

# Audit Discloses Problems

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A written statement from the grand jury requesting an indictment and/or investigation from the district attorney's office.

Concerning financial statements of the college, the audit report stated that the improper manner with which the college maintained and reported continuing education enrollment "resulted in the college receiving an undetermined amount of state appropriated funds from the Department of Community Colleges in excess of the amount actually earned."

As of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1986, the college had assets totaling more than \$2.5 million, of which nearly \$2.4 million was tied up in plant investments (buildings, land, equipment, etc.).

Revenues for that time were about \$2.3 million, with more than 90 percent coming from the state Department of Community Colleges. Other major revenues came from county (\$208,000) and restricted state grants and contracts (\$115,060).

Major expenditures included approximately \$1.5 million, or 55 percent of total expenditures, for circulation and non-curriculum instruction and \$233,486 for general administration.

The report found that except for "the adjustment necessary to accurately reflect the state funds earned by the college, the aforementioned financial statements present fairly the position of Brunswick Technical College . . . in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year."

A state audit of the entire community college system released in July recommended decreased funding of some continuing education classes and stricter regula-

tion of adult basic education classes.

This audit was followed by the appointment of Jesse Clemmons as dean of continuing education at Brunswick Tech and the subsequent establishment of a plan to ensure the accountability and credibility of the continuing education program.

Clemmons said Tuesday the recommendations in the state audit report should be covered in all cases by the accountability plan.

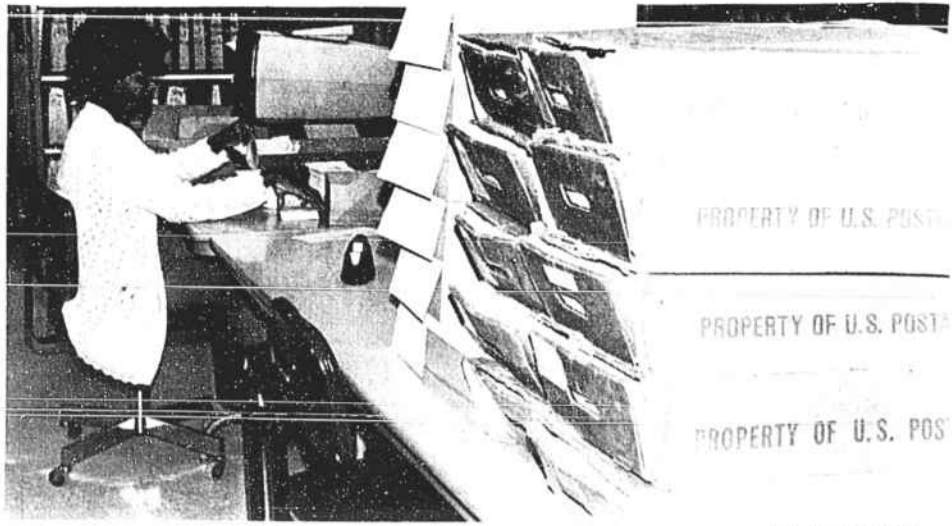
Among other things, the plan requires an unannounced visit from the dean of continuing education to at least 75 percent of each quarter's classes, an unannounced visit from the director of continuing education to at least 25 percent of each coordinator's courses for which the director does not have direct coordinating responsibility and at least one visit from each coordinator to each course for which he or she is responsible during the time class is in session.

Clemmons said the plan also requires a "more stringent record-keeping system" through which low-attendance classes can be identified and terminated if necessary.

Clemmons said as far as the recommendation to discontinue all classes held in out-of-state locations, the one instance in which that condition existed was "debatable."

He said the painting class was originally held at the Calabash Volunteer Fire Department but moved to a larger facility at Windjammer Village just over the South Carolina state line.

"At the time, it did not occur to us that this was in violation of community college laws," explained Clemmons. "When we found out it was wrong we immediately canceled the class."



