

Raisin' Funds, Friends

Brunswick Community College's Foundation begins its second year, handing out awards and announcing its first endowed scholarship. Details on the winners, the challenge are on Page 7-A.

Come Again, Boys?

The scenario's familiar: a 3-0 warm-up and a league opener against arch-rival East Bladen. But this time the Trojans look to win when they play Friday at home, Page 9-B.



The King Is Back!

Local pier fishermen were landing kings again last weekend after a long, dry spell. Details are in the Fishing Report, Page 10-C.

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STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUITER

CHARLES WILSON II waits to vote on the incorporation of Varnamtown Tuesday morning as election judge Mary Simmons, center, looks for his name in the list of registered voters. By 8:30 a.m., 23 of the com-

munity's 181 registered voters had cast ballots. At right is Judy Galloway, another election judge who greeted voters at Dixon Chapel United Methodist Church.

Varnamtown And Sandy Creek Say 'Yes' To Incorporation

BY SUSAN USHER

Drizzling rain didn't keep voters in the Varnamtown and Sandy Creek communities from turning out in large numbers Tuesday, with a solid major of them saying "yes" to incorporation.

An official canvass will be conducted by the Brunswick County Board of Elections at 11 a.m. today (Thursday). If the tallies are confirmed as expected, Tuesday's votes created the county's 15th and 16th municipalities: the towns of Varnamtown and Sandy Creek.

After the outcome of each referendum is confirmed, the interim town boards will schedule organizational meetings in their respective communities.

turnout of between 100 and 150.

As did a recent fish fry to benefit a local family, Davis said the high turnout Tuesday, "goes to show how closely knitted this community is."

While he's certain there were at least several instances in which one brother may have voted for and another against incorporation, Davis added, "They still love each other."

With the election now history, he predicted that life in the community would settle back to normal: "I don't think anyone is upset. This community is good about that."

Rev. Varnum's telephone line was busy after Tuesday's referendum and he could not be reached for comment. Earlier in the day he had been optimistic of approval, but noted that there was some opposition.

Sandy Creek Wants Services

Ernest "Ernie" Grainger, chairman of the Sandy Creek incorporation committee, said he was "real pleased" with the 70 percent turnout, especially considering that it was raining two-thirds of the day. The community had 105 eligible voters.

"I was surprised we didn't have any more 'no' votes than we had," he added. "That's a very low percentage."

Grainger first began working on incorporation four years ago, he said. "At first there wasn't much interest, but the people changed themselves. Now they like the idea."

Grainger said residents are interested in improved road maintenance and possibly city water, as well as statutes with which to enforce restrictions now incorporated

in deed restrictions and property owners association rules.

While the new town of Varnamtown would include an estimated population of about 400, Sandy Creek would have about half that number, estimated Orie Gore Tuesday night.

Both towns plan to operate under the mayor-council plan of administration, but beyond that their expectations differ.

Sandy Creek's town council will elect the mayor from its membership of five and the mayor will serve at the board's pleasure. Council members will serve staggered, four-year terms.

In Varnamtown, the mayor will be elected by the voters to a two-year term of office. The town's five aldermen will serve staggered, four-year terms.

Sandy Creek's charter calls for a proposed property tax rate of 30 cents per \$100 property valuation; Varnamtown's calls for a maximum tax rate of 10 cents per \$100.

Sandy Creek residents are eager for the town to begin providing municipal type services, according to Grainger, while Varnamtown residents favored incorporation in part to protect the community's existing character and independence in the light of the rapid development surrounding it.

Local bills providing for incorporation of the two towns—each subject to a favorable referendum—were introduced by Rep. David Redwine and adopted by the state legislature this summer.

8 'White Tide' Drug Defendants Receive Active Prison Sentences

BY RAHN ADAMS

With active sentences ranging from four weekends to 25 years, Superior Court Judge Samuel T. Currin last week sent eight drug defendants who were indicted in this year's "Operation White Tide" to jail.

According to the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office, the eight included Kevin Benz, 29, Jeffery Evans, 24, Christopher Corbett, 21, and Ricky Caison, 28, all of Supply; Richard Royal, 30, of Shallotte; Charlotte McCumbee, 26, of Ash; Cornelia Gonzalez, 52, of Miami, Fla.; and William Williamson, 28, of Fayetteville.

