

# Santa Claus Is Coming To Town—In Parade Saturday

The Shallotte Christmas Parade line-up is on page 3-A and more details are on page 6-C of the special holiday guide included in this issue.

## THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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### Officials Will Outline Plans To Provide Drug-Free Schools

Brunswick County school officials plan to outline their efforts to provide drug-free schools at a press conference called by the Brunswick County Board of Education for Wednesday, Dec. 9, at 1:30 p.m.

Participants will include Jack Kaufhold, interim superintendent; Dr. James Forstner, chairman of the Brunswick County Board of Education; Rev. Bryan Weger, chairman of a countywide advisory committee that has met several times; and Jean Parker, director of internal services for the school system.

The media event will be held in the conference room of the Board of Education office in Southport.

A recent survey taken by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction showed that students in southeastern North Carolina, including Brunswick County, have about the same exposure to drugs and alcohol as their peers elsewhere across the state. The random survey made last spring involved 10,000 students. Region-by-region figures, not county-by-county, were released last month.

In Region 2, which includes New Hanover, Brunswick, Pender, Duplin and Onslow county school systems, alcohol is the favored drug among teenagers.

The state survey showed that 39 percent of the seventh- and eighth-graders surveyed had tried alcohol at least once. For students in grades nine and 10, the percentage had risen to 64 percent.

Among high school juniors and seniors, 77 percent reported trying alcohol at least once, the same figure reported statewide.

However, 61 percent of youths in the southeastern area reported having had an alcoholic drink within the 30 days preceding the survey. Most reported having one or two drinks per occasion.

Of their peers statewide, the usage figure was 46 percent.

Also, a little over half the juniors and seniors in the region reported riding with a drinking teenage driver; 12 percent of them "more than 10 times."

Among drugs, usage of marijuana was reported more frequently than cocaine.

Of those surveyed, 51 percent of the juniors and seniors said they'd smoked marijuana; 22 percent had smoked it in the past 30 days.

Marijuana usage was at 12 percent for seventh- and

eighth-graders and 34 percent for ninth- and tenth-graders.

Cocaine usage levels ranged from a low of 2 percent for the lower grades to 13 percent for juniors and seniors. Less than 3 percent of the older group said they used it recently.

Slightly less than one-third, 27 percent of the region's juniors and seniors reported having used inhalants such as glue and paint thinner, while 22 percent had used "uppers."

Some of the school system's current drug use prevention efforts include informational programs by outside resource people from Cape Fear Substance Abuse and the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department, intervention counseling for high-risk students through Cape Fear Substance Abuse, use of the "Just Say No" program in targeted grades to address issues of self-esteem, values and coping with peer pressure, establishment of "Just Say No" groups in each of the high schools last year to provide peer support and alternative social activities; and drug prevention education resource files established by DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) at each high school.

Cape Fear Substance Abuse Center has increased its presence in Brunswick County this year.

Lynn Alexander is the prevention/education counselor assigned to Brunswick County, working five days each week primarily with the public schools. She replaces Bill Renn, who is now treatment counselor, working in Brunswick County one day each week, Thursdays, at a treatment center at Doshier Memorial Hospital in Southport and handling referrals, many of them from the Brunswick County Jail and Brunswick Hospital.

Results of the N.C. Department of Public Instruction survey contained few surprises for Renn, especially in the popularity of alcohol among area teenagers.

"The wine coolers are such a big thing now," he noted. "They're milder, more palatable. It's the in thing to do. They're setting themselves up. It's scary."

He was surprised that of 32 percent of the high school upperclassmen who had used marijuana, only 22 percent had used it in the previous 30 days.

"That's lower than I thought," he said. "That indicates episodic use, rather than regular use."

### Calabash Residents Voice Opinions Of Proposed Water Line Assessments

BY DOUG RUTTER

Calabash residents voiced varying opinions Monday during a public hearing concerning proposed assessments for phase one of the town water system.

While some waterfront property owners who will face the assessments opposed the town's methods of forcing residents to purchase something they don't want, other town residents requested the expeditious extension of water service to their subdivision.

The project, which is expected to start in January or February and be completed by sometime in the spring, will supply county water to properties on Ivey High Street, Oak Street and the Nance Street extension.

According to the preliminary assessment resolution, which was approved by town council at its Nov. 9 meeting, the town will assess owners of property which abut or adjoin the

project 100 percent of the cost, including any impact fee.

Although precise costs cannot be determined until a work contract has been awarded, Simmons estimated the assessments for residential properties at \$400, while small businesses will be assessed about \$1,000 and heavy commercial uses and restaurants will be assessed about \$3,000.

According to the resolution, the proposed basis for the assessments includes frontage abutting the project, land area served by the project, land valuation of the area served by the project or the number of lots served by the project.

The resolution also states that the full assessment must be paid within 60 days following the publication date of the notice of confirmation of the assessment role.

