



AN EASTER EGG HUNT sponsored by the Southport Jaycees was held Saturday afternoon under the oaks of Franklin Park, and more than 100 youngsters participated — along with several overzealous parents. Clarence Lennon donated 45 dozen eggs which Rick and Cathy Johnstone colored for the hunt. All 540 eggs were found in a matter of minutes.

By North Students

School Board Sued For 'Discrimination'

By BILL ALLEN
Five black students who were expelled from North Brunswick last fall have filed suit in federal court to be allowed to return to school. The students are seeking an injunction to allow them to return to school during the remainder of this year without requiring them to post any bond or give any security. They want a permanent injunction enjoining school officials from "punishing black students at any public school in the county more severely than white students charged with the same or similar offenses and from discriminating against Negro students in the county because of their race." They are seeking a declaratory judgment "adjudging the present policies, practices, customs and usages of school officials in discriminating against Negro students in the county schools to be in violation of the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States." The suit seeks to allow the students "their costs, including reasonable attorney's fees" and "such other, alternative and additional relief as may appear to the court to be equitable and just." Attorney James J. Wall of Cherry and Wall in Wilmington filed the civil action on behalf of Margaret Pearle Ballard, next friend of Linsey Ballard 17, Frazel

Grady, next friend of Milton Grady, 17 and Gerthel Grady 14, and Nellie Ballard, next friend of Debra Robbins, 16, and Lanier Grady, 18. The Brunswick County Board of Education and the individual members, Wilber E. Rabon, Franklin Randolph, W.T. Bowen, William Sue and Barbara Yount, Supt. Ralph King and North Brunswick Principal Nelson Best were named defendants. Board Attorney Mason Anderson, who has handled

legal work in the matter, is expected to represent the educational leaders in court. The civil action will be tried in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina in the Wilmington division. No date has been set. An attempt was made to contact Supt. King for his reaction to the suit. The Pilot was informed Thursday that Supt. King would not be back in his office until late Wednesday afternoon.

The action is an outgrowth of a fight that broke out between some white and black students at North Brunswick on October 4, 1974. A total of 14 black students and five white students were "suspended or expelled from the school as a result of the disturbance." The suit said Milton Grady, Linsey Ballard, Lanier Grady, Gerthel Grady, Debra Robbins, Adrain Spaulding, Jerry Brown and Jimmy

Appointed Or Not? Is Question For Authority

By BILL ALLEN
Are the two recently appointed Smithville Township representatives on the Brunswick County Hospital Authority original members or are they filling vacancies? The question has been raised since former Southport Mayor Dorothy Gilbert and Southport attorney Henry Foy were appointed to serve on the Authority by County Commissioner Chairman Franky Thomas at the March 3 meeting. Neither Mrs. Gilbert nor Foy attended the Hospital Authority meeting last Wednesday night in Shallotte because of questions about their appointments.

Foy said in a letter to the board of commissioners he had been informed by Authority Chairman Mason H. Anderson that his appointment "was not made according to law in that I was not nominated by the existing members of the Hospital Authority." The Southport attorney reported that Chairman Anderson said the method of the appointment "did not matter to him." Foy said the state law establishing a Hospital Authority said that "in the event of a vacancy or vacancies in the membership of the board by expiration of term of office or otherwise, the remaining members of

the board shall submit to ... the chairman of the board of county commissioners, nominations for appointments: All such vacancies shall be filled from such nominations." "In light of the foregoing provisions of the statute and Mr. Anderson's statement to me, I feel it would be improper for me to take an oath whereby I swore to uphold the laws of this state when my very presence to take such an oath is outside the laws of this state," Foy said in the letter. Under the law establishing a Hospital Authority, the chairman of the county commissioners appoints the original members. When

