

THE STATE PORT PILOT

A Good Newspaper In A Good Community

VOLUME 46 NUMBER 16 18 PAGES TODAY

SOUTHPORT, NORTH CAROLINA

NOVEMBER 6, 1974

10 CENTS A COPY

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

GOP Board Ousted, Strong Easy Victor

*-Brown, Bennett Wins Easily
-Unofficial Returns, Page 18*

By BILL ALLEN
Tuesday was a miserable day for Republicans in Brunswick County!

After four years in the wilderness, the Democrats, riding a state and national tide, swept almost all the Republicans out of office during the general election. Herman Strong, Jack Brown, Lowell Bennett, W.T. Russ, Jr., Steve Varnam, Franky Thomas, Willie Sloan and Ira Butler, Jr., rolled up almost landslide margins of victory.

Sheriff Harold Willetts and members of the board of commissioners were driven from office by a wave of Democrat votes coming from almost all precincts in the county.

Board of Elections Executive Secretary Linda Babson estimated that about 62 percent of the registered

voters in Brunswick County cast ballots Tuesday. Chairman Lester Babson said the percentage is the highest he can remember during the 33 years he has served on the board.

All totals printed in The Pilot this week are unofficial. The official totals will not be known until the Board of Elections conducts the canvass Thursday morning starting at 11 o'clock at the Courthouse in Southport. Republicans blamed the defeats on a split party, Watergate and "poor organizational work."

The newly-elected officials will take office the first Monday in December.

Strong pulled off one of the major surprises when he defeated Willetts, who has held office the past eight years, by 872 votes in what was predicted to be a close

race for sheriff.

Strong, who has served as police chief of Southport for about 10 years, rolled up 4,794 votes while Willetts had 3,922.

The Democratic candidate for sheriff took 13 precincts while Willetts was ahead in seven. However, Strong won most of his precincts with large margins while Willetts won his in fairly close races. He even held Willetts to a 399-to-203 winning margin in Willetts' home precinct in Bolivia.

In fact, Strong rolled up more votes in the first 18 precincts that reported than Willetts had when he was re-elected four years ago.

Brown, who has served as clerk of court for past 20 years, headed the Democratic ticket in Brunswick County.

The veteran clerk took every precinct in the county except Waccamaw and ran up a total of 5,824 votes. He had a 3,046 victory bulge over James (Jim) Jeffreys, Jr., who polled 2,778.

Bennett, seeking his fifth term as coroner, also won big. He took 18 precincts and 4,921 votes while Larry Andrews had 2,597.

The Democratic challengers for seats on the board of commissioners had no trouble knocking out the incumbent Republicans, who held all five positions for the past four years.

W.T. Russ, Jr., who is associated with a family automobile dealership, and

Steve J. Varnum, a seafood dealer, topped the ticket for board seats. Both men polled 4,710 votes.

Russ, who is from Shallotte Township, jumped into an early lead and was top man most of the night. But Varnam, who started slowly in the early returns and was running fourth after eight precincts reported, came on

(Continued On Page 4)

County Backs State Winners

Brunswick County Democrats, who won all local races, also scored victories on both the district and state levels in the general election Tuesday.

Democrat Allen Ward had an easy time defeating Ron Dunn for the 11th house district seat in the General Assembly representing Brunswick and Pender Counties. Ward, an oil dealer, received 7,723 votes in the two counties and Dunn 3,019. Ward picked up 5,633 votes in Brunswick and 2,090 in Pender. Dunn received 2,187 in Brunswick and 832 in Pender.

Ed Nye of Bladen County defeated Worth Mercer of Columbus County for the 11th district senate seat in the General Assembly. Nye received 11,102 in the three counties and Mercer 7,250. He won Brunswick County 5,214 to 2,347.

Democrat Robert Morgan, who won state-wide, had no trouble defeating Republican William Stevens in Brunswick County 5,588 to 2,399. Labor Party candidate Rudolph Newsmith had only 84.

