



Spring Break At Last!

Walter Denning III of Asheville (left) and Dean Batten of Smithville were putting the finishing touches on a sand sculpture mermaid Monday afternoon at Holden Beach.

Both are students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and were spending spring break at Holden Beach.

STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

TURNOUT VERY LOW

Jackson, Bush Take Super Tuesday Here

BY SUSAN USHER

The Rev. Jesse Jackson drew more Brunswick County votes than any other single candidate in Super Tuesday's presidential primary, totting up 1,662 to Vice President Bush's 1,234 in a primary marked mainly by voter apathy and failed expectations. "I had expected a little better," said Cedar Grove NAACP President Jesse Bryant Tuesday night. Still, he said, Jackson did "tremendously well" locally and elsewhere given his status as "having no money, being an underdog and a minority." Bryant had accompanied Jackson on a whirlwind pre-primary tour of the region last month.

While Jackson led a divided Democratic ballot by only a light margin over Sen. Albert Gore of Tennessee, with Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis in third, for Bush it was a clean sweep, reflecting his experience across the region. He took all but one county precinct. In Leland, where 1,748 voters are registered, former television evangelist Pat Robertson took 33 votes to Bush's 32.

The turnout at Leland was not untypical; only about 30 percent of the county's 25,823 registered voters went to the polls.

In Frying Pan Precinct, which votes at the Shallotte National Guard Armory, 54 people had voted during the first two hours the polls were open. By the end of the day, roughly 10 percent of the precinct's 1,561 voters had turned out.

Only a handful of people turned out at the Brunswick County Government Center to watch Board of Elections officials post unofficial results. The first precinct figures went up shortly before 9 p.m., the rough totals around 9:30 p.m., or two hours after the polls closed.

The count won't be official until the canvass is taken today (Thursday), when any corrections will be made.

Those unofficial results, by candidate are as follows for each party:

•Democratic—Jesse Jackson, 1,662; Albert Gore, 1,501; Michael Dukakis, 1,111; Richard Gephardt, 350; Gary Hart, 197; No preference,

80; Paul Simon, 31; and Bruce Babbitt, 19.

•Republican—George Bush, 1,234; Robert Dole, 702; Pat Robertson, 355; Jack Kemp, 103; No preference, 29; Pete DuPont, 10; and Alexander Haig Jr., 8.

Babbitt, DuPont and Haig had withdrawn prior to Tuesday's balloting, the first regional presidential primary in the South.

Southern political leaders had hoped a regional primary would give them clout at the national level, swinging support for a Southern/conservative candidate.

However, Brunswick County's party leaders had little enthusiasm for Super Tuesday.

"It was one of the sorriest turnouts we've ever had," said Democratic Party Chairman W.A. "Bill" Stanley, predicting a similar phenomenon statewide. "Super Tuesday is a complete flop as far as I'm concerned."

At first, said Stanley, he thought the low turnout was because of

something he hadn't done to get out the vote. "But the Republicans are in as bad a shape as we are," he added.

Super Tuesday did a disservice to voters and to the presidential candidates, Stanley suggested, because a combined May primary would have given a clearer indication of who the winners are, with local and state candidates helping to draw voters.

Republican Chairman John Dozier, contacted at home where he was recuperating following an illness, wasn't quite as vocal on the subject of Super Tuesday.

"I don't really see any point in it either," he said.

However, North Carolina's delegates to the GOP national convention will be bound on the first ballot to vote for the top GOP vote-getter in the state Tuesday—Bush.

Dozier said he had expected a low turnout; but he had also expected Robertson to do better than his showing Tuesday, based on precinct-level activity.



Jesse Meets Jesse

Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, who is seeking the Democratic nomination for president, was joined by Jesse A. Bryant (right), president of the Cedar Grove Branch of the NAACP on a recent tour of southeastern North Carolina. Jackson was invited, said Bryant, "to learn first hand information concerning drug problems and racial problems" in Brunswick, Bladen, Columbus, Robeson and adjoining counties.