TAX OFFICE EMPLOYEE Luenetter Smith works to finish putting property tax statements in envelopes last Thursday while waiting for the U.S. Postal Service to pick up Brunswick County's 85,000 property tax bills.

## Tax Statements Mailed

BY RAHN ADAMS

Some 85,000 Brunswick County property owners were greeted at their mailboxes late last week with bills for the property taxes they filed in January.

A special mail truck from the U.S. Postal Service in Fayetteville picked up the tax statements last Thursday at the county tax office in Bolivia, then carried them directly back to Fayetteville for distribution.

County property taxes are due upon receipt and are payable through Jan. 5, 1988.

According to Brunswick County Tax Administrator Boyd Williamson, preliminary figures indicate the billing will exceed the county's projected tax base of \$3.84 billion.

"We think we're going to have that much tax base and more," Williamson said last week, adding that the increase could be as much as \$50 million.

The county's tax base last year amounted to \$3.82 billion, he said.

Williamson said tax bills were

mailed late this year, mainly due to the county's continuing rapid development, Brunswick being the second fastest growing county in the state, behind Dare.

Public utilities for the first time ever accounted for more than one-quarter of Brunswick County's tax base, Williamson said.

At least 18 public service companies combine for more than \$1 billion in property taxes, he said, the largest of those companies being Carolina Power and Light Co., N.C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency and Southern Bell.

"We actually have the tax base of a county that should probably represent twice the population," Williamson said, noting that another major portion of Brunswick's tax base is composed of resort properties.

Brunswick County's estimated population in 1986 was almost 52,000.

Williamson said the county tax department does not have a problem with getting most property owners to list taxes. However, he said the coun-

ty does have some difficulty in getting residents to list motor vehicles each year.

"It's difficult to go and chase down an automobile," he said, in reference to dealing with delinquent motor vehicle taxes.

He said the N.C. Association of Assessing Officers has suggested three solutions to the problem, which plagues tax departments across the state: to let local Department of Motor Vehicles offices collect property taxes on vehicles; to let county tax offices issue license tags and collect the property tax; or to eliminate motor vehicles from the tax base.

Williamson said eliminating motor vehicles from the tax base would not greatly affect the county's tax coffers, because motor vehicles make up only a small percentage of Brunswick County's total tax base.

As an example, he said when the N.C. General Assembly eliminated personal household property from the tax base two sessions ago, "we almost didn't notice it."

## Small Oyster Season Expected

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to be slow.

Harry Varnam said, "It's just been getting a little worse each year."

According to N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries statistics, however, the value of the oyster industry in Brunswick County has gradually increased over the past decade, while the yearly oyster landings have fluctuated.

In 1976, for instance, the 61,359 pounds of oysters landed in the county sold for an average of 85 cents a pound.

The estimated 88,075 pounds of oysters landed last year sold for approximately \$2.30 a pound. This increase in value was not a sudden phenomenon, but rather a gradual trend which can be charted over the last ten years.

Thursday, harvesters were getting \$12 a bushel at the market; in turn the markets were asking \$15 a bushel.

And while the number of oysters has varied greatly over the years, peaking most recently in 1982 when 147,551 pounds were landed, the role of the county in terms of statewide seafood production hasn't changed in the least.

Brunswick County ranked ninth out of 22 coastal counties in the state in terms of seafood landings in 1964, and was in the same spot as of last year.

Although the county dropped to 12th in one instance and rose as high as number seven, it has consistently

retained its role within the state as a major seafood provider.

But all the numbers in the world can't change the mind of most fishermen.

Harry Varnam recalled the 1930s and 40s when he said the oyster harvest was at its best in the Lockwood Folly River.

"Back then," he said, "you didn't have all these problems with pollution and clambers that you do now."

Varnam explained that clambers, which operate all year round, kill the oyster beds when they rake over them and bury the oysters in the mud.

"They're just like you and me," he said. "They have to breathe to live."

Harry Varnam also said the law prohibiting oyster harvesting on Sundays is not enforced and that this leads to fewer and fewer oysters each year.

