

Brunswick Dropped From Proposed Four-County Fire Insurance District

BY RAHN ADAMS

Policy-holders in Brunswick County are no longer facing a special fire insurance rate hike, thanks to a recent decline in suspicious fires and to stepped-up prosecution of arson cases here.

According to Phil Riley, deputy commissioner of fire and rescue services for the N.C. Department of In-

urance, Brunswick was dropped in early January from a proposed special district where fire insurance rates are expected to increase due to high arson rates and losses by insurance companies as a result of fire-related claims.

The other counties, which remain in the special district, are Bladen, Columbus and Robeson.

"We have done further checking, and the (arson) problem has seemed to have dropped in Brunswick County," Riley said in a telephone interview last Thursday.

"Of the four counties involved, Brunswick County had the least amount of loss," Riley noted. "That was one of the factors in deciding to leave Brunswick as is."

He added that state insurance officials decided to "let the people pay where the problem is." However, he emphasized that a rate hike had not yet been requested for the special district.

Rumors of a 50 percent rate increase stemmed from an offhand remark made in a public meeting several weeks ago by a Columbus

County official, Riley said.

Last October, the N.C. Rate Bureau, an organization which represents insurance companies in the state, reported to the Department of Insurance that fire insurers had begun pulling out of the four counties due to losses.

A survey by the bureau showed that two insurance companies serv-

ing the four counties paid out \$29.7 million for fire losses between 1982 and 1986, while they collected only \$20.8 million in premiums on houses, mobile homes and farms, Riley said.

According to the survey, Brunswick County house owners paid \$5.88 million in fire insurance premiums and claimed \$6.39 million (See INSURANCE, Page 2-A)

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'RED TIDE' VICTIMS WORKING AGAIN

Shellfishermen Relocate Oysters In Lockwood Folly River

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shellfishermen put out of work two weeks ago by the "red tide" were back on the job this week following local implementation of a state oyster relocation program.

Under the program, shellfishermen are paid \$1 per bushel and up to \$100 a day to transfer oysters from areas permanently closed to pollution to areas currently infested by the "red tide."

The program started in Lockwood Folly River Monday, less than two weeks after the toxic algae first infested Brunswick County waters and forced shellfish beds to close.

Shellfishermen who lost jobs because of the "red tide" are now transferring oysters from the polluted areas upstream to sand shoals in the lower reaches of the river.

Once the algae lifts and the oysters cleanse themselves of its toxins, the shellfish will be suitable for harvesting.

The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries program operates five days a week, depending on tides and weather, and pays shellfishermen within seven days of the end of each work week.

Brunswick County Emergency Management Director Cecil Logan said, "The Marine Fisheries is doing a lot of good right here. They're putting a lot of people back to work and giving them a few dollars."

Tonya Clemmons of Holden Beach, one of about 80 shellfishermen to register for the oyster relocation program at the county government complex last Friday, said she was pleased with how quickly the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries acted in bringing the program to Brunswick County.

With previous experience in the state's relay program, she said, "It will help the river and it will help us fishermen."

Rodney Williams of Shallotte, who registered with his wife and two daughters last Friday, said the Division of Marine Fisheries should also

consider implementing the program in Shallotte River.

But according to Rich Carpenter, Wilmington regional manager for Marine Fisheries, the division does not have the personnel or equipment to begin another program. "We're strung out now as it is," he said. "We were pushing it to start anything down here."

Williams added, "It's been awfully poor. This will help out a whole lot. Anything's better than nothing."

The relocation program is limited to individuals who had commercial licenses for oysters, clams or scallops prior to Dec. 11, 1987. It is open to all shellfishermen affected by the tide, not just those in Brunswick County.

Toby and Lillie Smith, a Longwood couple who earn their entire income by working the river year-round, were among the 60 shellfishermen at Varnamtown docks Monday morning hoping to make some money through the program.

