

## Lawmen Get Second Canine To Put The Bite On Crime

BY RAHN ADAMS

The newest addition to the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department's "canine corps" may not be a purebred but he is definitely a champion—of crime prevention, that is.

Although opposition surfaced last fall to the department's plans to use a drug-detecting dog in local schools for the first time, this second "dog"—on the job now for over a month—has enjoyed a much more positive reception.

"You call, and we'll haul and be there with the dog," Crime Prevention Officer Don Gates assured the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation Women's Committee last Wednesday morning, after he introduced them to "McGruff the Crime Dog," a puppet which is being used in Gates' crime prevention programs for children.

The sheriff's department bought the three-foot-tall "bloodhound" in early April from a puppet manufacturer in San Diego, Calif. The \$300 used to buy McGruff and related materials was taken from drug forfeiture funds that the department received earlier this year.

But according to Gates, McGruff won't be concentrating his efforts only on drug awareness. Other crime

prevention programs on cassette tapes involve "stranger danger," traffic safety, latch-key children and child molestation.

He added that the puppet programs are geared toward children in kindergarten through the fourth grade. Before school ends next month, the puppet will appear at Shallotte Middle School and Leland Middle School. Gates unveiled McGruff on May 11 at Leland's Lincoln Primary School.

"It was fantastic," Gates said. "The kids accept him as being a real, honest-to-goodness, talking dog. After the program was over, they all wanted to hug him and pet him."

According to Gates, that type of acceptance enables him to communicate more easily with youngsters. "It gets the information to the children much easier," he said. "They remember it better."

McGruff's job doesn't end there. Last month he came to the aid of another member of the local sheriff's department.

Gates said Detective Nancy Simpson, who investigates child abuse cases, used the puppet to interview a youngster who had been molested. "The child opened up more to the puppet than to the adults," he noted.



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER Don Gates introduces "McGruff the Crime Dog" to members of the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation Women's Committee last Wednesday in Shallotte. The new puppet is being used in Gates' crime prevention programs for children.

## Four Sentenced In Rape Case

Four Shallotte area men, who initially faced rape charges, pleaded guilty last week to crime against nature counts stemming from a sexual assault in January. Three of the four received active prison sentences.

Willie Earl Johnson, 18, of Route 4, Shallotte; Terry McCray, 18, and David Lee McCray, 24, both of Route 1, Shallotte; and Frankie Pickett, 16, of Route 1, Ash, each entered guilty pleas last Thursday in Brunswick County Superior Court to one count of crime against nature, according to the clerk of court's office.

Judge Giles R. Clark sentenced both Johnson and Terry McCray to six-year prison terms, with credit for the time they served while awaiting trial. In both cases, the crime against nature charge was consolidated with a conviction on one count of felonious larceny.

David McCray was sentenced to three years in prison, with credit for time served. Pickett's three-year prison term was suspended for three years, with three years of supervised probation. Also, Pickett was fined \$250 and was ordered to perform 100 hours of community service work.

All four faced possible maximum prison sentences of 10 years and presumptive sentences of three years.

According to court records, additional charges against the four—including two counts of first-degree rape, two counts of first-degree sexual offense and another crime against nature charge—were dismissed as part of plea agreements.

The Brunswick County Sheriff's Department arrested the four men on the rape and sex offense counts on Jan. 19, one day after Johnson, Pickett and Terry McCray were jailed by Shallotte Police on shoplifting charges. David McCray was taken into custody Jan. 19 at his residence.

In February, the four were indicted by a Brunswick County grand jury on the rape, sex offense and crime against nature charges.

At the time of their arrests, Brunswick County Sheriff's Detective Lindsay Walton said the charges stemmed from two alleged rapes involving a 16-year-old Calabash area girl. The sexual assaults allegedly occurred Dec. 6, 1987, and Jan. 9 in the Pinecrest community.

## Local Teen-Ager Hurt In Weekend Traffic Accident

A Supply teen-ager was listed in serious condition Tuesday at an area hospital after being struck by a car early Saturday near Shallotte.

According to Highway Patrol spokesperson Ruby Oakley, the accident occurred Saturday at 12:34 a.m., 2.7 miles north of Shallotte on Cumbee Road, when Jonathan Gore Clemmons, 18, was hit by a 1981 Buick driven by Michael Lee Nelson, 16, also of Supply.

