



SOUTHPORT MIDDLE School students participated in the observance of Arbor Week on Friday by planting several trees in the vicinity of the school lunchroom. Here are the students who participated, their teachers and Principal J.A. Francis.



Board Wants Secrecy

Formal Tax Hearings Set April 22nd, 29th

All Brunswick County residents must list their taxes by March 31, members of the Board of Commissioners were informed during a special meeting Tuesday.

County Attorney James Prevatte, Jr., said all residents must list their taxes by the end of the month even if they have questions or complaints.

Prevatte said that residents who fail to list their taxes by March 31 will be "subject to penalty" under North Carolina law. "They can list and still protest valuations," he added.

Prevatte said that all residents who plan to appeal their valuations must contact

the Tax Supervisor's office by July 1, which is the last day notice can be given.

The Board of Equalization and Review, which hears from citizens who have complaints, must meet the first time as long as notice is given the general public. The E and R board can hold hearings in late fall if it desires.

Prevatte said he had been advised by a state official that the best policy is not to make any decisions until after the July 1 deadline.

If decisions are made before the deadline, citizens who have their valuations reduced will tell others about it. He said the state official

said this would "prompt others to want to appear at the hearings."

After hearing from Prevatte, who had researched the matter, the board voted unanimously to hold the first Equalization and Review hearings April 22 and April 29. The meetings will be held from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. in the Hood Building in Southport.

Residents who would like to appear before the E and R board will be required to phone Tax Supervisor K.T. Bellamy at 457-6436 in Southport.

Prevatte announced that Bill Conley of the tax division of the Department of

Revenue in Raleigh will meet with the board Tuesday night at 7 p.m. to provide information needed before the E and R hearings are held.

Chairman Franky Thomas said he believed that the E and R hearings need to be held in a "controlled atmosphere". Commissioner W.T. Russ, Jr., said he agreed residents should be handled on a "one to one basis."

Commissioners discussed requiring residents to make appointments to be heard at the E and R hearings, but took no action. It was also suggested that a tape recorder be used if the citizens agree.

Prevatte said Conley will be able to tell the board if the E and R board can meet in closed session to hear from the citizens. Russ said he believed the meeting should be closed to the public and press.

Earlier in the meeting, Bellamy told the board that Allied Appraisers had expedited the process of seeing residents. After seeing 300

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Two Nabbed In Drug Bust

Two Shallotte area men were arrested on multiple drug charges following a raid Friday night, Chief Det. George Reed reported.

Albert Willis, 20, was charged with three counts of possession with the intent to distribute and three counts of selling and delivering drugs to minors.

James Watts, 25, was charged with three counts of possession with the intent to distribute.

They will be tried in District Court in Shallotte in April. Willis has been released on \$10,000 bond while Watts is still being held under a \$5,000 bond.

Willis and Watts were arrested after three juvenile girls reportedly were found unconscious beside the Intracoastal Waterway near Gause Landing Friday night.

The three girls were found by a brother, who took them home. The girls were transported to Myrtle Beach hospital, where they were treated for an over-dose of narcotics — THC. One of the girls was held until Saturday while the other two were released.

Det. Reed said Willis and Watts were arrested after a raid on their home in the Gause Landing section Friday night. He said the house had been under observation for several weeks.

The deputies and Bureau of Narcotics officers, armed with search warrants, reportedly found THC, marijuana and LSD in the house during the raid.

For Improvements

City Continues Doshier Funding

The Southport Board of Aldermen decided to continue the monthly donations to Doshier Memorial Hospital during the regular monthly meeting Thursday night at City Hall.

The board voted unanimously to continue making the \$800 donation despite the fact the Brunswick County Hospital Authority has taken over Doshier.

The donation, however, was designated to be used to correct deficiencies in order for the hospital to keep its temporary license. The motion requested that the Hospital Authority keep the board advised of the deficiencies corrected with the donations.

The motion was approved following a closed-door meeting to discuss the hospital situation. About 20 residents, who were attending the meeting, were asked to leave.

Earlier in the meeting, Mayor E.B. Tomlinson, Jr., told the citizens that the board "had not given up one bit on its commitment to keep Doshier operating as an acute care hospital." The residents applauded after hearing the statement.

The board voted unanimously to protest the higher property values set by county revaluation and higher electrical rates.

A spokesman for the NAACP chapter requested

that the board act on the two matters. He said the two requests were made by more than 500 NAACP members and concerned citizens, who signed petitions calling for the action.

Mayor Tomlinson reported he had read that Rep. Allen Ward of Thomasboro had said he is willing to introduce a bill in the General Assembly to set aside the reevaluation. The NAACP spokesman said a letter had been written to Rep. Ward.

The mayor said the monthly fuel adjustment clause has caused the electric rates to increase. He said the city electric department has lost

about \$14,000 since the first of the year because of the higher rate being charged by Carolina Power and Light Company.

The mayor and board members answered a number of questions asked by a delegation of black residents. The delegation, estimated to number about 50 people, asked about drainage, water rates, trash pick-up service, streets, etc. A large number of the citizens stayed for the rest of the meeting.

City Manager Alvin Kornegay, Jr., was instructed to do what he could to expedite the start of the water, sewer

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County Rescue Units To Meet

There will be a meeting of all rescue squads in Brunswick County on Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Leland Volunteer Rescue Squad building.

Purpose of the meeting is to form an association of county rescue units.