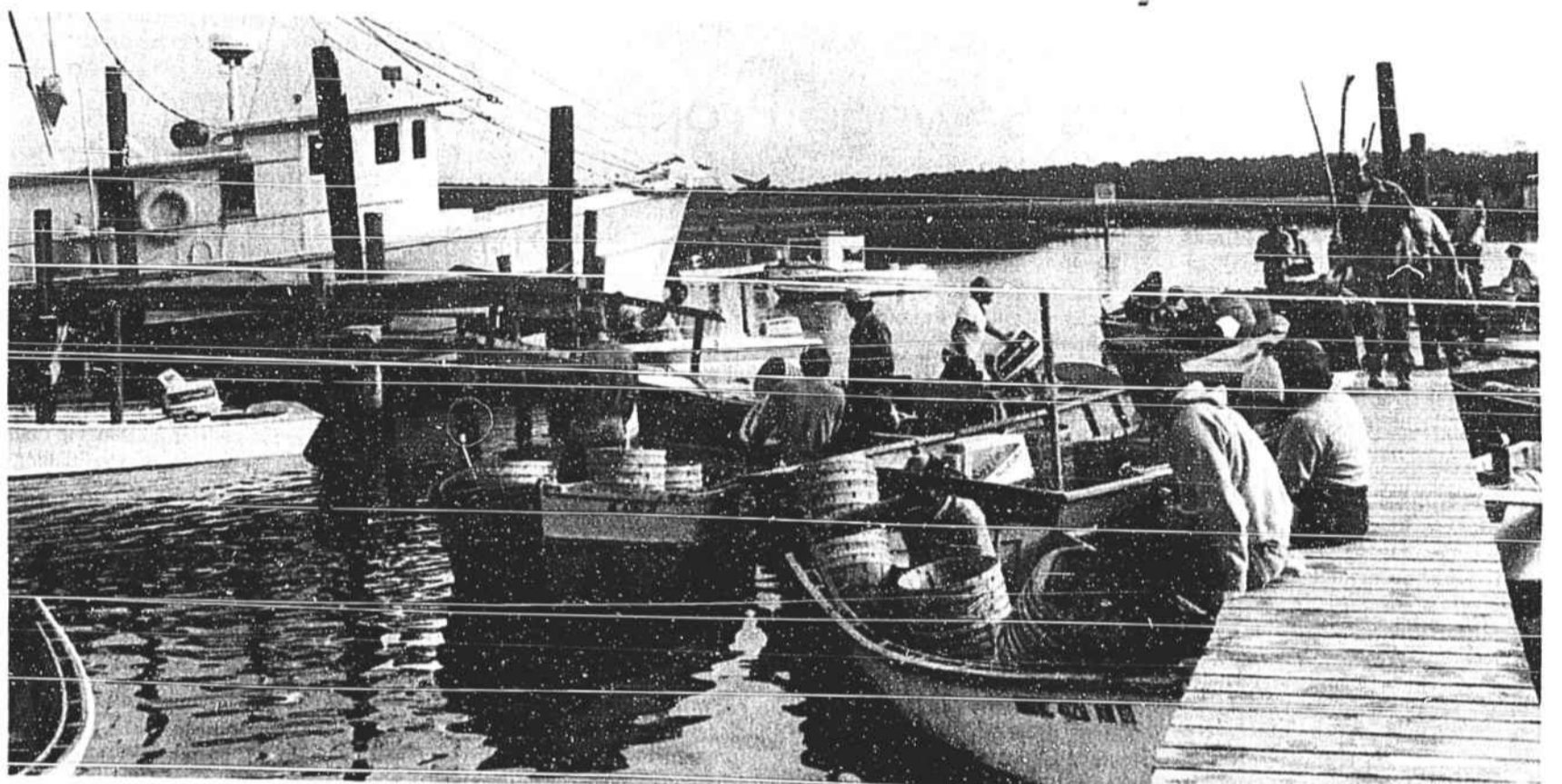
Referring to the fact that the Division of Social Services has not introduced any emergency programs or changed its standards because of the "red tide," Mrs. Smith said, "It's a disaster, but you can't get any help."

North Carolina's relocation program, which was started in mid-December in New Hanover and Pender counties, has paid out more than \$90,000 to more than 300 fishermen so far.

Carpenter said, "We're just trying to help as many people as possible." But state officials are not sure how long the local program will continue.

