

'Red Tide' Losing Grip Along Brunswick Coast

BY DOUG RUTTER

State environmental officials this week said the "red tide" which has plagued the North Carolina coast since last October appears to be on its way out.

Within the past week, water samples have revealed toxic levels of the ptychodiscus brevis algae in only three locations. Levels greater than 5,000 cells per liter are considered toxic.

George Gilbert, assistant supervisor with the state shellfish sanitation program of the N.C. Division of Health Services, said, "We feel fairly confident that it's on its way out."

Water samples taken Monday showed high levels,

5,800 cells, at only one station, Carolina Beach Inlet.

Samples taken last Friday revealed that Shallotte Inlet and Lockwood Folly Inlet were the only two areas with toxic concentrations of the "red tide" organism. Lockwood Folly samples contained 13,000 cells per liter, while Shallotte Inlet had counts of 5,800.

Jim Tyler, spokesman for the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, said Monday, "The numbers have gone down an awful lot. Even in Brunswick County they've gone down an awful lot."

Although many northern areas have been free of "red tide" for several weeks, the entire 200-mile stretch from Buxton to the South Carolina state line has re-

mained closed to shellfishing.

Scientists have continued to conduct toxicity tests on shellfish meats in those areas. Gilbert said he has been encouraged by results of the last two tests, but would not speculate on when shellfish beds could reopen.

"It still may be some time before we're able to reopen beds because of the high concentrations of algae which infested those areas for so long," he said. "We really don't know."

In South Carolina, samples taken Monday showed traces of "red tide" algae at two locations, Murrells Inlet and Magnolia Beach.

Charles Newell, shellfish program manager for the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, said there were no other traces of algae detected and no areas where the levels were toxic.

The shellfishing ban from the state line through Murrells Inlet remains in effect. Water sample analysis was to continue later this week.

Meanwhile, after a week of waiting for the right tidal conditions, shellfishermen were expected to return to the river Wednesday to continue working under the state Division of Marine Fisheries oyster relocation program.

(See RED TIDE, Page 2-A)

