

Obituaries

Arvelle O. Yates, 74, of Oak Island

Arvelle O. Yates, 74, of Oak Island died November 25, 1999. He was born September 26, 1925, in Davidson County, a son of Roy and Susie James Yates. He had been a resident of Thomasville most of his life, working there with Gilbarco Inc. for 20 years, until retiring in 1987. He was a veteran of World War II, serving with the U. S. Navy. He was also a member of VFW Post 2756 and a former member of Moose Lodge 1868. While a resident of Thomasville, he was a member of Carolina Memorial Baptist Church and the men's Sunday school class. On August 21, 1963, he was married to Nell Louise Briggs, who died in 1979. Surviving are one brother, Bill Yates of Lexington, S. C., and friend Jackie Killian of Oak Island. Graveside services were conducted at Holly Hill Memorial Park Cemetery, Thomasville. Memorials may be directed to the charity of the donor's choice.

Willie Hemmings Miller, 84, of Oak Island

Mrs. Willie Hemmings Miller, 84, of Oak Island died Saturday, December 4, 1999, at Ocean Trail Convalescent Center. Graveside services were conducted Tuesday at Northwood Cemetery with the Rev. Jack Hancox and the Rev. Leander Mosley officiating. Mrs. Miller was born September 24, 1915, in Surry County, daughter of the late William Columbus and Beatrice Nichols Hemmings, and moved to Oak Island from Columbia, S. C., in 1975. She was preceded in death in April of this year by her husband of nearly 60 years, Alexander Coke Miller, and two brothers, Elwood and Byron Hemmings. Survivors include her brother and sister-in-law, Dr. Hugh C. Hemmings Sr. and wife Sharon of Southport; three nephews and two nieces. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 3131 Wrightsville Avenue, Wilmington, NC 28403. A Peacock-Newnam service.

Margaret McLain Beman, 63, of Oak Island

Mrs. Margaret McLain Beman, 63, of Oak Island died Friday, December 3, 1999, at her residence. The memorial service was conducted Sunday at Oak Island Presbyterian Church, where she was a member, with the Rev. Michael Ward officiating. Mrs. Beman was born July 14, 1936, in Mint Hill, a daughter of the late John and Ollie DeWitt Williams McLain, and moved here from Charlotte in 1994. She was active in Oak Island Senior Citizens, where she taught basket weaving. While in Charlotte, she attended Charlotte public schools, was a member of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, and retired from Eastern Airlines as a special service representative following 23 years of service. Survivors include her husband, Lew Beman of the home; two daughters, Margaret Ann Karnes of Charlotte and Ruth Dunn of Atlanta, Ga.; a step-son, Todd Beman of Atlanta; a sister, Jessie Gettys of Charlotte; and six grandchildren, Wesley, Michael and Maggie Karnes, all of Charlotte, and Elizabeth, Becky and Emily Dunn, all of Atlanta. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 3131 Wrightsville Avenue, Wilmington, NC 28403. A Peacock-Newnam service.

Miss Dorothy Lou Dickey, 96, of Southport

Miss Dorothy Lou Dickey, 96, of Ocean Trail Convalescent Center, Southport, died Friday, December 3, 1999. No services were held. Miss Dickey was born August 19, 1903, in Coshocton, Ohio, daughter of the late Karl and Daisy Pipes Dickey, and moved here in 1974. She had served as a Doshier Hospital Volunteer and was a retired public librarian. She was preceded in death by a brother, Niel Dickey, and there are no immediate survivors. A Peacock-Newnam service.

Thomas G. George Jr., 58, of Lancaster, Va.

Thomas G. George Jr., 58, of Lancaster, Va., died December 5, 1999. He is survived by his wife, Louise Potter George; one daughter, Candace G. Hall of Weems, Va.; one sister, Theresa Whittaker of Lancaster. He was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas G. George Sr. and Margaret S. George, and two sisters, Betty Lou Abbott and Sadie Mae McCarty. Funeral services were held Tuesday at Currie Funeral Home, Kilmarnock, Va., with interment in the White Stone Baptist Church Cemetery.

Former assistant Johnson will head county EDC office

By Terry Pope
Staff Writer



JOHNSON

Steve Johnson hears it most every day — how nice it is to live and work in Brunswick County.

He is among those who feel that way, and he wants to help others find their livelihoods here, too.

"We're keeping up with the growth in this county," said Johnson, who recently was appointed executive director of the Brunswick County Economic Development Commission. "Our main goal is to provide jobs for our graduates and our residents who pursue their education and return home to work."

Johnson succeeds Tom Monks as head of the EDC, the county entity which recruits new industry and helps existing industries expand to provide jobs and increase the county's tax base. Currently, the county is growing rapidly, at a rate of five percent annually.

"Our jobs and industries need to grow with it," said Johnson, who has been employed by the commission since November, 1991, and has served as assistant director since July, 1997.

Johnson has been instrumental in recruiting over 50 manufacturing plants to Brunswick County since he became employed by the EDC. He is also responsible for writing and implementing more than \$5 million in state grants and low-interest loans to enhance economic growth.

The type of positive industrial growth the county has experienced, he says, is attributed to the quality of life that exists in coastal Brunswick County, its ample labor supply, low property taxes and transportation including rail lines and shipping.

"The quality of life here is a big drawing card," said Johnson. "We're still a rural county bordered by Wilmington on one side and Myrtle Beach (S. C.) on the other. It's just an attractive area, and that's what we are trying to sell."

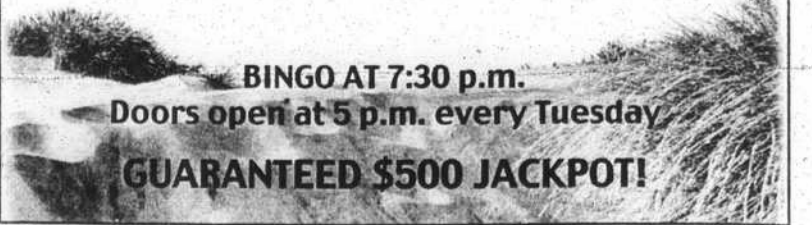
Johnson assumes his position at a time when there is a shake-up among the county's top employers. Exide Electronics in Leland has shut down operations, taking with it more than 100 jobs. The Cape Fear DuPont Co. plant near Leland also has cut back on production and its labor force.

But in January, work is expected to begin on a boat manufacturing plant in Navassa that will provide hundreds of jobs and a \$15-million investment. That company plans to offer employment to persons who have been hit hard by the cutbacks at Exide and DuPont.

Johnson's staff also works with five industrial parks that now exist in the county from Leland to Calabash. Larger companies eye sites in Leland because of the availability of railroad lines, its proximity to Interstate 40, plus it has water, gas and sewer service.

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SCEARCE & KETNER

Friday, December 17th, 7:30 p.m.
JEFF DEBOIS

Saturday, December 18th, 7:30 p.m.
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