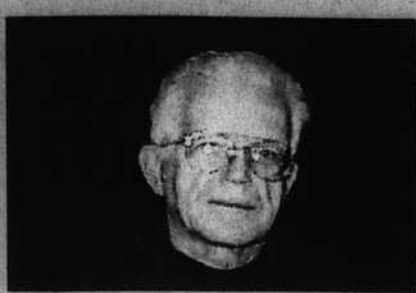


We've blow the whistle on our county editor, who looks really sharp in stripes -- 1B

The South Brunswick girls host an 8-team tournament starting this afternoon -- 9B



**Our Town**  
Bob Boyd, a Long Beach newcomer, is the newest member of council -- Page 2

# The State Port PILOT

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

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## Racial injustice charge meets sheriff at door

### Black group protest surprise to workers

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

Sixteen days into his new administration, Brunswick County sheriff Ronald Hewett is sitting at his desk shaking his head in disbelief.

A committee of black residents has accused him of racial injustice when it comes to hiring and firing officers. The black men had approached Hewett after his December 5 swearing-in with their concerns, but this time the gloves were off. They opened the debate in the local media, and in the process caught the young sheriff off guard.

"I feel," said Hewett, "that it is certainly not fair to judge my administration in 15 days while citing statistics, which are in themselves false, for the past two years."

The Concerned Citizens for Equal Justice (CCEJ) is represented by the Rev. Sam Flowers; Willie Fullwood, a Brunswick Community College trustee; former school board member Thurman Gause; Democratic party executive Bernest Hewett and Dr. George Saunders of Calabash.

CCEJ formed, the group says, because of "persistent rumors" that Hewett's goals now include "the removal of all Afro-Americans in the department within six months."

Rumors were further fueled by the demotion and transfer "to a position much less visible to the public of the highest ranking Afro-American in the department (Capt. John Marlow) and apparent clustering of Afro-American deputies in the much less desirable jailer positions preparatory to forcing retirement and/or resignation," a press release states.



Captain John Marlow and jailer Kim Thomas say they haven't heard rumors that blacks are targeted by sheriff Ronald Hewett. "I don't try to deal with

Marlow had served as chief deputy under former sheriff John Carr Davis and was reassigned with no cut in pay to take over the jail.

Hewett responded to the claims last week by rallying

rumors. I just try to do my job," says Ms. Thomas. Marlow has been a member of the department for 18 years.

he employees together, both black and white, to discuss the allegations in an open forum before the press. The CCEJ held a press conference December 21 in Calabash to also outline the charges.

"The consensus and opinion is that they (black employees) were never asked about this situation," said Hewett, "and they found it unfounded, and that I was fair. I met with all of my employees that I could physically gather here, and they were unaware of the press conference. They simply spoke out and said, 'It is not us doing this.'"

*'(Hewett) has put me as captain over the jail. I accepted the position he gave me. I'm going to do exactly what he asks me to do. This is his administration.'*

Capt. John Marlow

CCEJ says it investigated the rumors and claims the following:

- There has been a steady decrease of blacks in positions of lieutenant over the past two years. The trend also holds for supervisory positions below rank of captain.

- The number of women deputies is far below parity and is not making significant improvement.

- The one woman promoted to a supervisory position under Hewett (detective Zelma Babson) is in the department because of a settled lawsuit.

- There have been a number of blacks transferred to less desirable jail positions or prisoner transport (Larry

See Injustice, page 6

## Grave desecration lawsuit mediated

An out-of-court settlement has been reached by family members who claimed a pastor and Leland area church relocated their loved ones' graves without permission.

Jerry Calvin McKinney and the Christ Our Redeemer World Evangelism will pay the defendants \$41,750 within six months to settle the case heard before mediator William E. Wood of Whiteville.

The parties carried the dispute before a mediator rather than head to trial in Brunswick County Superior Court. A settlement was reached after just two and a half hours.

The families filed suit in January against McKinney and the church, formerly called the Damascus Road Church on Old Fayetteville Road in

See Lawsuit, page 12

## Brunswick is big business

# County protected from loss

### State has law that prevents finance abuse

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

If Orange County, Calif., can go bankrupt and squander away the tax dollars can Brunswick County, too?