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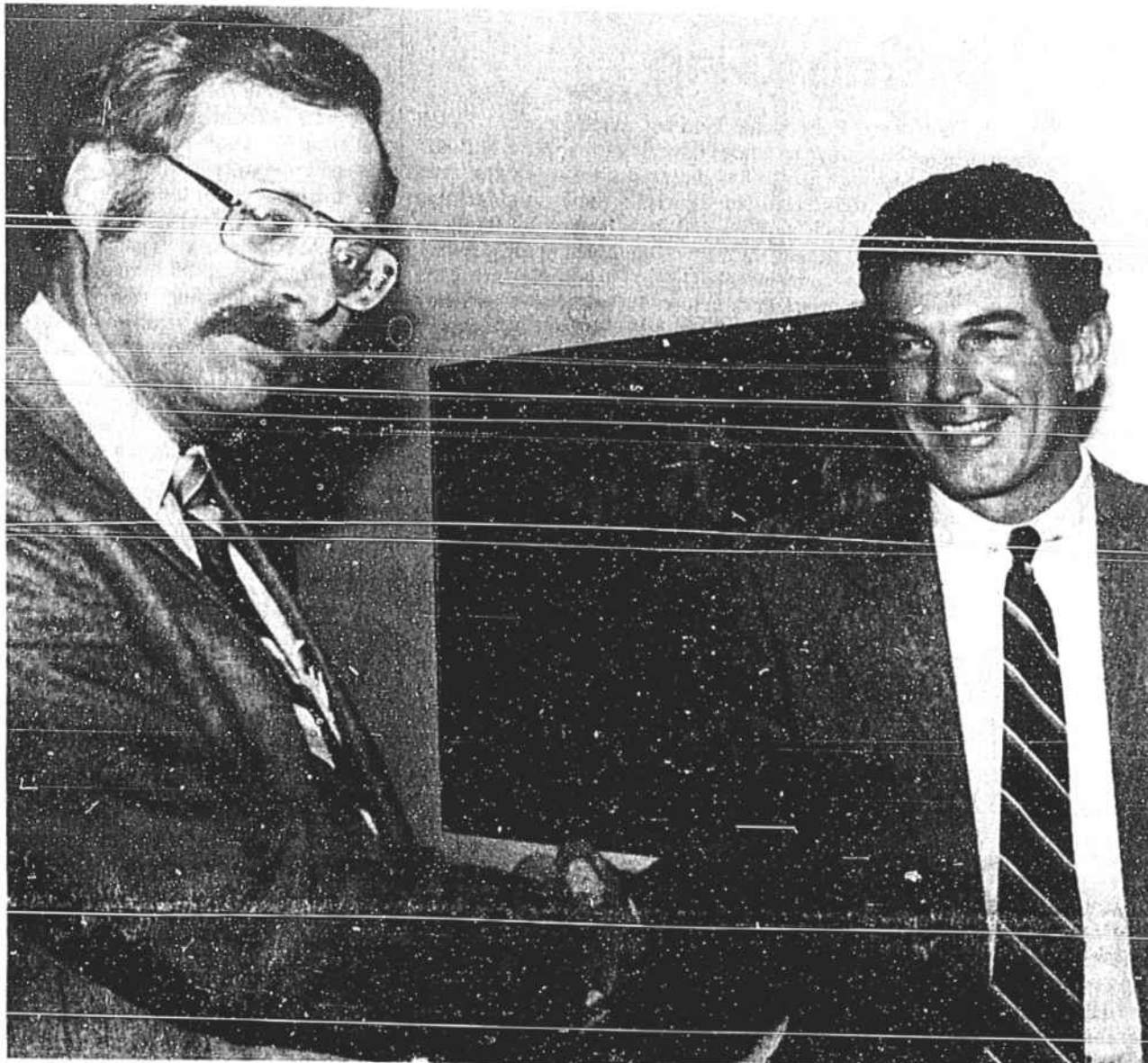
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NEW SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS John Kaufhold (right) accepts congratulations from Board of Education Chairman James Forstner Monday night.

Interim Superintendent Kaufhold To Lead Brunswick Schools

BY SUSAN USHER

It's not often a school board gets to see a future superintendent in action over a period of several months before hiring, but that's the case with the Brunswick County Board of Education.

Monday night, following more than two hours of closed-door discussion, the board hired as superintendent of schools John Kaufhold, who has served as interim superintendent for the past six months. The vote was unanimous.

"We were pleased with his performance," Chairman James Forstner commented after the meeting in Southport. "His recommendations—both official and unofficial—were very good and he was universally praised by our faculty and staff."

Along with routine checking of references, board members researched the backgrounds of finalists for the post through informal networking, he said, contacting professional and personal acquaintances in various communities. "We feel we did our homework thoroughly."

Kaufhold, 44, began work last July 6 as assistant superintendent for personnel, coming here from Camden County, where he was superintendent of one of the state's smallest units, with 1,100 students. Previously he was assistant superintendent in Roanoke Rapids, in charge of cur-

riculum and staff development.

On arrival in Brunswick County, he was almost immediately appointed interim superintendent in the wake of Eugene Yarbrough's resignation to accept the superintendency of the Buncombe County Schools.

As interim superintendent, he has faced several serious issues, including dealing with a \$553,242 shortfall in the school system's 1986-87 budget. The audit of that budget was submitted to the SBI for a preliminary investigation last week, on the recommendation of an assistant district attorney.

School officials attributed the shortfall to poor management under a previous administration and unanticipated cost increases rather than stolen or misspent funds.

A contract is to be ready for signing by Kaufhold and the board on March 7.

Though Kaufhold said he had wanted a four-year contract, he accepted the board's offer of a two-year, five-month contract which ends June 1990, at a salary between \$60,000 and \$65,000. Details will be worked out before the contract is signed.

