

# Shallotte Voters Favor Wine Sales By Wide Margin

Shallotte residents flocked to the polls Tuesday to overwhelmingly support the off-premises sale of unfortified wines within the town limits.

Voters indicated their support by passing the referendum by almost a two-to-one margin, with 293 votes in favor of the measure and 145 against it.

"I wasn't surprised, and I'm glad it passed," Shallotte Mayor Jerry Jones said Tuesday night.

The mayor added that he agreed with local store managers, who requested the referendum in April, that both fortified and unfortified wines should be readily available in town.

The alcohol content of fortified wines, such as Mad Dog 20/20 and Thunderbird, is between 14 and 20 percent, while unfortified wines—also called dinner wines—have less than 14 percent alcohol. Unfortified wines already are sold in local grocery stores.

Jones reasoned that since wines with higher alcohol content already are permitted, wines with less alcohol should be allowed as well. He said the outcome probably would have been different if fortified wines weren't already available.

Voters in both of the town's precincts favored un-

fortified wine sales. The measure passed by a 210-75 margin in Frying Pan precinct and by an 83-70 margin in Shallotte precinct.

Of the town's 653 registered voters, 438 or about 67 percent voted in Tuesday's referendum.

Gerald Long, manager of Piggly Wiggly of Shallotte, said Tuesday night that he feels unfortified wine sales should have been allowed long ago in Shallotte. "I'm delighted that it passed," he said. "I've been trying to get it done for 17 years."

Noting that local residents previously had to drive to Ocean Isle Beach for dinner wines, he added, "It's just a

convenience to the people of this area."

Although the referendum failed three years ago, Long said local store managers felt that it would pass this time. He speculated that one of the reasons for passage Tuesday was that newcomers apparently are used to having table wines available.

He also said the fact that the referendum was held in conjunction with the general election helped passage. Previous referendums on wine sales have stood alone, attracting voters who opposed the issue but not necessarily those voters who favored it, he said.

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## Republicans Seat Four, Celebrate Most Wins Since Sweep In 1972

BY SUSAN USHER

Jubilant Brunswick County Republicans whooped and clapped Tuesday as they celebrated their largest sweep at the local polls since 1972. They re-elected incumbent Commissioner Frankie Rabon and filled three other county offices.

Turnout was high as predicted earlier by Board of Elections Supervisor Lynda Britt. Based on presidential returns, an estimated 62.5 percent of the county's 28,346 voters cast ballots. The largest turnout was in Shingletree Precinct in the Calabash area, at 1,799.

A large crowd lingered at the Public Assembly Building in Bolivia for the returns as a number of races remained close much of the night. Well before the last precinct, Leland, reporting at 11:45 p.m., local Republicans closed their nearby headquarters and moved the celebration to the return center.

When Frankie Rabon, from District 4, returns to the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners on Dec. 5, he will bring with him a GOP majority in Kelly Holden and Gene Pinkerton.

Robert Slockett will take office as the sole Republican on the Brunswick County Board of Education, defeating retired veteran educator Jonathan Hankins for the District 3 seat now held by James Forstner.

In the tightest contest of the evening, Pinkerton, a semi-retired businessman and newcomer to local politics, wrested the District 3 seat from the incumbent, Democrat Jim Poole, by a 192-vote margin. By the unofficial count the spread was sufficient to bar a challenge. However, official results won't be available until after the Board of Elections canvass today (Thursday).

Vote Said Message

Holden, a self-employed farmer and businessman, led the local GOP ticket with 9,712 votes in defeating District 1 incumbent Chris Chappell. Chappell is serving his sixth year on the board.

While presidential or gubernatorial "coattails" mattered, Holden said he thought local issues were of greater importance in Tuesday's county elections.

"I think it was the lack of confidence in county government I've talked about in my campaign." As one example, he cited the current board's manner of developing a county budget, which he said has been "haphazard and not well prepared" for the past several years.

Holden said environmental issues such as water quality in Lockwood Folly River—including his opponent's involvement with developers of a project along the river, "definitely made a difference," even in areas not directly affected by the river situation.

Overall, Tuesday's results indicate, said Holden, that "Brunswick County is ready for a two-party system. Individual candidates will be voted on their own merits, not party labels. That's the one message sent."

Of his own victory, Holden said he was "speechless," that it was by a greater margin than he had hoped for.