Separation Feelings Grow

'Nothing Magic' About 100 Counties, Says State Official

By BILL ALLEN
North Carolina can have as many counties as the people and the General Assembly want, Secretary of State Thad Eure told The Pilot this week. "There is nothing magic about the number 100," Eure declared. "We don't have a law in North Carolina that says the state can only have 100 counties." The Pilot contacted Eure in his Raleigh office after Rep. Allen Ward introduced a bill in the General Assembly to

move the Brunswick County seat from Southport to Supply and a movement started to divide Brunswick into two counties. It was announced at a meeting of supporters of the move to divide Brunswick into two counties that the deadline for the petition drive has been set for April 8. Supporters hope that at least 50 percent of the residents of Northwest, Town Creek and Smithville township will sign petitions calling for the

establishment of "Clarendon County." Eure pointed out that North Carolina grew from one county - Albemarle - to 100 because of action of the General Assembly creating counties in the state. "The General Assembly can establish as many counties as it wants," the veteran Secretary of State said. "The General Assembly can keep creating counties as long as the members want." Eure said the 100th county

in North Carolina — either Lee or Avery — was created by an act of the General Assembly "sometime between 1900 and 1915." "But 100 is no limit to the number of counties we can have in this state," he added. Eure said he could not remember the last time the county seat of a county in North Carolina was moved to a new location. "I know it has not been done during the 39 years I have served as secretary of state of North Carolina," he noted. He said that he remembered that years and years ago a bill was introduced in the General Assembly to move a county seat. But he said the bill died in committee.

"I don't know of anything more explosive in a county that a drive to move the county seat," Eure stated. "It will divide a county more than anything else." Eure said it was his "off-the-cuff opinion" that only the General Assembly — not the county commissioners — can move a county seat. He said he understood that there is a movement underway to move the county seat in Brunswick County from Southport to Supply. "I have been to Supply numerous times," he pointed out. "I might have stopped in Supply once or twice, but mainly I just passed through." Rep. Ward's bill, according to the Institute of Government, would allow the people of Brunswick County "to decide by referendum whether the county seat, the courthouse, and all other buildings and agencies of Brunswick County should be relocated from Southport to the vicinity of Supply and to establish guidelines for the

County Unemployment 12.1%; 'No End In Sight'

Insured unemployment is continuing to rise at an alarming rate in Brunswick County with no end in sight, reports David Holden of the Employment Security Commission branch office in Southport. Insured unemployment in Brunswick County climbed to 12.1 percent during January, the latest month for which figures are available from the state ESC office. "A 12.1 percent insured unemployment rate means that 1,292 residents of Brunswick County are drawing insurance," an official with the Office of Manpower told The Pilot. Holden said he agreed with experts who believe the

Brunswick County unemployment rate is much higher than 12.1 percent. The 12.1 figure does not include unemployed residents who do not draw unemployment insurance payments each week. Because of the rapid rise of unemployment in the county, Holden said the Shallotte branch office is signing-up residents for unemployment checks five days a week. He said the change had to be made to eliminate the long lines at the office every

Thursday. Under the new policy, however, persons signing-up for unemployment insurance for the first time must go to the Shallotte office on Thursdays. After falling to 2.0 percent in the summer of 1973, insured unemployment has been climbing at a rapid pace. It almost doubled between July of 1973 and July of 1974 when it reached 6.0 percent. It moved up to 6.6 percent in September of 1974 and

relocation." The bill, which has been sent to Local Government Committee 2, said a county-wide referendum would be held June 21 to allow residents to vote on the question. If the move were approved, the proposed bill orders the county commissioners to begin discussions with the Local Government Commission concerning financing of relocation. It orders commissioners to apply to the Local Government Commission within ten months of the referendum if bonds are needed to be issued or a financial agreement needs to be entered into, and the bond election (if