Jerry Parker, shellfish biologist with the state Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, said Monday, "We're playing it by ear. We don't know how long this resource will last in the upper river. We'll go as long as it lasts."

Carpenter added that prior to the start of the program in Brunswick County, about 10 local shellfishermen (See OYSTERS, Page 2-A)



SHELLFISHERMEN GATHERED at the Varnamtown docks Monday morning as the state Division of Marine Fisheries began its oyster relocation

program in Lockwood Folly River. In the foreground are Longwood residents Jimmy Ivey (center), Toby Smith (left) and his wife, Lillie (right).

STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

District 1 Seats Draw Most Candidates

By the time filing closed at noon Monday, 34 Brunswick County residents had tossed their names in the ring as candidates for one of nine public offices. Another three had declared for the state's General Assembly.

District 1 seats on the board of county commissioners and board of education drew the most action, with six candidates making bids for the commissioner's seat now held by Chris Chappell and five for the school board seat held by Doug Baxley.

Democrats have primary election opposition in eight of nine local races, while Republicans will hold primaries in three races. The primary election will be held May 3.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS District 1

- Democratic:
•Chris Chappell, 37, Route 1, Shallotte (Calabash Acres), incumbent
•Harold E. Hickman, 62, Route 4, Shallotte
•Parker Stanaland, 55, Route 1, Ash
•Major White, 48, Route 1, Ash
Republican:
•Kelly Holden, 37, Route 3, Shallotte

BOARD OF EDUCATION District 1

- Democratic:
•Douglas W. Baxley, 41, Shallotte, incumbent
•Cary Godwin, 41, Route 2, Ash
•C.C. Russ, 44, Route 2, Ash
•Clawson Ward, 46, Route 1, Longwood
Republican:
•Diane Grissett, 27, Route 7, Shallotte

District 3

- Democratic:
•Robert Davis Smith, 57, Route 1, Ash

District 4

- Democratic:
•L.A. (Louis) Lewis, 52, Route 2, Supply
•Tom Simmons, 45, Boiling Spring Lakes
Republican:
•Frankie Rabon, 40, Winnabow, incumbent

- Mack Aman, 41, Yaupon Beach
•James R. Forstner, 41, Southport, incumbent
•Jonathan Hankins, 61, Southport
Republican:
•Robert (Bob) Slockett, 64, Yaupon Beach

District 4

- Democratic:
•Donna M. Baxter, 39, Boiling Spring Lakes
•W. Marvin McKeithan, 45, Route 2, Bolivia, incumbent
Republican:
•Theodora (Teddi) Neal, 65, Route 1, Bolivia
•John Watkins, 31, Route 2, Leland

CLERK OF COURT

- Democratic:
•Diana Morgan, 35, Long Beach, incumbent
•Joseph (Joe) Stanley, 36, Route 3, Shallotte
Republican:
•Jane Causey, 35, Route 1, Supply
•John R. Ramsey, 44, Long Beach

REGISTER OF DEEDS

- Democratic:
•Frank E. Galloway, 26, Bolivia
•Robert J. Robinson, 34, Route 1, Supply, incumbent
Republican:
•Diana Morgan, 35, Long Beach, incumbent

- William S. (Bill) Kirby, 39, Southport

CORONER

- Democratic:
•Greg White, 26, Shallotte, incumbent
Republican:
•Larry R. Andrews, 40, Route 1, Ash

STATE HOUSE

- 14th District
(Brunswick County, Cape Fear Township in New Hanover County, Topsail Township in Pender County)

- Democratic:
•E. David Redwine, 40, Ocean Isle Beach, incumbent
•R. Glen Peterson, 33, Leland
Republican:
•Rozell Hewett, 69, Shallotte

STATE SENATE

- 18th District
(Brunswick, Bladen, Columbus counties and Beavertown Township in Cumberland County)

- Democratic:
•R.C. Soles Jr., 53, Tabor City, incumbent
•Claude Spivey, 57, Tabor City
Republican:
•Randolph (Randy) Sullivan, 36, Route 3, Shallotte

Parker To Lead Sudan Shriners

Albert H. Parker, 54, of Supply was elected potentate of the Sudan Temple at its winter ceremonial held in New Bern on Jan. 23.