An extension clause provides that the contract can be extended for two years provided that Kaufhold is evaluated at the December 1988 meeting or as soon after as it can be arranged and the evaluation is favorable.

Kaufhold said Monday night he understands the shorter contract is the best one this board could offer him.

"I at first resisted taking a shorter contract," he added, "but after (board attorney) Mr. (E.J.) Prevatte talked with me about the legal concerns, I considered the loyalty and good faith shown by the board. What turned the tide was their show of support. I felt this was the best they could do."

A vagueness in the state school laws relating to the hiring of a superintendent by a "lame duck" board in an election year forced the limit. "We wanted to stay within the intent of the law," noted Forstner, chairman of the board. "Our legal advisor said we could do what we did."

Also, noted Forstner, the clause also serves as a courtesy gesture to the board that will be seated the first Monday in December following the November election, in which three seats are up for grabs. "Foisting someone on a new board—'forever'—is not a nice thing to do," he added.

Kaufhold was chosen from a field of approximately 35 to 40 applicants with experience ranging from principal to superintendent.

He will lead a system that includes approximately 930 employees and more than 8,600 students on 12 campuses.

Brothers Sentenced In Drug Cases

BY RAHN ADAMS

Two brothers who were indicted in Brunswick County last June on cocaine trafficking counts received suspended prison sentences this week, and were fined \$5,000 each on reduced charges.

Following a sentencing hearing Monday afternoon in Brunswick County Superior Court, Judge Giles R. Clark sentenced Leslie Ronald Newsome, 44, of Ocean Isle Beach, and Kenneth Dean Newsome, 37, of Whiteville, each to a two-year prison term, suspended for three years, with three years of special supervised probation.

Clark, however, ordered Kenneth Newsome to serve an active 120-day prison sentence, which was stayed until Feb. 22. The judge also recommended work release.

Leslie Ronald Newsome was ordered to serve an active 45-day jail term, with work release allowed. Clark stayed Leslie Ronald Newsome's jail sentence until July 1—when Kenneth Newsome's prison term will have expired—to enable the brothers to continue operating two family businesses in the area.

The judge required that each man's \$5,000 fine be paid within 2½ years. Each defendant also was ordered to perform 100 hours of community service work within 12 weeks of the completion of his active sentence.

In addition, both men must pay court costs, community service fees and probation supervisory fees. As part of their probation, they also must submit to drug counseling and treatment, if recommended by mental health agencies in Brunswick and Columbus counties.

Both men were represented by Raleigh attorney Joseph B. Cheshire V.

The Newsomes were among 32 defendants indicted on cocaine trafficking charges June 11 in Brunswick County by the state's first special in-

vestigative grand jury.

The brothers were both charged with conspiracy to traffic in more than 28 grams of cocaine and trafficking by possession of more than 28 grams of cocaine. Both faced 14-year prison sentences on those initial charges.

On Sept. 10, 1987, both pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess cocaine and possession of cocaine, with the felony charges involving between one gram and 28 grams of the controlled substance. Sentencing was continued from term to term of Superior Court at the discretion of the district attorney's office.

Special Assistant District Attorney William Wolak said both defendants

entered guilty pleas as part of plea agreements. Both faced maximum 10-year prison terms on the charges to which they pleaded guilty.

Court records show that 23 of 37 defendants who were indicted last June and July as a result of work done by the investigative grand jury pleaded guilty and were sentenced.

By Tuesday, nine others who pleaded guilty had not been sentenced. Three defendants were awaiting trial. Two others remained fugitives.

Wolak said Tuesday he did not expect to dispose of all 12 pending cases during this week's court session.

The next criminal session of Brunswick County Superior Court is scheduled to begin March 21.

Rozell Hewett: Disillusioned With Government, Demo Party

A Shallotte Point man who gained a reputation as a maverick during four years on the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners has set his sights on a higher office.

