

# Grade 4 Writing Scores Exceed State Average

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support of their argument and to explain those reasons.

Scores were on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 indicating the composition exhibited "a lack of command" of the writing form, 2, "exhibited a weakness," 3, "exhibited reasonable command," and 4, showed a "strong command."

A 2.5 is considered standard or average by the state and the Brunswick County Schools, said Talley.

"If my child got a 2.5 I wouldn't worry about his writing ability," said Talley. "All of us want our children to get a 4—a student at that level is very well equipped."

The tests were scored by teams of trained readers who read the compositions once using a method called "focused holistic scoring." Their focus was on how profi-

ciently the student integrated composition elements such as main idea, supporting details, organization and coherence, or logical flow, as they related to the composition type. Readers did not know the identity of the student writer or where the student went to school.

The readers also rated each student's proficiency in conventions such as sentence formation, usage, and mechanics such as spelling (errors in common one-syllable words of six or fewer letters), punctuation and capitalization. A plus sign means the composition showed evidence that the writer has a "reasonable and acceptable" level of proficiency, a minus sign that the writer does not have that.

In addition to the state-administered tests, this year, for the second consecutive year, Brunswick County ad-

ministered its own writing test to third, fifth and seventh grades, using prompts from old state tests for the next grade level.

This testing gives students experience taking the writing test, and helps teachers identify weaknesses in their language instruction.

Talley said the school system doesn't want its teachers focusing on bringing up the scores of just a handful of students, which would be one way to bring up the county's overall writing scores.

"We want to bring all of the students up," she said. "This year we gave the writings back to the teachers so they could see what each child needs to work on in their writing."

Those compositions will become part of the portfolio passed on to the student's teacher next year.

This year local teachers learned to score the tests themselves using the same technique the state employs. The experience increased their respect for the process and the accuracy of its results.

"We felt really good about it," said Talley. "We plan to train a new group of teachers this coming year and will expand it to include principals."

Talley said she is also pleased with the ways principals and teachers are "looking deeper" at their school's data and asking more questions. "They're using the feedback in the right way, to improve instruction. They are trying to identify things that are happening in classrooms that produce results."

## Brunswick To Consider Power-Generating Garbage Disposal

BY ERIC CARLSON

Brunswick County will consider joining three other area counties in a regional high-tech garbage disposal system that would eliminate the need for a local landfill while sorting recyclable materials and burning most of what's left for fuel.

After hearing a presentation on the waste disposal system, the county commissioners on Monday asked representatives of the Vedco Energy Corp. to return with a detailed estimate of what it would cost for Brunswick County to join Bladen, Cumberland and Hoke counties in their "BCH Energy Project."

The waste-to-energy system under construction outside Fayetteville will remove plastics, aluminum and other metals from garbage hauled to the site from participating counties. The combustible materials—mostly paper—will be burned in a high-efficiency boiler to generate electricity for a nearby DuPont plant. Only 10 percent of the solid waste will have to be buried in a Cumberland County landfill, Vedco officials told the board.

Brunswick County must find a new place to dispose of its garbage by 1998. It will also be required to come up with a plan to reduce the amount of landfill waste through recycling.

County Engineer Robert Tucker on Monday presented a comparison

**Brunswick County must find a new place to dispose of its garbage by 1998**

study of three solid waste disposal alternatives currently under consideration.

The first—and least expensive—option would be to develop a replacement landfill, Tucker said.

However, the county's efforts to find a new dumping ground have already raised concerns from people who live near the proposed sites. More intense political pressure is certain to arise as the choices are narrowed toward a final selection.

Option "B" would be to sign a contract with ARS Waste Management, Inc., to dispose of county garbage at a regional landfill proposed in Columbus County. Unfortunately, a suitable location has yet to be found for the operation and public opposition has already scuttled one proposed site.

The third possibility would be to enter into an agreement with Vedco to join in the BCH project. This option "would get Brunswick County out of the landfill business," Tucker said. But it would also cost more than the other two alternatives.

The estimated fees that would be

required to pay for an in-county landfill amount to about \$38 per ton for the first year, climbing to \$48 after 10 years, Tucker said. Option "B" is projected to require a \$40 tipping fee the first year, increasing to nearly \$57 ten years later.

Paying Vedco for waste disposal would cost about \$44 per ton the first year and more than \$62 per ton after 10 years, Tucker said. But he also noted that this option might save the county money in long-term recycling costs.

The state has established the goal of a 40 percent reduction in waste by the year 2001.

"Option 'C' provides for a simple and effective means to provide uniform recycling opportunities to all of Brunswick County citizens at a reasonable cost," he said. "Use of either Alternative 'A' or 'B' will provide for disposal of wastes, but will not enhance the county's recycling system."

Vedco representatives said they believe that the county might be underestimating its cost for constructing a new landfill and operating it in compliance with new recycling requirements. They offered to return and make a more detailed presentation of the company's program at a future meeting.

The commissioners voted unanimously to meet with the company and consider its proposal.

## Assault Suspect Held Here Fits Serial Rapist Profile, Police Say

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leged method of attack.

"I believe this guy fits the profile of a serial rapist," Mason said.

Acting on information provided by the victim, Mason and Detective Ken Messer obtained a warrant for Kirk's arrest. But when they went to his trailer to pick him up, the officers learned that Kirk had been arrested in Jacksonville on a charge of first-degree rape.

Mason said Onslow County authorities told him that Kirk went to a local massage parlor and raped one of the employees. He was being held there in lieu of a \$100,000 bond.

In a search of Kirk's residence and pickup truck, Mason said he and Messer found evidence linking the suspect to the Brunswick County case, including a razor-blade type box cutter believed to be the weapon used.

The victim was able to identify Kirk and his pickup truck in photographic line-ups, Masons said. Photos for the line-up were provided by authorities in New Hanover County, where Kirk was released on \$5,000 bond after being arrested on a charge of armed robbery for allegedly holding up a convenience store with a blue steel revolver, Mason said.

The detectives brought Kirk back to Brunswick County, where he made a first appearance in district court Friday. Bond was set at \$1 million.

Since then, Mason has learned that another Brunswick County

woman has accused Kirk of stalking her and raping her twice while choking and threatening to kill her.

"She didn't come forward earlier because she was scared. She knew him and was afraid that he would hurt her," Mason said. "She said he stalked her like she was prey."

The victim of the more recent assault says Kirk picked her up in Wilmington at about 3 p.m. and offered to pay her for sex, Mason said.

Kirk drove to a secluded area of Navassa, where things allegedly got rough.

Mason said Kirk allegedly pulled out the razor knife, forced her to perform numerous sex acts against her will and then cut her.

When she told him she needed to go to the hospital, he said he would end it for her right now," Mason said. "She thought she was going to be killed."

Kirk then told the woman he wanted to make a videotape and forced her into his pickup truck,

Mason said. He allegedly gave her a shirt to stop her bleeding and threw her clothes out the truck window on the way to Leland.

After stopping the truck in a cemetery on Lincoln School Road,

Kirk raped the woman and left her there with nothing but her shoes and a pair of stockings, Mason said.

She escaped on foot to a nearby church.

A woman there gave her clothing

and called 911 at about 7:15 p.m.

The victim was treated at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, where she was given tests for sexual assault and was interviewed by a rape counselor, Mason said.

Kirk is described as a white male, 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighing 185 pounds, with reddish-brown hair, a mustache and blue eyes. He has a cross tattooed on his upper left shoulder and a "Zig-Zag man" tattooed on his upper right shoulder. Kirk also has a mole below his navel, Mason said.

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