Democrats Elected

Returned to office were Democrats Clerk of Court Diana Morgan, Register of Deeds Robert Robinson, Coroner Greg White and District 1 Board of Education member Doug Baxley. Currently serving by appointment, Morgan and White won election to office in their own right, with Morgan leading the local Democrats with 11,270 votes.

"I'm real glad, I'm thrilled to death," said Morgan, praising supporters for their hard work. "But I feel bad not everybody is doing as well."

The only new Democrat to gain public office was Donna Baxter of Boiling Spring Lakes, who will fill the District 4 school board seat now held by Marvin McKeithan, a Democrat from Bolivia. Baxter defeated Republican John Watkins.

Regional Races

Rep. E. David Redwine won reelection handily with 11,565 votes in Brunswick County; his opponent, Rozell Hewett was the low vote-getter of the night with 6,304. Returns from Pender and New Hanover counties were unavailable; the 14th district includes one township in each.

Sen. R.C. Soles Jr. also won reelection, garnering 25,854 votes to GOP contender Randy Sullivan's 14,980.

U.S. Rep. Charles G. Rose also won re-election.

'We'll Be Back'

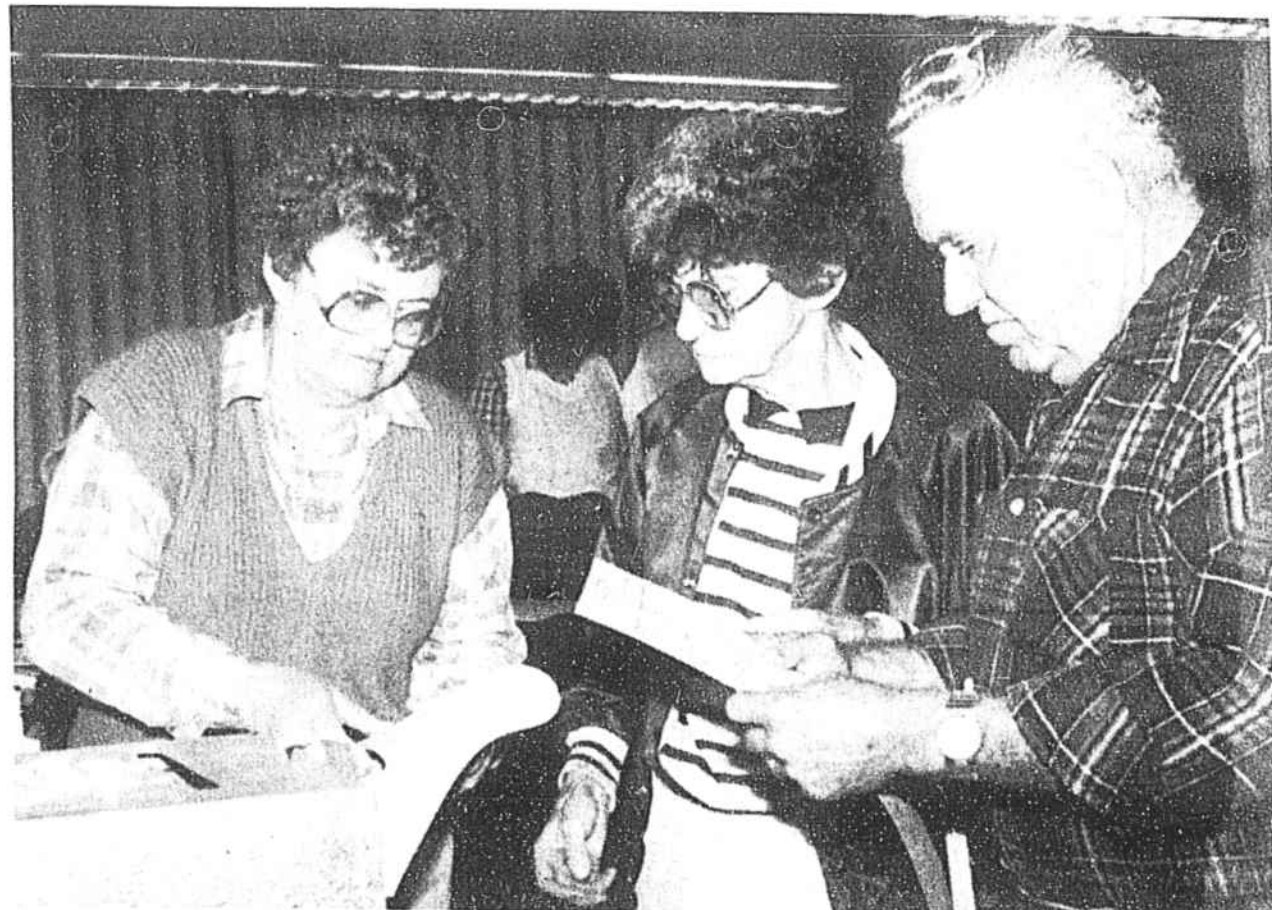
While Republicans celebrated Tuesday, many Democrats did not. However, most expressed optimism regarding future elections.