Brunswick County also gave its support to Democrat Rufus Edmisten who defeated appointed incumbent Republican James Carson state-wide. Edmisten gained 4,953 votes in the county while Carson had 2,694 with Shallotte precinct not reporting. Labor Party candidate Marion Porter had 137.

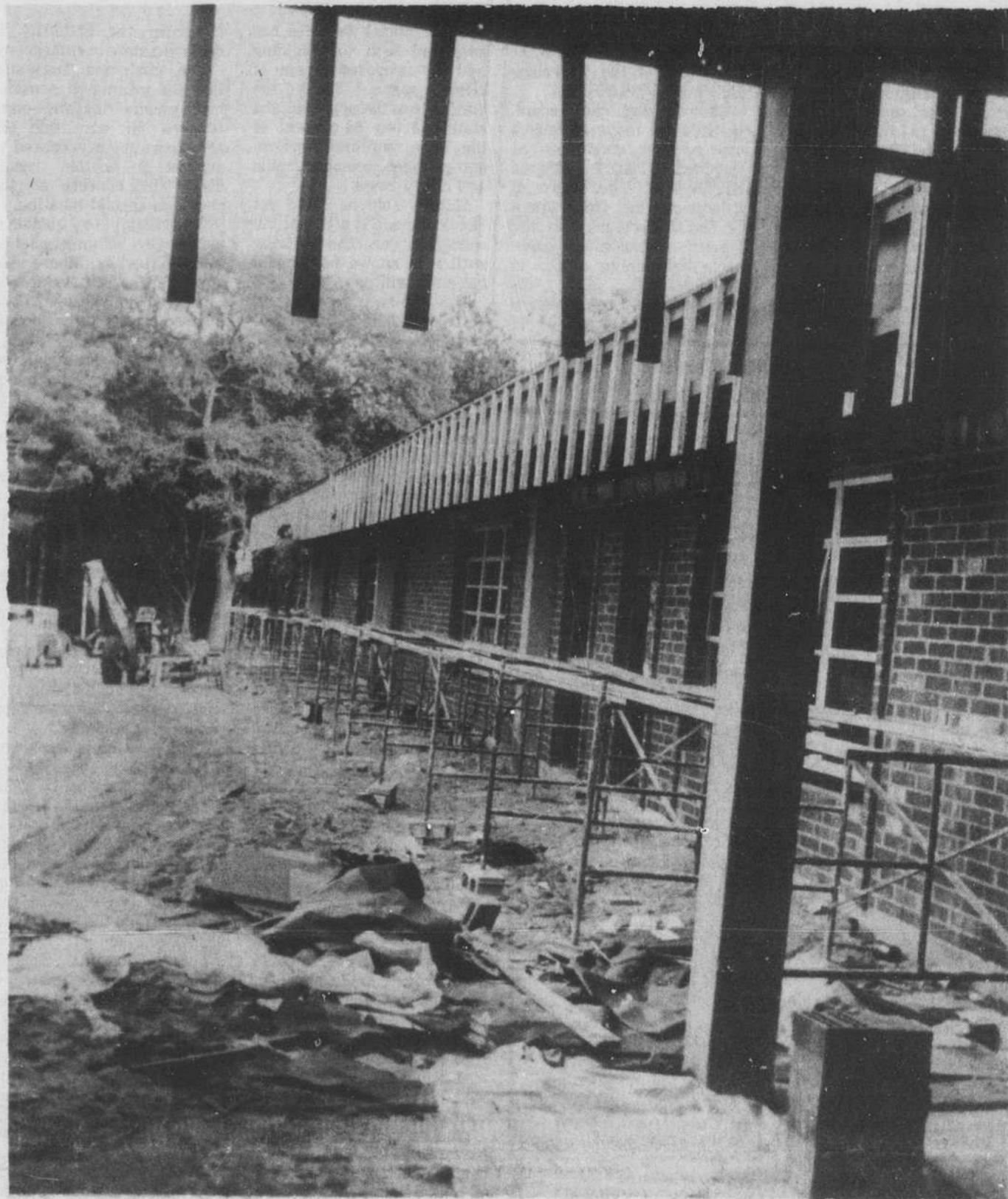
Democrat J. Wilton Hunt was elected judge in the 13th judicial district. He defeated Ralph G. Jorgensen 4,998 to 2,281 in Brunswick County. Lee Greer, running unopposed, was elected solicitor of the 13th district. He polled 5,502 votes in Brunswick County.

