

# Shallotte Aldermen Opposing Proposed ABC Store In Ash

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shallotte officials say they feel the Brunswick County ABC Board did them wrong four years ago when it opened the first county-operated liquor store on Holden Beach Road.

Town ABC revenues dropped more than 60 percent the year after the county store opened—a reflection of how much business the county store took away from the town.

Now Shallotte officials are fuming over the idea that the county ABC board is considering opening another store in the Ash area between Shallotte and the county line.

"If they open that store in Ash and it impacts us as much as the one at Holden Beach did, we might as well close our store," Mayor Sarah Tripp said Tuesday.

Dot Kelly, manager of Brunswick County's Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) system, said the county board will probably decide within the next few months where its third store will be located.

In addition to the Holden Beach Road location, the county operates an ABC store on U.S. 74-76 near the county line.

## Shallotte Revenue From ABC Store

YEAR	AMOUNT
1986-87	\$79,899
1987-88	\$51,000
1988-89	\$55,098
1989-90	\$71,900
1990-91	\$64,900
1991-92	\$24,000
1992-93	\$24,000
1993-94	\$24,000
1994-95	\$20,000

\*From 1994-95 budget

Although a specific site for a new store has not been decided, Kelly said the board has agreed that it should be in Ash. "They've decided on that much, to serve the people in that area," she said.

Shallotte officials hope the county board changes its mind. Town aldermen adopted a resolution last week opposing the opening of any new county ABC stores in the Shallotte area, including Ash.

With municipal ABC stores at

Sunset Beach and Ocean Isle Beach and the county store serving Holden Beach, Tripp said Ash is one of the few areas left that uses the Shallotte store.

Shallotte's revenues from its ABC store have plunged since the county store on Holden Beach Road opened in mid-1990.

In the five years prior to the opening of the county store, Shallotte received an average of \$64,359 in annual ABC store revenues.

The town has received \$24,000 each of the last three years, and officials anticipate only \$20,000 this fiscal year.

"Our income from the store came way down when the one at Holden Beach opened," Tripp said. "That's a lot of money to lose in a short time."

Tripp said the county ABC board has not contacted the town about the plan to open a new store.

"I hope they will listen to us and realize before they do it," she said. "I really and truly do not think they take into account the impact to the stores in the municipalities when they put them out in the country like that."

Kelly said liquor sales have gone "very, very well" at the county's two existing ABC stores. She could not provide sales figures for the 1993-94

fiscal year that ended June 30.

Brunswick County Commissioner Tom Rabon, who represents Ash, said Tuesday that he was not aware of the county ABC board's plans to open a store in his district.

"It's complete news to me," Rabon said. "I haven't heard any pros or cons to that. I don't have any idea what the local populace would think."

Mayor Tripp, who was brought up in Ash, said, "I've talked to some people around Ash and they don't particularly want it."

Kelly said the county ABC board is not considering any areas other than Ash as potential store sites at this time.

## Calabash Planning Board Reschedules

The meeting of the Calabash Planning and Zoning Board scheduled for July 4 has been rescheduled to Monday, July 18, at 7 p.m. in the town hall, according to Chairman Al Smith.

There will be a meeting of the planning and zoning board on Monday, July 11, to review the town's Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) land use plan update, at 7 p.m. in the town hall.

## Holden Hires New Attorney

Holden Beach Commissioners have hired Elva Jess of Southport as the new town attorney—a move they say will save money while also giving the town a lawyer more experienced in municipal affairs.

The town board voted unanimously in favor of the move after interviewing Jess during a special meeting last Friday morning. The interview was conducted in closed session.

Jess replaces Ken Campbell of Southport, who had served as Holden Beach's town attorney since January 1990.

Jess is the town attorney at Ocean Isle Beach, Boiling Spring Lakes and Caswell Beach and is the attorney for the Brunswick County Department of Social Services.

"We decided to change to another law firm and felt possibly someone that was working with some of the other beach towns might be more in tune with what we needed now," Mayor Gay Atkins said.