Guest speakers will be Fred Hardy, regional coordinator for Emergency Medical Services, and county commission chairman Franky Thomas. Ed Forbes, representing the Disabled American Veterans organization, also will be on the program.

Refreshments will be served by the Leland ladies auxiliary.

Former Sheriff's Case Is Defended By County

The Board of Commissioners voted on a split decision Monday to use county funds to defend former Sheriff Harold Willetts and a deputy in the mobile home "writ of attachment" case.

Southport Attorney A.H. Gainey, Jr., told the board he had been asked by Willetts and former Deputy Talmadge Varnam, defendants in the case, to request that the county pay the lawyer fees to defend the action.

The bond will pay the judgment if Willetts and Varnam lose in court, but it does not cover the cost of defending the action, Gainey pointed out.

Gainey said he was not seeking the job of defending Willetts and Varnam in the case. He said he would not take the case, but said he

could not rule out another member of his firm doing the legal work.

County Attorney James Prevatte, Jr., reviewed the law about the matter. He said the law says the county "may" provide the funds to defend the case. But he said the law did not say the county "shall" provide the money.

Vice-Chairman Steve Varnam, Jr., presiding over the session in the absence of Chairman Franky Thomas who did not attend the meeting, said the board needed to look at the matter from the point of right and wrong.

"I feel if you are working for the county, the county is responsible for your actions unless you are totally negligent, which has not been proven in court," Varnam declared.

Commissioners W.T. Russ,

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State Agency Stops Sloan Hiring Effort

By BILL ALLEN
State officials acted last week to prevent abuse of the Emergency Jobs Manpower Program in Brunswick County involving the "misuse of funds and nepotism."

Officials in the Office of Manpower Services in Raleigh stopped John Sloan, father of Town Creek commissioner Willie Sloan, from being employed in the county program.

State program coordinator Jack R. Stone provided The Pilot with a copy of a letter he wrote about the matter.

Stone said his office learned that there was "a possibility of misuse of funds in the Emergency Jobs Program in Brunswick County. The misuse involves nepotism," Stone continued. "In order to avoid any misunderstanding, let me inform you that the hiring of a relative is illegal."

After explaining the purpose of the federal program, designed to hire unemployed persons, Stone noted that "the law specifically

disallows the hiring of relatives."

If the possible misuse had not been discovered and nipped in the bud, Brunswick County taxpayers could have been required to refund program funds.

"Any misuse of funds may result in auditing problems that could eventually require a county to pay back those funds," Stone declared.

Brunswick County has already received \$150,000 in Manpower money and the total is expected to grow because of increasing unemployment here.

The Pilot heard reports in the county last week that state officials had intervened in the matter.

A Pilot staff member visited the Office of Manpower Services in Raleigh to determine the truth of the report and the Raleigh program officials confirmed the fact.

Stone told The Pilot that his office "picked-up information" that Commissioner Sloan's father was

being considered for employment under the program in violation of the nepotism law. He said his office has seven employees who travel the state to monitor the program to see that abuses do not occur.

The problem apparently developed because of a policy decision made by the Brunswick County commissioners during a regular meeting February 17 to allow each commissioner to name three persons from his township to be employed under the Manpower program.

The policy, unanimously approved without opposition, open the door to the near-abuse of the program that followed.

Stone told The Pilot that he knew of no other county in North Carolina in which individual commissioners refer persons for employment under the program. He said other counties have the appropriate agency or

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Baseball Lights Included

School Projects Nearing Bids

By BILL ALLEN

Bids on the four state building bond projects and the lighting of the three baseball fields could be called for in May, members of the Brunswick County Board of Education were told during a special meeting Monday night.

Lou Evans of L.H. Evans, architect of both projects, told the board that bidding was between four to six weeks away if everything goes according to schedule.

Board members spent over an hour reviewing and studying plans and design

documents for the construction projects at Bolivia, Lincoln, Union and Wac-camaw schools. The county received \$1.7 million in the State School Bond building program to do the work.

Evans said the main problems now are to obtain additional property at Bolivia school and soil borings at the Union school site.

Identical concepts are being followed with certain changes at each of the four schools. "Team teaching will be greater at Bolivia, Lincoln and Union than at Wac-camaw," he noted.

Evans, who was awarded the contract for architectural services to light the baseball fields at the meeting, said the total project will cost about \$135,000.

He said it will cost between \$38,000 and \$5,000 to light each of the fields at North, South and West Brunswick. The price will depend on the light support used.

He said he believed it would be best to use towers, which will make the cost about \$45,000 at each field. Chairman Wilbur Earl Rabon and Member William Sue said they agreed the towers

should be used.

Evans said he could design the baseball lighting projects in four to six weeks. He said it will take 150 days to light each field, with most of the time needed to obtain materials.

He said he believed the board would attract more bidders if the school and baseball field projects were put up at the same time. He also said his company officials will be able to follow construction closer with all the work underway at the same time.

The board voted

unanimously to name Henry Buffaloe and Associates of Raleigh engineers on the baseball field lighting projects.

The board honored George L. Bagby of Charlotte at a banquet prior to the meeting.

Bagby donated to the board free of charge a 1973 model, 32-foot Chris Craft houseboat. The boat, valued at between \$31,000 and \$34,000, is at the boat harbor in Southport. The boat will be used in the Marineology classes.

Supt. Ralph King thanked

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