Although returns are not available, it is believed that all 33 Democratic candidates for judges running in Brunswick County won.

The county went along with the state in approving constitutional amendment one changing the name of the solicitor to district attorney. The vote was 3,294 "yes" and 1,904 "no" in the county with two precincts not reporting.

Although constitutional amendment two about industrial bonds was defeated in the state, it was approved in Brunswick County with two precincts not reporting. A total of 2,492 voters supported the bonds here and 2,191 voted in opposition.

James D. Bellamy, Jr., Harold C. Robinson and Bryan R. Smith, running unopposed in the non-partisan Brunswick County Soil and Water supervisor's race, were elected. But the totals were not available at press time.



THERE IS NO DOUBT that the new Southport Primary School will be ready for occupancy next fall — not with the progress shown during recent weeks at the site in the northwest sector of town.

The new facility will accommodate all primary-grade children, making unnecessary the mobile units that many have used throughout the early school years.

Kopp Reimbursed

Public Taxed For Injunction

The North Carolina Attorney General's office has said that Brunswick County taxpayers "may" pay the court costs involved in the Open Meetings injunction.

Mrs. Carole Greene, clerk to the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners, said she received a letter from Associate Attorney General Richard F. Kane saying the money to pay the court costs can come from tax money.

"In response to your letter of October 30, 1974, this office is of the opinion that Brunswick County may provide for the cost of defending its employees or officers for acts or omissions done or made in the course and scope of their employment," Kane said in a letter to Mrs. Greene.

Mrs. Greene wrote the Attorney General's office last week to determine the "meaning of the court order." The judgment order said that the court costs should be "taxed against the defendants individually and as the Board of Commissioners."

County Budget Officer Regina McKeithan said the county will pay the full court costs involved in the Open Meetings injunction because of the ruling from the Attorney General's office.

Mrs. McKeithan said the county will send the Clerk of Court's office a check for \$1,451.54 next week when bills are paid. Payment of the costs will remove the judgment against the commissioners involved in the action.

In addition, she said the county will send Chairman William Kopp, Jr., a check for \$362.90. Shortly after the bill was presented, Chairman Kopp went to the clerk's office and paid \$362.90, which was one-fifth of the total cost.

Officials said the county will pay the full costs even though County Attorney Thomas Horne recommended that the submitted bill be reduced \$169.84.

Kane said the question of whether the individual members pay or the board pays "has been specifically

answered in the General Statutes, Chapter 160A, Section 167."

"There the General Assembly provided that a county may spend funds for the defense of officers of the county where an action is brought against either in their individual or official capacity or both," Kane said in the letter.

"In the instant case the board of commissioners was sued as individuals and as members of the board for action taken in the course and scope of their office," Kane continued. "Therefore, G.S. 160A-167 controls and the county is authorized, upon request, to pay the cost of the action as ordered by Judge Braswell on August 10, 1974."

3 Of 11, Report Says

Bolivia Buses 'Overcrowded'

Information concerning the number of students riding Bolivia school buses has been released by Supt. Ralph King. Supt. King acknowledged in the report that three of the 11 buses serving the school carry more than the legal capacity.

Bus 34 has a legal capacity of 67 but averages transporting 70 students. The bus has transported as many as 78 students.

Bus 52 averages 65 students a day, but the legal capacity is only 60. The high - low rate is 67-61.

Bus 84 takes an average of 77 students, but has a legal capacity of only 67. The high - low rate is 84-74.

According to the report, the other buses are averaging less students each day than the legal capacity.

Bus 31 has a legal capacity of 60 and the average number of students transported is 51. The high - low range for the

bus is 58 and 40.

Bus 32 also has a legal capacity of 60 and an average of 48. The low is 46 and the high is 48.