Despite opposition from some property owners who will face the assessments, Simmons said that the

town will go through with the project because the restaurant owners who will benefit most and are in favor of the project could end up paying as much as 90 percent of the assessments.

Meanwhile, residents of Village Green asked council why they planned to supply water to Oak Street, which has two residences, instead of extending the line to their subdivision.

Several Village Green residents said they would willingly pay the assessments for county water, but were told that the extension of water to their subdivision would come during a future phase.

Town Attorney Mike Ramos explained that the line had to be extended down Oak Street for "hydraulic reasons." He said that the water pressure needed to insure fire protection to the waterfront required a loop to existing lines on N.C. 179 and that Oak Street was part of this loop.

Several residents were also upset that they had never had the opportunity to voice their opinions about the water system assessments through a planned referendum.

The town was to have held a referendum in conjunction with its Nov. 3 general election, but a mixup between state and local governing bodies resulted in the omission of the issue from the ballots.

According to Ramos, the only purpose of the referendum was to decide if the town was going to assess property owners upfront or following completion of the project.

"They have always had the authority to put that line in and assess you," he said. "The only thing they have to do is hold this public hearing today."

Other residents said they were pleased with their well water and didn't want any part of costly water line assessments.

(See CALABASH, Page 2-A)

### Wilmington Man Arrested For Drugstore Break-In

BY RAHN ADAMS

A two-day stakeout by lawmen at a Calabash drugstore last week resulted in the arrest of a Wilmington man on break-in and drug charges.

Gary Frederick Stegall, 31, of West Street, Wilmington, was arrested Nov. 24 around 11:30 p.m. at Seashore Drugs on N.C. 179 in Calabash, according to Brunswick County Sheriff John C. Davis.

The same drugstore had been hit by thieves about two weeks ago, Davis said.

Stegall was charged with breaking, entering and larceny, resisting arrest, injury to real property and felonious possession of narcotics, Davis said.

According to Brunswick County Sheriff's Capt. Phil Perry, Stegall's arrest was made by Det. Sgt. David

Crocker and Deputy Gene Caison, who were conducting their second night of surveillance at the drugstore.

Perry said the officers observed the suspect throw a cement block through a window of the store to gain entry.

A bottle of the controlled narcotic "Hycodan" was found on the suspect after he left the building, Perry said.

Stegall was placed in the Brunswick County Jail under a \$30,400 total bond and later last week was transferred to Central Prison in

Raleigh for "safekeeping," due to a possible drug dependency, Perry said.

Perry said Stegall's arrest hopefully will help lawmen solve other drugstore break-ins that have occurred recently in Brunswick County.

At least seven break-ins have occurred at drugstores in the Calabash, Supply and Southport areas over the past two months, Perry said.

He added that drugstore break-ins have become a problem across the state, not just in Brunswick County.

According to Davis, the sheriff's department has formed three four-

man surveillance teams to stake out the 12 drugstores located outside municipal boundaries in the county.

The surveillance operations will continue here through cooperation of the sheriff's department, the SBI and local police departments, Davis said.

Perry noted that lawmen last week had received information tipping them off to the Calabash break-in, allowing officers to make the arrest.

However, he said future drugstore stakeouts would be done "on random dates and at random times" throughout the county.



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

#### Decking The Streets

Shallotte town employees Roland Varnam (top) and Harvey Champion install Christmas decorations downtown Friday morning to help usher in the Christmas shopping season in Shallotte on the day after Thanksgiving.

### Barber Announces Plans To Give Up Sunset Beach Taxpayers Presidency

BY RAHN ADAMS

Sunset Beach Taxpayers' Association President Mason Barber, who recently was elected mayor of Sunset Beach, has announced that he will resign as head of the association as soon as directors can meet to choose a new president.

Barber made the announcement Saturday during an annual meeting of the taxpayers' association. Approximately 50 association members attended the meeting at the Sunset Beach Volunteer Fire Department.

"I will resign as president of the taxpayers' association, due to my

new position with the town," Barber told the gathering, near the close of the meeting.

Barber was elected mayor of Sunset Beach in November and will be sworn into office Dec. 7. He has served as taxpayers' association president since 1985.

In an interview last week prior to Saturday's meeting, Barber said he was considering stepping down as association president since there could be a conflict of interests if he attempted to lead both the taxpayers' association and the town council.

On Saturday, he said association

members will be notified by newsletter of his replacement after the organization's seven-member board of directors meets to elect a new president.

Director Minnie Hunt said Saturday that the board would meet within 30 days to choose Barber's replacement.

Barber received a standing ovation from association members at Saturday's meeting, in appreciation for his "strong leadership" of the group.

In another matter Saturday, Ms. Hunt announced that four incumbent (BARBER, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

SUNSET BEACH TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION recently re-elected four incumbent members of the organization's board of directors, with the announcement made at Saturday's annual association meeting.

The directors who were re-elected include, pictured from left, Albert Wells, Minnie Hunt and Warren "Bud" Knapp; and not pictured, Alan Russ.