He suggested the only solution for getting the oyster population back up is to close the river to oystermen and clambers for one or two years and then enforce strict regulations prohibiting clambers from ruining the oyster beds, and oystermen from harvesting on Sundays.

"There just ain't any oyster season around here like there used to be," he said. "I'm glad I got out when I did because this ain't no way to make a living."

Mrs. Varnam added, "It's not going to be abundant like it used to be. A lot of things is against us."

## Oyster Shuckers Place At Nationals

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26 penalty seconds.

Mrs. Carlisle also finished eighth at the Sept. 26 World Oyster Opening Championships in Galway, Ireland, with a time of 3:34 in opening 30 oysters.

"I am grateful for all the local support," Mrs. Carlisle said, especially that of the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce, The Brunswick Beacon, and individuals such as Herman Myers.

While such performances may be expected as part of an honest day's work for Mrs. Carlisle, Ms. Futch didn't even think about entering until she arrived in Maryland.

She said, "I was just going up there with Cathy, and she somehow talked me into entering the amateur division."

Ms. Futch defeated four other competitors in the amateur competition by shucking her 12 oysters in 1:20.

She had never competed in a shucking contest before, although she had shucked for two years with Mrs. Carlisle at Milliken's Oyster House at Shalotte Point.

"I had never really shucked raw oysters before," she explained. "I had worked with Cathy a little when she was practicing, but I never thought I would enter the contest."

After she won the amateur division (and a festival T-shirt for her efforts), agents of a real estate firm

asked to sponsor her in the professional competition.

Although she came in fifth and last place in the women's competition, she won \$70 and said she learned a lot.

"I'm hooked now," she said. "The contest was a lot of fun."

Ms. Futch said she plans to return to the nationals next year when Mrs. Carlisle will compete as the 1987 North Carolina champion. She said a Leonardtown diner has promised to

sponsor her in next year's competition, paying the entry fee of \$50.

She also said she hopes to enter the state shucking contest during next year's N.C. Oyster Festival.

Ms. Futch said she and Cathy have been friends for about eight years; both are looking forward to next October's shucking showdown at Seaside.

"I've been coaching her all this time," joked Mrs. Carlisle. "I hope she doesn't get any better."

## Court Requires \$25,000 Bond

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with claims submitted to both the Medicaid program and the International Longshoreman's Association.

Also, the defendant was charged with mail fraud in connection with procurement of an employee group insurance policy from the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company. In September 1983 she allegedly applied for and obtained a group policy for which the requirement was a minimum of ten full-time employees when at no time, the indictment notes, did she employ sufficient persons for her office to qualify for the policy.

The counts contained in the indictment refer to "services" allegedly rendered during the period of December 1982 through Jan. 17, 1986, the date Paine's license to practice

medicine in North Carolina was surrendered to the N.C. Board of Medical Examiners.

Conviction of Medicare or Medicaid fraud carries a potential penalty of five years incarceration, \$25,000 fine or both per count; while mail fraud carries a penalty of five years, \$1,000 fine or both. On a majority of the alleged counts, alternative fine provisions and/or special assessments apply in Paine's case.

Paine's office on Forest Drive in Shalotte, from which she had continued to send statements on overdue accounts, burned Sept. 14. That fire and another the same morning that destroyed the office of a local chiropractor, are both under investigation as arson.

On Jan. 17, when Paine's license

was surrendered to the N.C. Board of Medical Examiners, the board was to have conducted a hearing on allegations Paine had prescribed 17,272 dosage units of Percocet; 820 dosage units of Meperidine; and 200 units of Percodan, all controlled substances, to a patient, identified by the board as Subject A, "without proper medical need or reason" and had allegedly failed to maintain adequate records pertaining to the patient, including documentation of the prescriptions issued.

The allegations were grounds, if proven, for suspension or revocation of Paine's license.

Paine was the first staff physician hired by the Brunswick County Hospital in Supply, now The Brunswick Hospital; however, in March 1978 she was suspended from the staff and her privileges revoked.

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