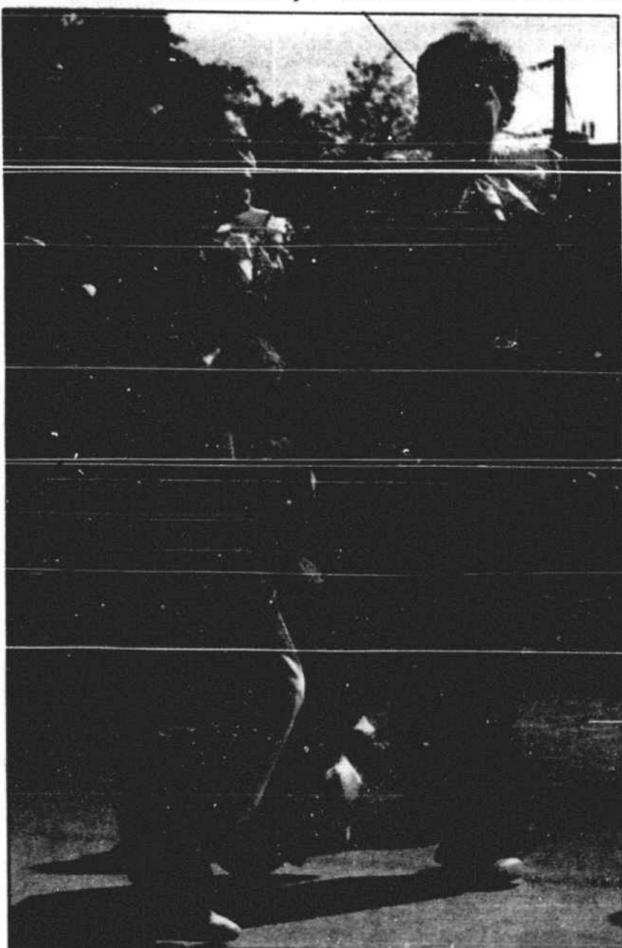
During her four-hour ordeal, Mason said Kirk used the knife to cut off a portion of the victim's breast.

Originally from Ocala, Fla., Kirk also resided in Virginia and Ohio before moving to Leland. Mason has issued a bulletin on the police computer network requesting information from authorities in those states regarding any unsolved sexual assault cases that resemble Kirk's al-

(See ASSAULT, Page 2-A)

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STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

## In Perfect Harmony

Harmony, the West Brunswick High School Show Choir, entertains students, teachers and volunteers during a program last week at Union Elementary School. Pictured are singers/dancers Heather Branch and Scott Sellers.