Atkins compared the decision to a recent change in accounting firms. "It's just kind of to get a different perspective, nothing wrong with the law firm. Ken is a really nice person and we enjoyed working with him."

The move will save money for Holden Beach. The town will pay Jess a \$300 monthly retainer and \$75 per hour. Campbell's fees were \$500 per month plus \$75 per hour.

Jess is a partner in the Southport law firm Fairley, Jess & Isenberg. Michael Isenberg is the town attorney at Sunset Beach, and William Fairley works with Bald Head Island.

## Rescuer Needed Rescuing In Sunset Beach Incident

BY SUSAN USHER

A Rockingham man who attempted to rescue a boy from drowning at Sunset Beach ran into trouble himself Saturday evening.

Between 7:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, in the swimming area near the Sunset Beach Pier and access area, Fred Metton, 38, went into the ocean with the intent of helping a panicked youth who had apparently been caught in an undertow offshore.

"Then the man got pulled under himself and some other people had to go to his rescue," said Sunset Beach Police Officer Anna Dosio, reciting a scenario all too familiar to Brunswick County emergency personnel during the summer season.

She responded to the scene along with Sunset Beach Volunteer Fire Department first responders, Calabash EMS, Brunswick County EMS and Ocean Isle Beach VFD's Water

Rescue Team.

When Sunset Beach first responders arrived, said Asst. Chief T.J. Lyke, a first responder, Metton was already on the beach strand. "He was conscious, but drowsy," Lyke said. "We treated him there and Brunswick EMS started advanced life support."

Calabash EMS transported Metton to The Brunswick Hospital, where he received further care and was held overnight for observation and released Sunday, said Chief Executive Officer Mark Gregson of the hospital.

Metton stopped by the Sunset Beach Police Department to thank Dosio and let her see that he was fine.

"He looked a lot better," she said. As for the boy Metton set out to help, "We don't have any idea what happened to him," reported Lyke. "He swam off."

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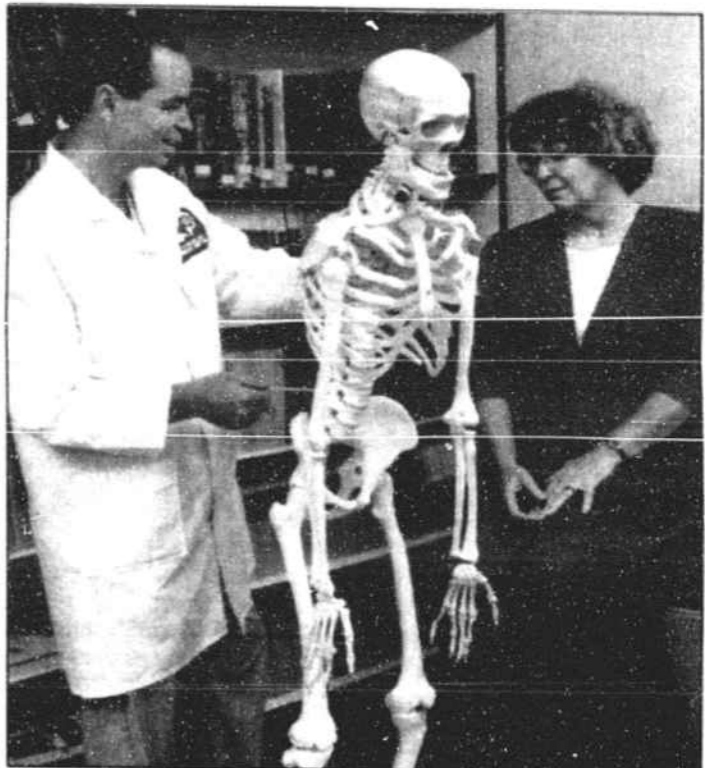
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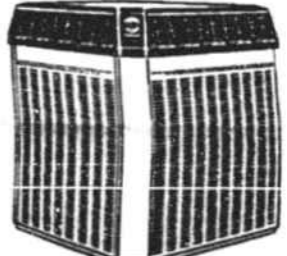
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