

Potpourri Of Fine Arts

Guests at Shallotte Middle School's Fine Arts Fair Saturday morning enjoyed a potpourri of the arts, including an eighth grade handbell choir performance directed by music teacher Atheda Lusk-Watson (above) and print-making by eighth grader Robin White (right), who was selling the prints to raise money for art department supplies. Performing with the handbell choir were (from left) Adam Edwards, James Norley Woods, James Wemyss, David Batten, Brett Henly and (not pictured) Joe Bell, Joey Ward, Brett Danford, Jeremy Hewett, Matthew Darby, Shane Stanley and Robert Stanley. Also performing were the school choruses and bands, the seventh grade handbell choir and the SMS Recorder Consort. French students sold crepes at a "sidewalk cafe."

STAFF PHOTOS BY SUSAN USHER



Bill Allows Board To Transfer Leland Site To County For Collateral

BY SUSAN USHER

Paying for a public school on the installment plan is more complicated than it first seems.

That's why state Rep. David Redwine is involved once again in county efforts to finance and build a new K-5 elementary school in Leland.

Brunswick County Commissioners plan to pay for the new school by issuing \$5.5 million in certificates of participation that would be placed with a commercial bank and repaid on a five-year installment plan.

Only challenge is, while the commissioners have the financing authority, the school board owns the property needed as security for the loan. It purchased a 32-acre site on River Road from the N.C. State Ports Authority (with some behind-the-scenes help from Redwine and others) this spring on which to build the 83,000-square-foot facility.

Only cities and counties—not boards of education—can finance projects on the installment plan under North Carolina state law.

Commissioners don't have the legal authority to acquire the school system's property. In turn, the school system can legally convey property to the county only if it finds the property to be surplus or unnecessary for public educational purposes, which isn't the case.

Redwine's House Bill 1926, which should be considered by the House Finance Committee sometime this week, addresses both concerns, and once passed, should allow the project to proceed.

It would add Brunswick to the list of 13 counties that have statutory authority to acquire property, by a variety of means, for use by the local board of education.

It also would allow the board of education (in Brunswick County on-

ly) to:

enter into a contract for erection or repair of school buildings upon sites owned by the county;

lease or sell its property to the board of county commissioners "for any price negotiated between the two boards," regardless of whether that property has been declared surplus or found unnecessary for educational purposes. The sale or lease must be in connection with additions, improvements, renovations or repairs to the property or to some part of the property.

Once construction or improvement loans have been paid off, the county would be expected to return the property to the schools, though that isn't specified in the bill.

"There is no reason for them to hold on to it once it's paid for," said Redwine, who noted that a bill to provide for that could be introduced later if needed.

School board members approved the commercial financing of the project after commissioners agreed to reduce the loan period to five years. While most of the money will be repaid through state half-cent sales tax revenues, the school board has asked the county to begin committing local property tax revenues to a separate fund to help pay for future school construction needs.

The new Leland Elementary School is just the first item on a list of capital projects the school board says will be required to keep pace with the county's population growth. A new elementary school in southwestern Brunswick County is expected to be one of the next projects.

The school system had anticipated opening Leland Elementary School for the 1995-96 fall term, easing overcrowded conditions at both Lincoln Primary and Leland Middle schools.

Density Control Plan Fizzles At Holden Beach

BY DOUG RUTTER

The Holden Beach Planning and Zoning Board's recommended density control regulations were not exactly met with rave reviews by town residents and commissioners.

"I think planning and zoning needs to work on this from my point of view," Commissioner David Sandifer said of the proposal to limit the number of people who live and vacation on the island.

"I've had no one call me that was in favor of this," added Commissioner Marlaine Thomas, adding that several people have called to say the plan is too restrictive.

The proposal to further limit the size of houses built on Holden Beach was presented to town commissioners after about 1½ years of off-and-on work by the planning board.

"I think all we've given you is someplace to start," Planning Board Vice Chairman Jim Shafor explained at the May 25 town meeting. "We looked at 1,000 different things from putting a gate up to eliminating kids."

Commissioners took no action on the five-page proposal, and indicated that planners still have a lot of work to do before the board will accept their recommendations.

Currently, town code says the "footprint" of the house may not cover more than 30 percent of the platted lot area. A 50-by-100-foot lot can accommodate a home as large as 3,000 square feet.

The planning board's proposal is to limit the roofed portion of the house to 30 percent of the lot's actual square footage, as measured from setback lines established by state and federal agencies.

An 1,800-square-foot house would be the largest house allowable on a 5,000-square-foot lot.

On canal and marsh lots where 20-foot setbacks are required, houses could be no larger than 1,440 square feet.

