

DETECTIVE LINDSEY WALTON, (from left) restaurant manager Troy Price and SBI investigator Jeffrey Webster circle the ruins of the Dockside Restaurant, still smoldering at mid-day Friday.

PRICES PLAN TO REBUILD

Cause Of Dockside Blaze Unknown

BY SUSAN USHER

Arson is not suspected in a Friday morning fire that destroyed one of Calabash's oldest waterfront restaurants.

While the family that owns Dockside Restaurant plans to rebuild, it may never know how the blaze started.

Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan said Monday that the pre-dawn blaze apparently began in a waitress station-off area about midway the rear of the 200-seat facility.

"We can't determine the cause," he said. "We did that through it for four hours. It's one of those fires we may never know the origin of. It could have been a short in a TV, the motor of an ice machine; it could have been anything."

SBI Arson Investigator Jerry Webster joined Logan, Calabash Fire Chief Jerry Prince and Brunswick County Sheriff's Detective Lindsey Walton in their investigation of the fire.

Firemen from four departments responded to the call before dawn, in 20-degree weather with a wind-chill factor that made it feel like below-zero weather.

Troy Price, manager of the family-owned restaurant, stood by quietly Monday morning.

Later he told *The Beacon* the family plans to start over. "Oh, yeah, we'll rebuild. We've got to do something," he said. "We would like to have it back by Easter if everything goes right."

Meanwhile, he was going to check

on the availability of unemployment benefits for the 25 employees who, for now, are without jobs. "It's hard to find anything this time of year," he said.

Price manages the restaurant for his mother, Clarice Price. Another son, Russell Price, helps with the business end of the operation.

The restaurant was one of Calabash's oldest, in operation for 31 years since Price's father started construction in fall 1955, a year after Hurricane Hazel made landfall here.

All that was salvaged was a

storage shed and an outdoor freezer.

When Calabash firefighters arrived on the scene minutes after the report came in around 4:30 a.m., they found the restaurant already ablaze.

"It started at the back and broke through the top," said Chief Prince. Firefighter Ann Christy noted, "There was nothing left when we got here except a wall of flame."

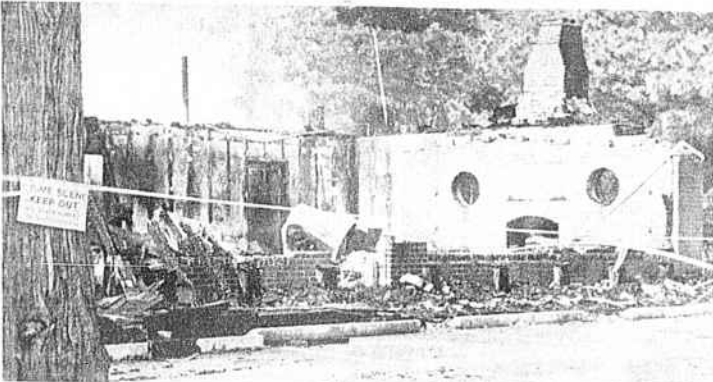
Sunset Beach, Ocean Isle Beach and Waccamaw fire departments provided mutual aid.

According to Mrs. Christy, spray from the fire hoses froze on a small cedar tree beside a gas tank near the rear of the restaurant.

"It had icicles on it that long," she said, stretching her hands about six inches apart.

A recent customer was among those who watched firefighters cool the smoldering debris Monday morning.

"That's a shame," said J.C. Smith of Gastonia as he and his wife looked on. "We had just eaten there Monday night for the first time. The food was excellent."



ALL THAT remained standing near the front of the restaurant was the brick hearth on one end of the dining room.

Shallotte Man Arrested On Drug-Related Charges

A Shallotte man indicted Oct. 20 by a Brunswick County Grand Jury on 12 drug-related charges was arrested Saturday, according to the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

Joe Shersin Reeves was arrested at 2 p.m. Saturday and charged with two counts each of maintaining a dwelling to sell LSD, the sale and delivery of LSD and possession with intent to sell and deliver LSD; and three counts of maintaining a dwelling to sell and distribute marijuana,

and the sale and deliver of marijuana, according to the arresting officer's report.

Reeves was released on a \$15,000 bond.

His arrest is the result of "Operation Street," an undercover operation involving the Brunswick, New Hanover and Columbus County Sheriff departments.

The operation has been underway since March and is designed to eliminate street-level dealers. The SBI is also assisting in the investigation.

Deadlines Moved Up Next Week

All deadlines of *The Brunswick Beacon* will be a day earlier next week because of the Thanksgiving holiday.

Since there will be no mail delivery Thursday, local mail subscribers should receive their paper on Wednesday.

In order to publish a day

earlier, the deadline for real estate advertising is moved to 5 p.m. Friday. The deadline for all other advertising and news copy is noon Monday.

The Beacon office will be closed Thanksgiving and will reopen Friday morning at 8:30.

Carolina Shores Ballots Coming In

BY SUSAN USHER

Ballots polling Carolina Shores property owners on the proposed incorporation of that southwestern Brunswick County community are trickling in.

However, Carolina Shores Property Owners Association President Al Houghton said the ballots will be kept under lock and key until they are counted next month.

