



Job freeze is allowed by county

By Terry Pope
County Editor

A personnel policy Brunswick County commissioners adopted Tuesday gives county manager David Clegg, if he chooses, power to impose a hiring freeze effective immediately.

The action comes just one month after the newly elected board voted 4-1 to keep Clegg as manager and county attorney despite rumors that he would be fired.

The board also voted 4-1 to add \$26,000 to the Resources Development Commission budget for consultation, advertising and travel. The money had been sliced from the RDC budget in June.

District 4 commissioner Tom Rabon's motion to change the county's hiring policy passed 4-1 with District 2 commissioner Jerry Jones voting no.

The policy states that Clegg will review all vacant positions and "refrain from filling any non-essential position" effective January 19. If he chooses to advertise a vacant job, that position will be identified and reported to commissioners at the next regular meeting.

"I think if Mr. Clegg thought a position was non-essential he would bring that to our attention," said Jones.

Department heads are not currently evaluating existing vacant positions to determine if they are really essential, said Clegg.

"I may impose a 30-day (hiring) freeze in the morning," said Clegg. "I am very seriously considering it. I'm going to sleep on it."

The county has a number of vacant positions advertised, but it has been unable to recruit qualified applicants for some.

"If he (Clegg) thinks the county can get along without that position," explained Rabon, "then that position is gone."

Facing budget shortfalls and feeling the squeeze of state cuts, Clegg
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TAKING A FALL



South Brunswick's Dan Arnold was headed for the mat in competition with North Brunswick last week, but he rebounded to pin his North Brunswick opponent and the Cougars were headed for a 44-24 win.

Photo by Jim Harper

Long Beach

Limit on bond submission has no legal power

By Holly Edwards
County Editor

The state Constitution does not allow the Town of Long Beach to limit bond referendums, town attorney James R. Prevatte Jr. told the town council Tuesday night. Therefore, Prevatte said, the town charter amendment preventing a defeated bond referendum from being resubmitted to a vote for five years is not valid and should be deleted.

Council members subsequently voted unanimously to eliminate the amendment from the town's charter.

"(The amendment) didn't restrict anything anyway, so I can't see where it's going to impact on anything, other than maybe some people getting

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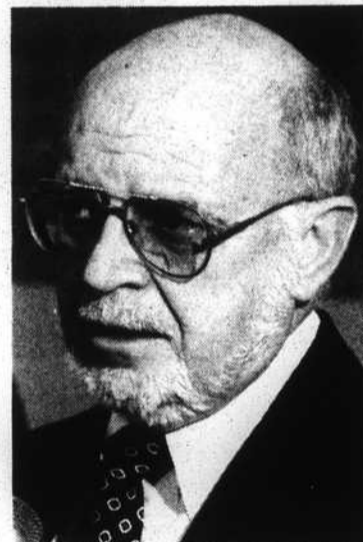
CP&L plant receives same grades as '91

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

Carolina Power and Light Co. drew praise but not high marks from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission January 14 for its past year's accomplishments at the Brunswick nuclear plant.

In a SALP (systematic assessment of licensee performance) conference at the plant Stewart D. Ebnetter, NRC regional administrator, said, "Qualitatively there was not much change (shown by the SALP scores), but quantitatively there have been a lot of changes."

In fact the Brunswick scores -- five middle-rank and two low-grade -- were identical to SALP scores last
See CP&L plant, page 6



EBNETTER

Oak Island, Leland libraries come first

By Terry Pope
County Editor

New libraries will be built on Oak Island and at Leland first before existing branches are closed for renovations at Southport and Shalotte.

The Brunswick County Library

Board of Trustees agreed Monday with the staggered plan proposed by John Sawyer Architects of Wilmington.

At an earlier meeting, the board had considered scheduling all construction work at one time. Members now say they want the new
See Libraries, page 5

Defending high cost of crime

Lawyers paid \$211,109 to help the indigent

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Figures show Brunswick County is following the trend of rising costs needed to provide poor defendants with court-appointed lawyers.

Brunswick County attorneys were paid \$211,109 during the 1991-92 fiscal year to defend persons too poor to hire their own lawyer.

That's an increase from \$162,294 for 1990-91 and \$178,281 for 1989-90, but costs are also soaring in other counties and across the state.

The state spent \$24 million last year and will spend an estimated \$30 million in 1992-93 on its indigent defendant program, said Ginger Cooper of the N. C. Administrative Office of the Courts.

To be eligible for a court-appointed attorney, a defendant must file an affidavit of indigency that lists monthly income and expenses. The person must describe his or her assets and liabilities, such as cash on hand or money deposited in bank accounts, all motor vehicles and real estate owned and money held for the applicant.

The goal is to provide those who might sit in jail without a lawyer the same representation as those who can afford to hire their own. However, the decision rests with each judge, and some have different standards.

"There is no real definition for 'indigent'," said Ms. Cooper. "Each case is looked at individually."

Defendants are brought to court on first appearance within 96 hours of their arrest. At that time they can ask the judge for a court-appointed lawyer.

An estimated 15 to 20 defendants do so in Brunswick County District Court each week, said Marie Jordan, court reporter. An average of 12 are granted attorneys.

"There are not too many denied," said Mrs. Jordan.

Some counties have indigent screeners who interview jailed defendants to find out more about a person's ability to pay, said Ms. Cooper. Brunswick County does not.

If a defendant is found guilty the judge can issue a civil judgment requiring

See Crime pays, page 8

Soaring Cost of JUSTICE



Figures represent legal fees for Brunswick County's indigent.

OUTSIDE



Forecast

The extended forecast calls for cloudy skies Thursday with a chance of rain. Mostly cloudy skies will prevail Friday, followed by mostly sunny overhead on Saturday. Highs will be in the 50s, lows in the 30s and 40s, during this period.

Tide table

HIGH	THURSDAY, JANUARY 21	LOW
7:03 a.m.		12:29 a.m.
7:12 p.m.		1:08 p.m.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 22		
7:45 a.m.		1:12 a.m.
7:54 p.m.		1:47 p.m.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 23		
8:22 a.m.		1:54 a.m.
8:31 p.m.		2:26 p.m.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 24		
8:58 a.m.		2:34 a.m.
9:06 p.m.		3:03 p.m.
MONDAY, JANUARY 25		
9:33 a.m.		3:12 a.m.
9:41 p.m.		3:38 p.m.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 26		
10:05 a.m.		3:49 a.m.
10:17 p.m.		4:15 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27		
10:36 a.m.		4:27 a.m.
10:55 p.m.		4:51 p.m.

The following adjustments should be made:
Bald Head Island, high -10, low -7; Caswell Beach, high -5, low -1; Southport, high +7, low +15; Yaupon Beach, high -32, low -45; Lockwood Folly, high -22, low -8.