As potentate, he will lead the more than 11,000 members of Sudan during the next year. Sudan Temple is part of the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North America.

A graduate of Shallotte High School and former Coast Guardsman, Parker is president of four family-owned businesses: J.M. Parker & Sons, Brunswick Insurance Services, Beach Trader Realty and BFT Inc., a land development company. He is also chairman of the Southern National Bank Advisory Board.

He is a member of Shallotte Masonic Lodge No. 27, Wilmington York and Scottish Rite Bodies, Royal Order of Jesters, past president of the Brunswick County Shrine Club, member of Camp United Methodist Church, American Legion Post no. 247 and the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce.

Parker and his wife, the former Kathleen Clemmons of Supply, have two children and two grandchildren.



State Study Will Focus On County's EMS Needs

BY RAHN ADAMS

A state agency is ready to begin a long-awaited study of Brunswick County's emergency medical services system.

Brunswick County Commissioners Monday night authorized the N.C. Office of Emergency Medical Services to proceed with the study that initially was requested about 1½ years ago by former County Manager Billy Carter.

"I move that we endorse this (study) wholeheartedly," said Commissioner Jim Poole, prior to the unanimous vote.

EMS Regional Supervisor Timothy Keel said his office will look at the county's current volunteer system

and make recommendations to get Brunswick County "ready for the 1990s" in EMS care.

"The study is an attempt to take a long, hard, meticulous look at the existing system," Keel told commissioners Monday.

Keel noted that Brunswick currently is served by 11 volunteer rescue squads which provide basic life support services. Problems include manpower shortages during the day and the lack of a centralized dispatching point, he said.

Keel added that at least 65 percent of the state's citizens have access to advanced life support care, mainly from paid ambulance services that

(See STUDY, Page 2-A)

'Red Tide' Moving South

The "red tide" appeared to migrate south last week, as scientists noted the disappearance of the toxic algae from northern waters and detected it for the first time across the South Carolina state line.

Meanwhile, algae counts in Brunswick County waters have fluctuated dramatically within the past week.

While concentrations of the "red tide" organism in water samples taken from Lockwood Folly Inlet last week were among the highest in the state, samples taken from that area Monday revealed a relatively low count of 10,000 cells-per-liter.

Other water samples analyzed earlier this week indicated that the algae had completely left the mouth of the Cape Fear River near Southport. But high concentrations were found in Tubbs Inlet, marking the first time the "red tide" had been detected there.

According to Pat Fowler, sanitarian with the N.C. Shellfish Sanitation Division, "It's hard to say if there really is a trend. We're just looking at everything carefully, from day to day, and learning as we go."

She said the "red tide" algae, *ptychodiscus brevis*, has dissipated along a 45-mile stretch of coastline from Buxton to Atlantic.

Water samples taken from those areas have not shown a trace of the toxic organism for more than a week. And algae has not been detected in the waters off Cape Hatteras for about three weeks.

Although the "red tide" appears to

have disappeared from those waters, the area remains closed to shellfishing.

Ms. Fowler said the state will continue to test oysters and will not reopen shellfish beds until the filter feeders have purged themselves of all toxins.

Meanwhile, South Carolina health officials last Friday detected the first signs of "red tide" algae in waters off Horry County.

On Monday, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control extended the shellfish ban through Murrells Inlet after detecting high algae counts in waters near Surfside and Garden City.

Ron Tata, district director for the S.C. Environmental Quality Control Division, said, "The concentrations were sufficient for shellfish closure and since Murrells Inlet was very close, we closed it as a precautionary measure."

Tata said the majority of shellfishermen at Murrells Inlet work commercially, while Cherry Grove oyster beds are public grounds.

South Carolina shellfish areas from Cherry Grove north to the state line were closed as a precautionary measure about two weeks ago when the algae first moved into waters off southwestern Brunswick County.

In addition to the 200 miles closed to shellfishing in North Carolina, the ban on the harvest of oysters, clams and scallops now includes about 30 miles of South Carolina coast.