County finance director Lithia Hahn assures commissioners her office operates nothing like Orange County.

North Carolina wouldn't allow it, even if new boards of elected county officials attempted to adopt unusual financial practices.

There would still be someone at the state level to guard the cash drawer. At times some may consider the approach too conservative, said Ms. Hahn.

Brunswick County collected more than \$32 million in taxes in 1994. Of that amount, \$18.7 million came from individual property owners and \$6.3 million from corporations.

Another \$6.8 million was paid by

the public utility companies. Running county government is big business.

The funds are invested, with hopes of making a profit in interest payments. The N. C. Capital Management Trust, as established and admin-

istered by the State Treasurer's office, owns no investments similar to the type that led to the embarrassing bankruptcy of Orange County.

NCCMT invests only in securities that qualify as permitted investments

under state statutes, said Ms. Hahn. Diversification of the investment portfolio is also a major part of the state's strategy.

Orange County's troubles developed from investing primarily in reverse repurchase agreements for high leverage as well as extensive use of a

See County, page 12

## Dosher will receive \$900,000 in taxes

In addition to collecting taxes from individuals and corporations, Brunswick County tax administrator Boyd Williamson also manages tax accounts for the towns of Navassa and Varnamtown.

His office also administers the Doshier Memorial Hospital District four-cent tax levy within Smithville Township, which includes all of Southport-Oak Island.

For 1994, Doshier hospital will receive \$898,657 in taxes based on a total property valuation of \$2.24 billion.

That amount is based on the following:

- Individuals, \$835,684,543 valuation, for \$334,308 in taxes.
- Corporations, \$292,044,009 valuation, for \$116,837 in taxes.
- Public utilities, \$1,116,015,497 valuation, for \$446,406 in taxes.

The county also collected \$117 in late listing penalties for Doshier.

## Holiday closings

Banks, post offices and all municipal and county government offices will be closed Monday, January 2, in observance of New Year's Day.

Brunswick County libraries will close Sunday and Monday, but will be open Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Students throughout Brunswick County, including those attending Brunswick Community College, will resume classes Monday.

The State Port Pilot will be open for business on Friday and Monday as usual.

## Long Beach audit

# 'Strongest cash position ever'

Fiscal year 1993-94 was another in a series of strong years financially for the Town of Long Beach.

Independent auditor Menton Padgett told council last week the town increased unappropriated fund balances in its two government funds and increased retained earnings in its two enterprise funds.

"The town is probably in its strongest cash position ever," said Padgett, of the Southport accounting firm Brock, Padgett and Chandler. "The books and records are in proper or-

der." Council accepted the state-mandated audit of accounts for 1993-94 without comment or question.

The end-of-year unappropriated fund balance in the town's general fund was \$1.48 million -- about 48 percent of budgeted general fund revenues and expenditures for the current year. Revenues received in 1993-94 exceeded expenditures by about \$96,400, and general fund investments increased over \$146,000.

Property tax collection rate in 1993-

94 was 97.16 percent, down from 97.5 percent the previous year.

The accommodations tax fund ended the year with an unappropriated fund balance of \$279,917 -- about 170 percent of the budgeted revenues and expenditures for the current year and some \$128,000 more than at year-end 1992-93.

Accommodations tax revenues were nearly \$66,500 more in 1993-94 than in the previous year and expenditures from the fund were about \$46,700 less. Fund investments in-

creased from \$116,628 in the prior year to \$250,878 in 1993-94.

The town's water fund generated \$84,305 in excess revenues over expenditures, down \$18,850 from the previous year. Retained earnings, however, increased by nearly \$110,500. Operating revenues were up about \$40,000 for the year, as were expenses. Invested funds -- restricted and available -- increased \$83,419 in the one-year period.

The town's solid waste fund, which

See Position, page 7



Work continued this week on repair of the leaky City Hall roof. It is hoped by installing a pitched roof on the building a repeat of the damage caused by Friday's storm will be avoided. Water poured inside City Hall, flooding the old courtroom upstairs and damaging records and carpeting on the ground floor.