Bus 33 has an average of 55 riders and a capacity of 60. The high - low range is 57-52.

Bus 36 has a capacity of 60 and averages 45. The high - low is between 50-40.

Bus 47 averages 66 with a legal capacity of 67. The high is 67 and the low 60.

Bus 72 also averages only one student below legal capacity. It has capacity of 60 and transports 59 on an average. The high - low rate is 63-55.

Bus 88 transports an average of 52 with a capacity of 60. The low is 50 and the high 54.

Bus 40E, which has a legal capacity of 67, transports an average of 46 students. The high - low range is between 50-43.

Holden Beach Okays Water

Holden Beach residents voted to pledge the town's power to levy taxes as security for a FHA loan during the general election Tuesday.

A total of 74 residents went to the polls and cast 54 votes in favor and 20 votes in opposition to the proposal.

34 Cents To 56 Cents

Cost Of County School Lunch Varies 22 Cents

A 22-cent variation in the cost of preparing lunches in Brunswick County schools has been brought to the attention of the Board of Education.

Assistant Supt. P.R. Hankins submitted the report that was based on the first 25 days of school. Cost of preparing a school lunch ranged from 34 cents to 56 cents; ironically, the extremes were noted at Southport Primary and Southport Middle schools.

Hankins, stating he was "concerned with the wide variation," noted there were two possible explanations: that two large servings were being offered at the more

costly schools; and some lunchrooms might be over-preparing food, having leftover meals.

Board member William Sue, in response to Hankins' observation that lunchroom personnel might be sensitive to study, said "We're talking about money, we're not talking about sensitivity."

The primary school has shown a \$9,972.08 profit; the middle school has lost \$6,652.33.

Sue suggested that lunchroom personnel observe operations at other schools.

Hankins noted that the higher-cost lunchrooms "have a reputation for serving real good meals," adding that a possible cause of higher cost might be that managers put a lesser amount of "extenders" — fillers — in meat items on the menu.

On the county level, the report shows lunchroom participation greatest in the western area. Only North and South Brunswick and Southport Middle schools are operating at a loss while Shallotte and Union schools have shown the greatest profit.

The system has 79 percent participation by students in the lunch program with 5,706 of the 7,276 participating. Paid lunches total 2,105 while free lunches number 3,522 and reduced-price meals 78.

Hankins said the report is the first indication of how the lunchrooms are doing. "We should see some narrowing of the gap," he told the board.

Following is the school-by-school reported presented by Hankins:

Bolivia, with an enrollment of 736, has 528 students or 72 percent of the total eating school lunches. Some 203 pay for their meals while 279 eat free and 28 are charged reduced prices. A plate costs 37 cents and the lunchroom is showing a \$6,793.74 profit.

Southport Primary has 65 percent participation with 327 of the 506 students eating at the lunchroom. A total of 156 pay and 170 receive free

meals. A lunch costs 56 cents to prepare and the lunchroom has lost \$6,652.33 this year.

Leland school has 81 percent participation with 560 of the 694 students eating lunchroom food. Some 291 eat free and 239 pay. It costs 40 cents a plate to prepare the food and the lunchroom has made \$2,882.32.

A total of 471 or 92 percent of the 512 students at Lincoln participate in the lunchroom program. Some 213 eat free and 250 pay. The cost-per-

(Continued On Page 3)

Thursday, 7:30

Long Beach Meeting Set

The Long Beach Board of Commissioners will have a lengthy agenda to discuss at the regular monthly meeting Thursday night at 7:30 p.m., Town Manager Frank Kivett has announced.

The board will consider establishing procedures for meeting and public hearings, lease of land from National Development Corporation for motorcyclists and lease of land from Kings Lynn Corporation for parking.

Peirson and Whitman engineering consultants will give a report on the proposed water system.

The board will hold a discussion on proposed charter revisions.

The board will hold public hearings to discuss three amendments to the zoning ordinance. One involves the definition of portable manufactured housing units for permitted uses.

Reports will be heard from the planning board, the board of adjustment, the police department, the police department, tax collection department, fire department and rescue squad, attorney, engineer and manager-