Clemmons was taken by rescue squad ambulance to The Brunswick

Hospital in Supply before being transferred to New Hanover Memorial Hospital in Wilmington for further treatment.

Ms. Oakley said Nelson was traveling east on Cumbee Road when he rounded a curve and encountered two stopped vehicles—one on the right shoulder of the road and the other in the left travel lane.

Clemmons was struck when he stepped from the vehicle on the left into the path of Nelson's car. Nelson told Trooper Gerald Williams that

the headlights on Clemmons' vehicle obstructed his vision.

No charges were filed in the accident. Damage to Nelson's car was estimated at \$400.

In another traffic mishap last week, a Supply teen-ager suffered moderate injuries in a one-car wreck Friday near Supply.

Ms. Oakley said the accident happened Friday at 10:30 a.m., four miles south of Supply on Civietown Road.

Rodney Wayne Suggs, 19, ran off the left side of the road in his 1980 Ford and struck a ditch bank. He told the investigating trooper that his vehicle's steering mechanism malfunctioned, Ms. Oakley noted.

The teen-ager was taken by rescue squad ambulance to The Brunswick Hospital for treatment of non-incapacitating injuries.

He was charged with a seat belt violation. Damage to his car was estimated at \$1,200.

## BCC Seeks Federal Matching Funds For Endowment Program

Brunswick Community College is applying for a federal endowment challenge grant of up to \$100,000.

If awarded, the school would have 18 months in which to raise an equal sum of matching money for its endowment fund, working through the Brunswick Community College Foundation.

Annie Marie Schettini, BCC's public information officer, said the college won't know for three to six months if it will receive the grant.

Applications for the grants—which ranged from \$50,000 to \$250,000 in 1987—are reviewed and assigned points on the basis of several criteria, including the percentage of students who receive need-based financial aid.

Brunswick Community College meets the basic qualifications for the grant program since it is an accredited two-year institution that has at least 50 percent of its degree students receiving such financial assistance. Also, BCC has a low

average expenditure per full-time equivalent student.

Endowment funds from the matching grant are monies that must be invested, with the restriction that the principal and 50 percent of the income may not be spent for 20 years.

According to David Batten, president of the BCC Foundation, "This federal matching funds program presents a definite challenge to the institution... Through the leadership of the Brunswick Community College Foundation and with the support of the entire community, we will meet this challenge full-force if this grant is awarded."

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Seeing Well As You Grow Older

A Special 12-Part Series About Our Changing Eyesight  
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**Unrecognized Symptoms of Cataracts**

By George Tate, Jr., M.D.

Cataracts are sly. Loss of vision from cataracts often occurs so slowly that most senior adults are not even aware of their effects on their style of living.

Cataracts usually begin to develop in one eye first, and the good vision in the other eye "hides" the poor vision in the eye with the cataract (to discover this, cover one eye at a time, and see if there is a difference in your vision from left eye to right.)

Here are some unrecognized symptoms of cataracts:

1. Driving up over curbs while turning the car. With poor vision in one eye only, depth perception may be affected.
2. Mismatched colors of clothing (a blue tie with a brown shirt.) Because cataracts are often yellow or brown in color, the blue and violet colors cannot be seen as well. One lady bought lamp shades for her home two days before having her cataracts removed, then after surgery she discovered they were the wrong color. Many patients are thrilled with how blue the sky appears after surgery.
3. Tinting hair "blue." How could Mabel tint her hair blue? No one suspected cataracts. For the same reason given above, many women in their senior adult years can't see the "blue" in their hair after tinting.
4. The New England Journal of Medicine recently reported that cataracts are an overlooked cause of medication errors. The yellow cataracts prevent many adults from seeing the colors pills they are taking. Blue may appear dull grey. Green may appear dark brown.

For more information about cataracts, or about other eye disorders, call SightLine, our toll-free information service at 1-800-227-5189.

This special series on eyes is sponsored by Carolina Eye Associates of Brunswick County, Brunswick Hospital at Doctors Complex #2, Supply, NC. Phone (919) 754-5434.