They were among 48 individuals indicted in April on cocaine and marijuana trafficking charges by Brunswick County's second investigative grand jury in as many years.

During sentencing hearings last Wednesday and Thursday in Brunswick County Superior Court, Currin determined that all eight defendants had provided substantial assistance to investigators, with his findings based on testimony from SBI agents who were involved in the special grand jury probe.

A finding of substantial assistance allows a judge to hand down a lighter sentence than is required by state drug trafficking laws.

Benz, who initially faced a mandatory minimum prison sentence of 273 years and \$1.85 million fine, was sentenced to a 25-year prison term and \$5,000 fine. He pleaded guilty June 27 to 15 counts of trafficking in more than 28 grams of cocaine, four counts of trafficking in more than 400 grams of cocaine and four counts of trafficking in more than 100 pounds of marijuana.

Ms. Gonzalez was sentenced to a 22-year prison term and \$2,000 fine. She pleaded guilty Aug. 30 to four counts of trafficking in more than 28 grams of cocaine and four counts of trafficking in more than 400 grams of cocaine.

Williamson, who is Ms. Gonzalez's

son, received a 15-year prison term and \$1,000 fine, after he pleaded guilty last Thursday to six counts of trafficking in more than 28 grams of cocaine, three counts of conspiracy to traffic in more than 28 grams of cocaine, two counts of trafficking in more than 400 grams of cocaine and one count of conspiracy to traffic in more than 400 grams of cocaine.

Evans was sentenced to an eight-year prison term and \$5,000 fine. He pleaded guilty June 30 to conspiracy to traffic in more than 400 grams of cocaine.

Royal received a five-year prison term and was recommended for work release after he pleaded guilty last Wednesday to four counts of trafficking in more than 28 grams of cocaine and four counts of conspiracy to traffic in more than 28 grams of cocaine.

Corbett was sentenced to a two-year prison term and also was recommended for work release. He pleaded guilty in June to conspiracy to traffic in more than 50 pounds of marijuana, conspiracy to traffic in more than 100 pounds of marijuana and four counts of conspiracy to traffic in more than 28 grams of cocaine.

Caison pleaded guilty last Wednesday to five counts of conspiracy to traffic in more than 28 grams of cocaine. He was sentenced to an active six-month jail term, with work release recommended; and a suspended 10-year prison term, with five years of supervised probation.

Ms. McCumbee, who pleaded guilty June 30 to conspiracy to traffic in more than 400 grams of cocaine, was ordered to serve four weekends in the Brunswick County Jail. Also, she was given a suspended 10-year prison term, with five years of supervised probation.

Without a finding of substantial assistance, the mandatory minimum sentence for a 400-gram cocaine trafficking charge is 35 years in prison and \$250,000 fine; 28-gram cocaine trafficking charge, seven years in prison, \$50,000 fine; 50-pound marijuana trafficking charge, five years

in prison, \$5,000 fine; and 100-pound marijuana trafficking charge, seven years in prison, \$25,000 fine.

Nine other drug cases—all separate from the special grand jury investigations—were disposed of during last week's term of Superior Court. They included:

•Stacy Leonard, Holden Beach, two counts of sale of cocaine, guilty pleas, six-year prison term and \$5,000 fine.

•David Boyer, Orlando, Fla., three counts of trafficking in cocaine, guilty pleas, substantial assistance found, five-year prison term and \$1,000 fine.

•Tony Brown, Bolivia, felonious sale of marijuana, guilty plea, six-month jail term, work release recommended, suspended two-year prison term, three years of supervised probation.

•Stephen Dean, Shallotte, three counts of sale of marijuana, guilty pleas, three-month jail term, suspended six-year prison term, three years of supervised probation.

•Lori Busby, Southport, four counts of sale of a controlled substance, guilty pleas, suspended five-year prison term, three years of supervised probation, \$250 fine.

•Weldon Paul Hewett, Shallotte, possession of more than one-half ounce of marijuana and maintaining a dwelling for keeping marijuana, guilty pleas, two consecutive suspended two-year prison terms, one year of supervised probation, two years of unsupervised probation, \$200 fine.

•Kenneth Bowman, address unavailable, sale of cocaine, pleaded guilty Feb. 8, suspended three-year prison term, one year of supervised probation.