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County Board Met 19 Times

By BILL ALLEN
Brunswick County commissioners apparently believe in meetings! Current commissioners are quickly establishing themselves as one of the "meetingest" boards in the history of the county. They have already held 19 meetings on 18 days since taking office the first of December. Under normal circumstance, the board meets only twice a month on the first and third Mondays. If they had stayed on the normal schedule, they would have held eight meetings during their first four months in office. Since it costs the county \$164.68 every time the board meets, the large number of meetings has cost taxpayers \$3,101.74 since the commissioners took office. Commissioners are paid \$25 for attending each meeting. In addition, they are paid travel at a rate of 12 cents a mile and \$2.50 meal money. Commissioner W.T. Russ, Jr., of Shallotte Township receives the largest travel pay — \$7.68 — because he lives the farthest from the meeting room at the Hood Building. Chairman Franky Thomas of Northwest receives \$7.50 while Commissioner Willie Sloan of Town Creek gets \$6.24 and Commissioner Steve Varnam, Jr., of Lockwood Folly, \$5.76. Commissioner Ira Butler, Jr., of Smithville is not paid travel because he lives in Southport. The board held two regular and one special meetings in December — December 2, 12 and 16. The board was in session four times in January. Regular meetings were held on January 6 and January 20

and special meetings on January 10 and January 24. The number of meetings held by the board increased to six in February. Regular meetings were held on February 3 and February 17 and special meetings on February 7, 17, 19 and 24. State officials rules that the second session on February 17 — held at night after the regular meeting — was a special meeting. But

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Application Withdrawn

An application for Law Enforcement Assistance Agency (LEAA) funds was withdrawn Thursday after it appeared to call for the consolidation of the Long Beach and Yaupon Beach police departments. "I have asked Commissioner Ellis Dudley, our representative to the Cape Fear Council of Governments, to attend its executive meeting, to repudiate this application, to request it not be approved and to request you to notify Jerry Ramsey to cancel its further consideration," Long Beach Mayor E.W. Morgan said in a letter to Executive Director Beverly Paul of the Cape Fear Council of Governments. Mayor Morgan said he was taking the action because the Long Beach board had no knowledge of, nor approved, its submission, it is dated one day prior to a board meeting

where the possibility of holding a referendum for the people of Long Beach to vote on consolidation with Yaupon Beach was discussed, and the project summary contains several statements which are not factual. "Whoever prepared this summary was misinformed, if a stranger; or knowingly furnished false and misleading information, if an employee of Long Beach," Mayor Morgan said about the third point. Town Manager Frank Kivett also said it should be rewritten or withdrawn. He said in a letter to Paul that the application suggested something not intended since no effort is being made to consolidate the two police departments. Kivett said the application should be approved subject to being rewritten, tabled until rewritten or given an unfavorable review.

Commissioner Nancy Leggett said Mayor Morgan's letter had been written without the knowledge of the board. She said she believed the controversy was a "gross misunderstanding." Mrs. Leggett said she found that the LEAA staff had written the application because of the time element. The inaccurate application was written with "good intentions," she added. Paul said the application did not need to be withdrawn because it had been rejected by the governor's office. He pointed out the application was preliminary and did not obligate the town. The application, signed by Kivett and Long Beach Chief James Hamlett, was filed to obtain a \$25,119 LEAA grant to hire two patrolmen and a clerk-dispatcher for the "Long Beach Consolidation Project". It said the project

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Lakes 3-To-2 Against Split

The Boiling Spring Lakes board of Commissioners voted Tuesday on a split decision to oppose the division of Brunswick into two counties. The commissioners, meeting in special session, also opposed action taken by Rep. Allen Ward to re-locate the county seat and governmental office building. The resolution said that Rep. Ward's action "usurped the authority and responsibility invested in the Brunswick County board of commissioners." "We further oppose any action of this type wherein the North Carolina General Assembly is asked to resolve any internal matter which the local elected officials have full authority and responsibility to take appropriate action," the resolution said. The three-page resolution containing both actions was introduced by Col. Paul Day, who is mayor pre-tem. After discussing the resolution for almost two hours, the board voted 3-to-2 to support it. Mayor Alfred Switzer, Col. Day and Robert Altizer supported the resolution while Arthur Greene and Chester Handler were in opposition.