

Easter Activities Scheduled Sunday

Both religious and secular Easter observances are slated Sunday in the area.

Sunday at 10:15 a.m. the South Brunswick Interchurch Council is sponsoring a brief "blessing of the palms" service at the old Sunnyside School in Shalotte Municipal Park, with the public invited.

Palm Sunday, the first day of Holy Week, recalls the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem riding upon a donkey, when the people shouted "Hosanna" and scattered palms in his path.

In a more secular observance of the Easter season and springtime, a community Easter egg hunt will be held from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at the Brunswick County Government Center in Bolivia.

Youngsters ages pre-school through age nine are invited to participate in the hunt, which is sponsored by the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department.

Youngsters are asked to bring a basket and register for a prize. Candy will be provided.

UOB To Recommend Studies On County's Water Needs

BY RAHN ADAMS

"We think we've got one more rabbit in the hat for '88, but after that the rabbits are gone," Water System Director Kenneth Hewett said last week about the system's capacity to meet peak water needs in southwestern Brunswick County.

Pointing out that the county water system must "beat the peak" like a power company, Hewett reminded county officials last week that the demand for water in areas southwest of Shalotte will exceed current capacity by July 1989, according to growth estimates.

Discussion of that issue and others involving county water service came at last Thursday's three-hour meeting of the Brunswick County Utility Operations Board in Bolivia.

The meeting included a 50-minute executive session requested by UOB Acting Director John Harvey to discuss "personnel and contractual relationships." No action was taken as a result of the closed-door session.

UOB members present included Chairman William English, Robert Nubel, Morris Crouch, Alfonza Roach and Ed Gore. Jimmy Oldham, Ernest McGee and ex officio member

Frankie Rabon were absent.

Projects Discussed

County Manager John T. Smith and Finance Director Lithia Hahn also were on hand to discuss possible methods of funding major additions to what Harvey called the county's "basic backbone water system."

At the UOB's January meeting, Hewett estimated that water consumption in southwestern Brunswick County will reach 2.9 million gallons per day next year, with the peak occurring over the July 4th weekend. The system's current capacity southwest of Shalotte is 2.6 million gallons per day.

This summer the demand will be met with Hewett's last "rabbit in the hat"—by operating the Calabash River pump station on a "time mode," pumping water out of the Sunset Beach area only at night, he said last Thursday.

Hewett noted that the long-range solution would be construction of a water line from Shalotte to the Seaside area along U.S. 17 and N.C. 904. Preliminary cost estimates for the project range from \$3 million to \$4.3 million.

Other major additions will even-

ually be needed to increase capacity to the Holden Beach and Southport areas.

Smith and Ms. Hahn said \$2.1 million is available now for water projects in Brunswick County. Regardless of the amount allocated for water in the 1988-89 budget, the county will have to find other revenue sources to fund major additions to the water system. Possible sources include a tax increase, water rate increase or bond referendum, they said.

"Other than those three sources, I don't know where you're going to get the money," Smith commented.

Studies Recommended

Following lengthy discussion, board members voted unanimously to recommend that commissioners authorize three separate feasibility studies involving additions or changes in the water system.

If authorized, the studies would involve the proposed U.S. 17 and N.C. 904 water line; proposed additions which would rid the system of other "missing links;" and the proposed closing of the old groundwater treatment plant on N.C. 211.

Earlier in the meeting, Smith told

UOB members that he would rather see them do the feasibility studies before they presented commissioners with a list of water system needs.

"What we need to do then is prioritize what (needs) we have here and put them in sequence—put them on a calendar," said Gore.

"I don't see how we can avoid it (feasibility studies)," said Nubel, in making his motion to recommend the studies.

The board also approved a motion by Nubel to study the possible closing of the N.C. 211 plant. Several months ago, Nubel suggested that the water system could save money by using only the new Northwest Treatment Plant.

SAD Updates Given

Engineer Jay Houston of Lewis and Associates brought the UOB up to date on the progress of water projects in the county's six special assessment districts (SADs).

Houston said last Thursday that the SAD 2 project in the Brick Landing area was about 90 percent

finished, with all water lines installed and completion expected within 30 days. The SAD 1 project in the North Holden Beach area was about 25 percent complete, with about half of the water lines installed.

Materials were to be delivered to SAD 3 in the Seaside area on Monday (March 21). The engineer said contractors have until June 23 to complete the project.

At last Thursday's meeting, the UOB unanimously approved recommendations involving SADs 2 and 4. The board voted to recommend assessing property owners in SAD 2 on a front footage basis—the same method approved for SAD 1. The UOB also put its stamp of approval on the plans and specifications for SAD 4, which is located in the Sea Pines area.

Public hearings on preliminary assessment resolutions for SADs 5 and 6 are scheduled for March 30 in Bolivia. SAD 5 is in the Ocean Pine Acres area, and SAD 6 is in the Whispering Heights and Water Wonderland area.

Deputies Respond To 854 Calls

Officers with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department answered 854 calls, including 77 domestic calls, during the month of February.

Last month, 250 investigations were initiated by the sheriff's department, and 33 arrests were made as prosecuting witnesses. No arrests were made on drunk and disruptive charges.

Also, \$28,656.71 worth of stolen property was recovered.

Officers served 328 local warrants, 587 civil papers, two juvenile petitions, two foreign warrants and four mental and inebriate papers last month.

In addition, officers spent 441 on-duty hours and six off-duty hours in court. Some 247 witnesses were summoned.

Members of the sheriff's department drove 88,151 miles last month and used 5,845 gallons of gasoline.

While on patrol, deputies discovered one fire and found one door or window open. Some 19 crime prevention meetings were held in February.

Paine Trial Opens In Federal Court

Trial of a former Shalotte physician on charges of insurance and mail fraud opened in U.S. District Court in Wilmington Monday.

The trial of Karen N. Paine on 89 counts of Medicaid, Medicare or mail fraud is expected to continue two to three weeks, J. Michael Carpenter, director of the Medicaid Investigations Unit of the N.C. Department of Justice, said last week. Carpenter has been cross-designated as a special assistant U.S. Attorney so that he can prosecute the case in federal court.

This is the first case in the Eastern court district to all involve all three types of counts, according to Carpenter.

Paine was arrested by U.S. Marshals in Shalotte on Oct. 15, following her indictment on Oct. 13 by a federal grand jury meeting in Fayetteville.

The federal indictment was the result of a two-year investigation conducted jointly by the Medicaid Investigations Unit and the Office of Investigations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Greensboro.

Fraud is alleged in the counts regarding reimbursements obtained for services the investigators contend were never rendered to patients. Paine was indicted on 39 counts of Medicare fraud, 19 counts of Medicaid fraud and 31 counts of mail fraud.

Information on 23 patients contained in the indictments specify reimbursements for more than \$25,000 in public and private insurance payments.

The challenged services were allegedly rendered between the period December 1982 through Jan. 17, 1986.

On that same date, Paine voluntarily

surrendered her license to practice medicine to the N.C. Board of Medical Examiners, after a hearing was scheduled by that board on an unrelated complaint.

Paine had practiced general medicine from an office on Forest Drive, which was destroyed last Sept. 14 by a fire under investigation as possible arson.

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