Rozell Hewett is running for the 14th District State House of Representatives seat held by Rep. E. David Redwine. Once a die-hard Democrat, 69-year-old Hewett is running under the umbrella of the Republican Party. He has no primary opposition and in November will face either Redwine or Redwine's primary opponent, Glen Peterson of Leland.

A decision to file was made late, and as of last week, he still hadn't lined up a campaign manager. Despite that, Hewett insisted his campaign is a serious one.

The county's rapid growth, he said, isn't being done "to preserve our natural state" and he feels also that "people have lost control of government in Brunswick County and on up-

"They're not for the people, the average person, but for special interest groups," he continued, such as "developers, lawyers, insurance people."

The county should help development while at the same time, he added, "developers should take into consideration other people who earn a living in Brunswick County."

Hewett was in the shrimping business from 1956 to 1972 as a boat owner and packing house operator and then taught marine occupations at West Brunswick High School for eight years, until the program was replaced with a building trade program.

Since losing a primary re-election bid, Hewett has lobbied for extension of county water to the Shallotte Point area, which was given a high priority of need in the 201 Facility Needs plan for southwestern Brunswick County several years ago, but isn't due to receive water in the near future

Kaufhold Says Probe Will Give Schools 'Clean Bill Of Health'

BY RAHN ADAMS

Interim Superintendent John Kaufhold doesn't expect a preliminary SBI investigation of Brunswick County school system finances to turn up any criminal wrongdoing.

At the recommendation of the 14th District Attorney's office, the SBI is reviewing the Brunswick County Board of Education's 1986-87 budget audit which showed a \$553,242 deficit.

The audit was conducted by

Flowers and Associates of Raleigh, an independent auditing firm.

"I expect that the SBI will probably come to the same conclusions as the Flowers people and give us a clean bill of health," Kaufhold said Friday.

According to Kaufhold, the auditor reported that "to the best of their knowledge, nothing was done illegally and no money was misappropriated."

County and school finance officials said last month the deficit apparently stemmed from expected revenues that were budgeted but not collected.

"It's more or less a preliminary investigation at the state level," Kaufhold said.

He added that "if they get into a full-fledged investigation, they'll want to see our books, files, receipts, purchase orders—all of our records."

Last Wednesday in Bolivia, Kaufhold met with Assistant District Attorney Napoleon Barefoot Jr. and SBI Agent Fred McKinney to discuss a possible investigation—a step that

was suggested by the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners last month when school officials asked for financial help.

At their Jan. 19 meeting, commissioners agreed to transfer \$290,000 from the half-cent sales tax fund for school construction to the schools' operating budget. Additional budgetary measures taken by the school board brought the system's operating budget into line.

Kaufhold said he gave Barefoot a copy of the 31-page audit report and reviewed the auditor's three-page summary letter with the assistant district attorney.

According to Barefoot, the audit report appeared to be "in order." However, it was sent to the SBI audit division in Raleigh to check for "anything irregular," such as misappropriations or embezzlement.

"The SBI agent and I didn't see anything irregular on our own, but we're not auditors," Barefoot said Friday.

(See PROBE, Page 14-A)



ROZELL HEWETT
... Changed party

through the county's special assessment district program.

He would like to see the state help the poorer or less populated counties with grants for projects such as sewer systems to serve their more

(See HEWETT, Page 2-A)

New Inside This Week . . .

In this week's issue, Brunswick Beacon readers will find several new features, plus the return of a popular local columnist.

•Photographer/naturalist Bill Faver of Holden Beach and Wilmington, a longtime Beacon columnist, returns to the opinion page after an absence of several months due to illness. His column can be found on Page 4-A.

•TV viewers will find expanded listings and easier-to-read format of the new TV Log. Found on Pages 8-B and 9-B of this issue, it includes weekday daytime network listings, weekday evening listings and complete morning, afternoon and evening weekend coverage.

•Local golfers, both pros and duffers, will enjoy the personal perspective of Will Cockrell, a U.S. Golf Association associate member and golf coach at West Brunswick High School for four years. His weekly golf column makes its debut this week, on Page 12-C.