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"A lot of people bought lots thinking they could build a certain size house. Changing it now is seen as unfair by some." —Town Manager Gus Ulrich

Gus Ulrich said Friday.

Commissioner Jim Fournier suggested last Wednesday the planning board consider how much density the island can support—an idea suggested earlier in the meeting by resident Crawford Hart.

Even though some real estate developers and builders may not accept it, Fournier said there's a limit to how many people an eight-mile-long island can accommodate.

"It's something we have to look at whether they like it or not," he said.

Several residents commented on the density control proposal at last week's meeting, and none were favorable.

Conrad West said changing the lot coverage allowance "smacks of overkill" and there "needs to be a fairness applied when changing a set of rules."

West suggested the town use the number of bedrooms, not the size of the home, to control population. Further limiting the size of homes will prevent permanent residents from building dens or family rooms, he said.

"I think we have enough restrictions for now," West said. "All these things are turnoffs for our island for renters, developers and permanent home purchasers."

Said Andy Watson, "What you're running into is they don't want another building on this island and they're doing everything they can to stop it. The only time you have a viable community is when you're growing."

Mayor Gay Atkins also read a letter from a homeowner who favors controls on growth, but is opposed to the planning board's proposal.

New Recycling Site
Holden Beach's recycling station

will be moving about 120 feet from its present site on Rothschild Street to the east side of the water tower.

Commissioners have approved a lease agreement with Holden Beach Enterprises to use a 60-by-100-foot tract on the north side of Brunswick Avenue across from the town's public works garage.

The agreement requires the town to erect a fence and keep the area "clean and neat at all times."

Holden Beach will pay \$10 per year for use of the land, and commissioners have agreed to hold the landowner harmless for any actions arising out of the town's use of the property.

The town or owner may terminate the lease by giving the other party 60 days notice. Ulrich said Holden Beach Enterprises wanted the termination clause because the property is on the market.

The term of the initial lease is one year, and the agreement will automatically be renewed each year unless the town or owner notifies the other party of its intent not to renew.

Sidewalk Construction

Commissioners voted 3-2 to halt east-end sidewalk construction at Jordan Boulevard, instead of continuing toward the bridge. Sid Swarts and Dwight Carroll dissented.

Ulrich is working on sidewalk plans in the bridge area. In the meantime, workers will start building sidewalk from Swordfish Drive to Shell Drive at the west end of the island.

Schools Auction Brings In \$8,506

An auction of surplus equipment by the Brunswick County Board of Education Saturday yielded \$8,506 in revenues.

"We had a wonderful day, a prosperous day, with good weather and a happy crowd," said Pam Dean, who coordinated the event.

Used cafeteria equipment brought in the most money per item, she said, while several pedal-operated sewing machines in wooden cabinets sold for less than anticipated.

After expenses which include a 10 percent fee to auctioneer Douglas Fite and \$1,000 building rental, the balance will go to the schools' general fund.

Dean said she thought having the items well-displayed helped boost sales. Several part-time employees worked nights to get all items off the floor and on tables or racks.

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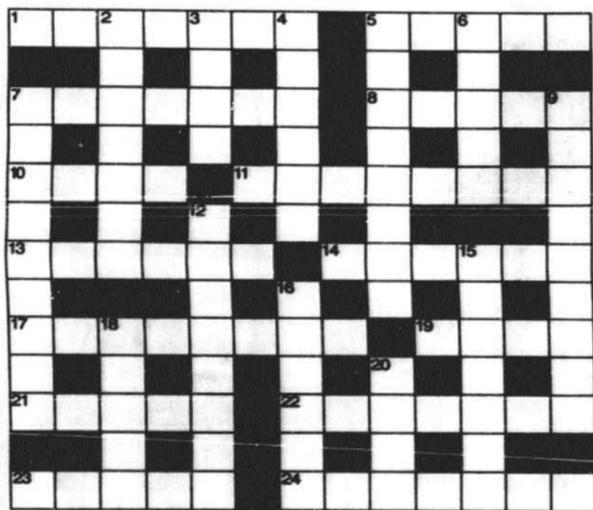


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CLUES ACROSS

1. Prohibition
5. Portents
7. Hamlet
8. Melodies
10. Requirement
11. Reprimand
13. Items for discussion
14. Blitzed
17. Alone
19. Prison (British)
21. Corn
22. Affect strongly
23. Pardon
24. Attempted

CLUES DOWN

2. Trust
3. Meander
4. Carry too far
5. Conventional
6. Boredom
7. Wanton damage
9. Timetables
12. Close by
15. Courage
16. Contraption
18. General dislike
20. Musical composition

(Answers are on Page 9-C)

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