•Jerry Varnam, Southport, sale of marijuana, guilty plea, suspended two-year prison term, three years of supervised probation, \$100 fine.

•Freddie Hewett, Shallotte, misdemeanor possession of marijuana, guilty plea, suspended 30-day jail term and \$100 fine.

Drainage Commissioners Seek County Support To Aid Reactivation Effort

BY RAHN ADAMS

Brunswick County Commissioners this week agreed to provide legal assistance in the effort to reactivate the Cawcaw Drainage District but delayed action on the drainage district board's request for financial help.

All five county commissioners were on hand for Monday night's 2 1/4-hour meeting in Bolivia, which also was attended by Drainage

District Commissioners Kendall Bellamy, Wendell Bennett and Jennings Edge.

Appearing before the county commission for the first time since the three-member drainage panel was reorganized in February, Chairman Bellamy asked for permission to have County Attorney David Clegg act as the drainage board's legal counsel.

Bellamy also asked for the county to loan the drainage board \$5,000 to cover the cost of mailing certified letters to property owners within the proposed new boundaries of the drainage district, which is one of the first steps in the reactivation process.

After conferring briefly with Clegg, county commissioners unanimously approved the drainage board's appeal for legal assistance. Clegg said he would represent the

district "up to a point . . . to where (the two boards') interests diverge."

When renewed discussion concerning reactivation of the drainage district began last fall, county commissioners and local soil and water conservation officials differed over the county's future financial involvement in the project. County officials maintained that the district should stand on its own, despite requests that the county fund restoration and maintenance of the 16 1/2-mile canal system located in southwestern Brunswick County.

Bellamy told the county board Monday that, if granted, the \$5,000 loan would be repaid from property owner assessments in the drainage district. "It (the district) was on sound footing before, and I certainly believe it'll be on sound footing again," Bellamy said, although he (See DRAINAGE, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

KENDALL BELLAMY, chairman of the Cawcaw Drainage District Board of Commissioners, listens to county commissioners' comments Monday night after requesting action by the board.

Shalotte Continues Robbery Investigation

Shalotte Police still had no suspects Tuesday in their continuing investigation of a robbery which occurred last week at Hill's Food Store.

The robbery was reported last Thursday at 11:37 a.m., according to Shalotte Police Chief Rodney Gause.

He said approximately 10 Spanish-speaking persons, who he described as either Mexicans or gypsies, entered the store and distracted employees. The group included two or three women, said Gause, and ranged in age from their early 20's to 40's.

One of the women started arguing with a clerk, he said, which caused the store manager to leave the office in the rear of the store.

The manager was counting money

at the time of the disturbance and placed it in an unlocked safe when he went to see what was going on. When the manager returned to the office, he discovered a "large amount" of money, checks and food stamps missing from the safe, said Gause.

The chief said he believes one or more of the group robbed the safe while the manager was trying to restore order. He said the persons were probably not local.

Following the robbery, Gause said police were looking for three vehicles used by the suspects—a late model black Monte Carlo with red pinstripes; a white, two-door Cavalier with black molding and Canadian tags; and an early model burgundy Camaro.

Man Charged With Murder Of Wife

A Supply man was being held without bond in the Brunswick County Jail Tuesday in connection with the stabbing death of his wife.

Pete Collins, 47, was charged with first-degree murder after he was arrested late Monday night at the couple's Sellers Road residence, according to Brunswick County Sheriff John C. Davis.

Eulene Collins, in her 40s, was dead when officers arrived on the scene

Monday around 11 p.m., Davis said. The home is located just west of U.S. 17 near The Brunswick Hospital.

The sheriff added that the husband had called Shallotte Volunteer Rescue Squad, who in turn notified the sheriff's department of the stabbing. Collins was taken into custody without incident.

Davis said the stabbing apparently followed a domestic quarrel. The woman suffered three stab wounds to the chest and abdomen from a large

kitchen knife. The weapon was seized by officers.

According to Brunswick County Coroner Greg White, the victim's body was sent Tuesday to the regional medical examiner's office in Jacksonville for autopsy. Tests results were expected to be available Wednesday, he said.

Davis said Collins made his first court appearance Tuesday in Bolivia and was denied bond.