

## BEMC Manager Believes In Community Service

BY DOUG RUTTER

"If you want some work done, go to the person who's busy."

Those dozen words once read by David Batten on the wall of a welding shop stuck firmly in his mind.

And if his actions are any indication of his thoughts, he enjoys his work very much because he is as busy as the proverbial beaver.

A native of Columbus County and graduate of Hallsboro High School, Batten has been general manager and executive vice president of Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation since June 1981.

As manager, he said his daily task is to direct the entire operation and carry out the goals of the organization's 32,000 members as voiced through the board of directors.

"It's the type of job that you live because of the complexity of it," he explained. "You don't just do it."

Batten, 43, lives at Buccaneer Hills near Holden Beach, a place he fondly refers to as "paradise," with his wife, Kay, and their three children.

In describing himself, he uses the terms strong leader, family man, aggressive, self-confident, knowledgeable and compassionate.

He explained that his approach to most situations is one of positive action. "Instead of shirking it and turning your back, you go after it," he said. "I'm one who believes there is time enough to do it all."

Batten said he follows a simple philosophy on life. "What you put into it is what you get out," he explained. "We're not gonna be here but one time."

Before his promotion to general manager, Batten worked for the electric cooperative for 10 years as assistant administrator and district manager in Whiteville.

He is also a former vocational agriculture instructor at Whiteville High School and was involved in promoting industrial development as a regional representative with the state Department of Commerce.

Earlier this month, Batten was elected to a one-year term as president of the N.C. Association of Electric Cooperatives. This organization, made up of 28 cooperatives throughout the state which served about 500,000 customers and sold \$6.5 million of electricity in 1987, is currently searching for ways to improve rural economic conditions.

In February, Batten was re-elected to a three-year term as director of the National Rural Telecommunications Corporation. Currently serving as vice president of the NRTC board of directors, Batten was one of the 10 original founders of the group which organized two years ago to address the need for telecommunications through the use of satellite dishes.

In conjunction with his involvement in NRTC, Batten established a local satellite dish service last year, Rural Consumer Service Corporation, as a subsidiary of

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He also serves on the community and economic development committee of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

As a regional representative, Batten coordinates various rural revitalization and growth projects from North Carolina to Maine. Last year, he spoke at four national marketing conferences on behalf of the NRECA.

Batten also promotes the future of electric energy through his service on a national research task committee for the Electric Power Research Institute in California.

His educational achievements include a B.S. degree in agricultural education and a master's in education from N.C. State University. He has also earned a master's degree in management through the NRECA.

In addition to his heavy involvement in the business sector, Batten also serves as president of the Brunswick Community College Foundation Board, which works toward establishing endowment funds and scholarship programs for the college.

He said recent growth at the college's main campus should not only help the students, but also should create a greater sense of community pride.

"I'm excited about the stage it's in now," he added. "I want to see us attract some good students and also help the needy students in the area."

And it may be only fitting that the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce office in Shallotte sits on property leased through BEMC. Batten serves on the board of directors and is a past president.

He is also involved in the operations of Shallotte's Calvary Baptist Church, where he serves as a trustee and chairman of the finance committee.

"It's quite exciting when you're involved in so many different things," he said. "If you can get wrapped up in it, you really learn to love it."

With his feet so deeply entrenched in the happenings of Brunswick County, it is hard to believe the man has any time for hobbies.

But in addition to an occasional cast of the fishing line and jaunt around the golf links to free his mind from the pressures of big business, Batten said he is a carpenter at heart.

"I'm not a workaholic. I just have something going all the time," he said. "I feel I'm at the ideal stage of happiness and involvement."



DAVID BATTEN (left) talks with Congressman Charlie Rose during a recent visit to Brunswick County. Batten, general manager of Brunswick Electric

Membership Corporation since 1981, believes his position in the business community works hand in hand with his role as a leader in the private sector.

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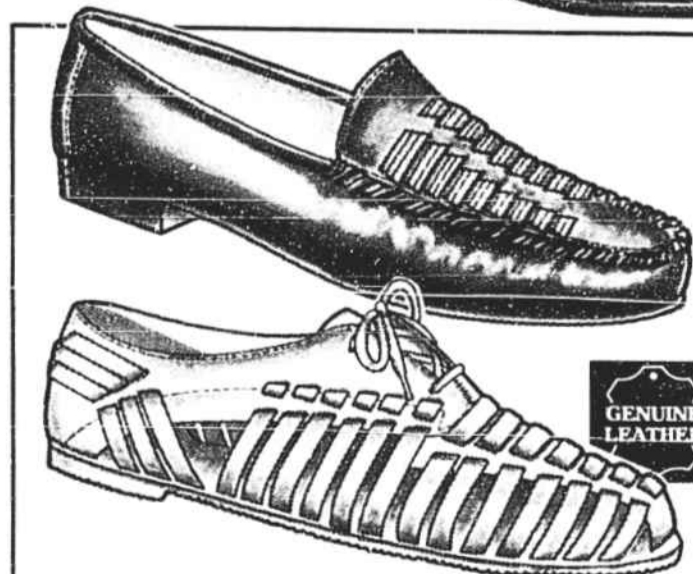
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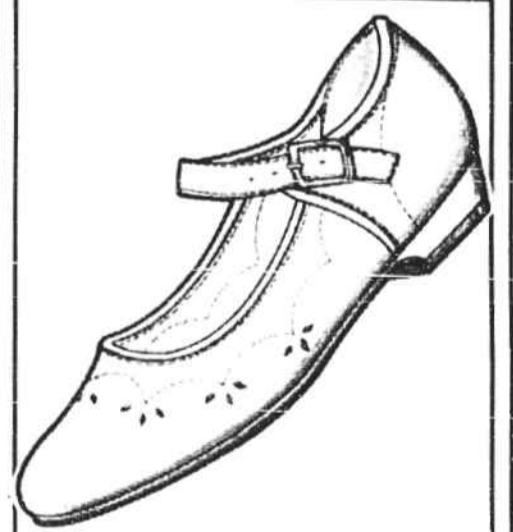
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