Joint Probe Yields Arrests In Suspected Burglary Ring

BY RAHN ADAMS

A joint investigation by local law enforcement agencies last week yielded 11 arrests, including three in connection with a suspected drug-related burglary ring in southwestern Brunswick County.

According to Brunswick County Sheriff's Capt. Phil Perry, all 11 arrests were made last Wednesday at 1:15 a.m. during a party at a Turnpike Road residence near Supply.

"It just happened that way," Perry said last Thursday, in reference to how the suspects happened to be together at the time of the arrests.

Three Supply area men were charged with break-in and drug counts, while the other eight suspects face drug charges.

Rodney Wayne Suggs, 19, of Turnpike Road, Supply, was charged with two counts of breaking, entering and larceny; assault on a female; misdemeanor possession of marijuana; and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Michael Lindy McDuffie, 22, of Route 3, Supply, faces two counts of breaking, entering and larceny; misdemeanor possession of marijuana; and possession of drug paraphernalia.

And Jeffery Mark Harden, 24, of Lakeview Estates, Supply, was charged with two counts of breaking, entering and larceny; misdemeanor possession of cocaine; misdemeanor possession of marijuana; and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Following their arrests last Wednesday morning, all three were placed in the Brunswick County Jail under \$50,000 bonds.

The other eight were charged with one count each of misdemeanor possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

They included: Marcus Gregory McDuffie, 25, of Shallotte; Wayne Allen Mooney, 18, Route 3, Shallotte; William Chance Payne, 16, Route 3, Shallotte; Kenneth Daniel Vance, 27, Turnpike Road; George Linnon Dudley, 32, Ornum; Tanya Dawn Woolen, 18, Route 1, Supply; Shonda

D. Haley, 19, Route 3, Shallotte; and Angela Marie Munna, 17, Route 3, Shallotte.

The eight were released from custody on \$200 bonds.

Perry said the arrests resulted from several weeks of investigation by the sheriff's department, Holden Beach Police, Ocean Isle Beach Police and the SBI.

The charges against Suggs, McDuffie and Harden stemmed from two recent home break-ins in the Holden Beach area.

However, the on-going investigation may yield charges in connection with numerous other break-ins throughout southwestern Brunswick County over the past six months, Perry noted.

"I'm anticipating somewhere in the neighborhood of six to 10 burglaries (to be solved)," he said last Thursday. "As this thing progresses, it could be more than that. We're just beginning to put things together."

Lawmen obtained information about the suspected burglary ring

following two break-in arrests made last month by Ocean Isle Beach Police, he said.

Dudley—one of the 11 arrested last week—and another Robeson County man were both charged Feb. 16 with felony possession of cocaine, possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of stolen property.

Ocean Isle Beach Police Chief Bill Ozment said last month the two arrests were possibly linked to more than 20 vacation home break-ins that occurred in early February.

According to Perry, the home break-ins under investigation were drug-related.

"From the intelligence we could gather, it (stolen property) was being swapped for money or drugs," he said, "or the money was being used to buy drugs."

Perry noted that mainly jewelry, televisions, video cassette recorders, guns and household appliances were taken from the residences.

"We have recovered some of the property but not all of it," he added.

BERNARDS SEEK INVESTIGATION

Tougher School Drug, Alcohol Rules Coming

BY SUSAN USHER

Harsher penalties are ahead for Brunswick County students who make alcohol and drugs part of the school scene.

Monday night, board of education members voiced broad support for a draft policy presented by Superintendent John Kaufhold for review and revision. The draft will be rewritten and presented for a vote at the board's April 4 meeting.

Kaufhold said the board had made a commitment to its fight against student drug and alcohol use. "We think we do need to get tougher," he noted. "This is very strict. We think it will go a long way toward deterring drug abuse in our schools."

Suggesting wording revisions to make the language of the policy clearer and more consistent, member Doug Baxley said that over all, the policy was "on the right track."