The count, to be conducted by the association's standing elections committee, will be held on Saturday, Dec. 6, at the association's annual dues assessment hearing. The meeting is the equivalent of a town's budget hearing, according to Houghton.

Property owners may cast ballots until then, he said. Ballots and information packets on the proposal were mailed to owners of the 1,216 parcels in the development last month. One vote is allowed per parcel, which means owners who hold title to more than one parcel get more than one vote.

If results of the balloting favor incorporation, Houghton said the association would then petition the legislature for the granting of a charter.

"Even if it's favorable it's almost certain we would have to have a referendum," he said.

Rep. David Redwine has said recently that he doesn't plan to introduce any incorporation bills in the future that did not provide for a vote by residents of the area proposed for incorporation.

Such a referendum would be conducted by the Brunswick County Board of Elections and only resident property owners would be eligible to vote.

Carolina Shores residents have been discussing the possibility of incorporation for several years. Since a public meeting in October on the subject, Houghton said four additional meetings have been held by the POA.

Commissioners Say No Choice; Fund Program

BY ETTA SMITH

Brunswick County Commissioners agreed Monday they had no choice but to pay up—or face a possible withdrawal of state money—for their earlier refusal to fund an emergency assistance program.

The board voted 3-1 to appropriate \$5,000 in contingency funds to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Emergency Assistance Program. Voting for the motion were Grace Beasley, Jim Poole and Benny Laddell. Chairman Chris Chappell voted no, while Commissioner Frankie Rabon, who is chairman of the county social services board, left before the vote.

The program, which provides emergency financial aid to residents facing evictions or utility disconnections, was approved by the state legislature in July, after the commissioner's budget had been approved.

The program was designed to receive 75 percent funding from the state and federal governments, and 25 percent from the county.

County Manager William Carter told the board he was "in a Catch-22 situation," and that it would be illegal for him to appropriate money the board hasn't approved.

Janice Orrock, director of the Brunswick County Department of Social Services, told the board that nobody knows what the cost of the program will be.

Carter, Orrock and board Chairman Chris Chappell met last week with officials of the N.C. Division of Social Services appropriations office and the state Attorney General's office, and were told Orrock's office was in compliance with regulations as far as approvals for the aid.

Orrock said his department has approved between \$3,000-\$4,600 requests in the first month of the pro-

gram, which covers an eight-month period. He added that the requests have dropped significantly since last week.

Albert Thompson, deputy director for the state division of social services, said Tuesday that the state was prepared to withhold funds from other programs administered through the department had the commissioners not voted to fund the aid program.

"North Carolina elected to go with this program," Carter said Monday night. "Not all states have it."

Orrock told commissioners, "It's a difficult situation you're in. But you can fight the state and you're not going to win."

Commissioners Endorse Vote On Lottery

Brunswick County Commissioners officially endorsed a state-wide referendum Monday that could decide the question of a lottery in the state.

The board unanimously approved the resolution at its regularly-scheduled meeting. The resolution requests Sen. R.C. Soles and Rep. E. David Redwine exhibit the board's support of the referendum.

Supply resident Peggy Jaynes had petitioned for the board last month, asking for its support and the endorsement.

Commissioner Jim Poole presented the resolution to the board.

Industrial Park Developer Will Donate Utility Lines

BY ETTA SMITH

A New Hanover County developer gained approval Monday from the Brunswick County Commissioners to develop a 2,100-acre tract of the Grand Industrial Park.

Bobby Harrison, president of Landmark Organization, told the Beacon the project would cost an estimated \$3 million and be worth \$8 million when completed.

Landmark plans to install sewer and water lines, and pave roads on the proposed site, which encompasses the park area outside that being developed by a Brunswick County development group.

The utility lines will be donated to the county when the project is complete, said Harrison.

Approximately 1,300 feet of sewer lines and 11,000 feet of water lines will be placed on the tract, he said.

Michael deSherraine, executive director of the Resources Development Commission for Brunswick County, told board members the project is on a much larger scale than the park has been so far.

Other business

In other business the board: Accepted in principle the N.C. Department of Transportation's proposal to install a radio communications antenna on one of the county's water tanks. The board will approve the placement after DOT comes up with an agreement on liability that is satisfactory to the board.

Approved a \$250 grant for the county's Community Based Alter-

natives Task Force on Youth Needs (CYA). The grant will be used for postage, phone and conference fees.

CYA is an organization with the purpose of seeking alternatives to state homes for troubled youth. Board members also approved the group's membership.

Appointed Grace Peoples to the Cape Fear Council of Government Aging Advisory Committee.

Discussed a public hearing scheduled at 7 p.m. Nov. 24 to obtain input from the public on the closing of a portion of S.R. 1520.

Denied a request by Spee Print Inc. for the board to grant its blessing to a real estate directory project the company wants to undertake. Board members expressed dissatisfaction with the idea the company can obtain the information from the county records with or without its approval.

Then sell the information to residents. The same information is available to residents free at the Brunswick County Government Center.

Approved a motion to accept DOT's letter of certification of completion of a paving project on Brooks Drive. The move allows the board to now hold a public hearing to discuss assessment of the residents on the road. The county established a \$50,000 fund several years ago to initiate the project, which will be paid back by residents.

Approved a resolution requesting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to undertake a dredging project on the Shallotte River.