The proposed policy calls for an automatic 10-day out-of-school suspension for first offenders, or junior high and senior high students caught for the first time using, possessing, under the influence of, or selling, transmitting or distributing drugs or alcohol in school, on school grounds, and off-campus while on a school-sponsored function.

A principal would recommend long-term suspension, or "exclusion" from school for the remainder of the

school year unless the student and one parent or guardian enters a rehabilitation program, obtains substance abuse counseling or enters some other approved intervention or treatment program.

"Involvement of parents early in this process is one thing research has shown is making a difference," Chairman James Forstner said.

The school system is now in the process of identifying community agencies to provide substance abuse programs for the offenders. Also, Superintendent Kaufhold is contacting local business and industry to see if they would help pay for treatment for families who cannot afford it.

Under current policy, a student who violates drug and alcohol rules is suspended for three to 10 days and then returns to school.

At member Dot Worth's suggestion, the policy will also include disciplinary steps for elementary students who violate the policy.

Forstner warned that school system administrators and board members should be prepared to "take the heat" from parents once the policy is adopted.

"This kind of policy is great until it's my child," he said, referring to community reception of the policy. "The heat's coming."

Investigation Sought
 Under the proposed policy change,

a West Brunswick High School senior suspended 14 days this winter for letting passengers on his bus drink alcohol could have received a long-term suspension, according to Superintendent Kaufhold.

Monday night, board members heard from William H. Dowdy, a Wilmington attorney hired by the family of senior Bryan Bernard.

Dowdy called for an in-house investigation of the incident by the board, saying the student's rights had been violated because punishment was rendered "before him getting minimal legal due process, such as a hearing."

"It was levied without his getting (See TOUGHER, Page 2-A)

Local Oyster Season May Be History

BY DOUG RUTTER

A state environmental official last week said there are strong possibilities that local shellfishermen have seen the last of this season's oyster harvest.

George Gilbert, assistant supervisor of the shellfish sanitation program of the N.C. Division of Health Services, said results of tests conducted on oysters last week showed little change in the amount of toxicity concentrated in their bodies.

And with the closing of oyster season statewide effective March 19, Gilbert said it is unlikely local beds will reopen before the fall.

"I'd say chances are awfully remote that anything will happen again with oysters," he said. "We're discouraged, but I guess we can't say we're totally surprised."

According to Gilbert, state environmental officials have learned quite a bit since the algae bloom was first detected off the North Carolina coast in October.

Although the state has received informational assistance from environmental agencies in Florida where the algae blooms are somewhat common, he said this infestation has created some problems which have never been experienced.

"I think we've come to realize we're in a completely different situation," he said.

Gilbert explained that lower water temperatures in North Carolina have slowed down the process of shellfish purging themselves of the toxins.

During previous red tide infestations in Florida waters, oysters have cleansed themselves within six

weeks. However, with winter water temperature differences of some 20 degrees between North Carolina and the Gulf of Mexico, local oysters have pumped the toxins at a much slower rate.

Meanwhile, the 50-mile stretch between New River and Marshallberg, which was infested with the highest concentrations of toxic algae for the longest period of time, also remains closed to clamming.

Gilbert said there has been some reduction in meat toxicity within the past two weeks, but not enough to recommend the beds be reopened.

William Hogarth, director of the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, said the state made the decision to conclude all oyster harvesting next Saturday based on input gathered at several recent public hearings.

The state wanted to extend the season to provide for

shellfishermen hurt by the "red tide," he explained, but also wanted to protect areas which had been "overharvested" this season.

He said oyster beds in the northern part of the state, which was not affected by the algae, as well as areas in Brunswick County were harvested more than usual this season.

"We're trying to allow them to continue harvesting what they can," he added. "Our main objective is to do what we can to get some of the economic hardship behind them."

Oyster season south of Surf City usually lasts until March 1 while the season in the northern part of the state usually ends a month later. State law requires the season to close no later than March 31.