While Party Chairman W.A. (Bill) Stanley went home before all 22 precincts had reported, Treasurer Louis Vernon Ward made the rounds in his wheelchair, congratulating winners of both parties.

"We should congratulate them, they did a good job," he said. "You go out and do your best, congratulate the winners then go and start working on next time. We'll be back."

With Tuesday's results, Ward said he felt the impact of the county's steadily increasing number of senior citizens "hit home."

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A JAMMED VOTING MACHINE had voters from Frying Pan precinct manually stuffing ballot boxes for several hours Tuesday morning. Above, pollworker Esther Mae Gore helps Lee and Johnny Browning of

Copas Shores fold their ballots. The ballots were later fed through the repaired machine and counted without difficulty.

## Developers Return To Sunset With New Annexation Requests

BY SUSAN USHER

Developers of a proposed Seaside area shopping center appeared before the Sunset Beach town council again Monday night with additional requests for annexation they hope will lead to annexation of the center site itself.

Unlike an earlier request for satellite annexation, or annexation of property several miles outside the town limits, this proposal for contiguous annexation didn't get a flat refusal.

Instead, the council voted 3-1 for Town Administrator Linda Fluegel to

proceed with investigating the validity of the annexation petition once a corrected version is submitted. Voting for Council member Ed Gore's motion were Kathy Hill and Mary Katherine Griffith. Councilwoman Minnie Hunt voted against it. Councilman Al Odom was absent. It was he who made the motion at the Oct. 3 meeting to reject the satellite annexation request, saying he had strong objections to satellite annexation. Griffith was absent from the Oct. 3 meeting.

In voting against the move, Hunt told fellow members, "I believe per-

sonally and absolutely that we have North Myrtle Beach in our back yard and I have no doubt it will creep in, but I do not choose to invite it in my front door."

While taking the next step, council members made no commitment this week to approve the corrected request.

"I still would like to see a referendum on it," said Hill, even if the vote would be advisory only, not binding the town board to a specific action. The board took no action to set a referendum.

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## Shallotte Residents Oppose Home For Mentally Retarded

BY DOUG RUTTER

Despite a bombardment of complaints from an angry group of town residents who attended a public hearing last week, a group home for mentally retarded adults will be built in Shallotte.

About 40 residents of the neighborhood surrounding John and Milliken streets where construction of the home has been planned packed the conference room in town hall last Wednesday, with many voicing strong opposition to the chosen location.

But after almost two hours of sometimes heated debate between citizens and representatives of Southeastern Mental Health (SMH), it was publicly announced that the group home was coming to town regardless of any objections. Town board approval is not required for the home to be built.

"The house is coming to Shallotte," said SMH Chairman Rex Gore. "We are not in a position where we are going to jeopardize the funding we have received."

According to Gore, Southeastern Mental Health worked for five years and was passed over twice before being approved to receive some \$250,000 in federal and state funds to build the first group home in

Brunswick County.

Although the home will be built in Shallotte, Gore agreed last week to see if there is time to look at other sites in town without taking any chance of losing the funding. He said Monday that he expected official notification later this week from the N.C. Association for Retarded Citizens, who would own and run the home under the auspices of SMH.

Gore said last week that Southeastern is at a stage in the funding cycle that if it had to start over with site location, it would probably lose the funding. "We don't have any options," he said. "It's either here or we lose it."

Earlier in the hearing he had stated that it would take about 18 months to design and build the home and that it would not be operational until at least June, 1990.

The group home would house a maximum of six mentally retarded persons over the age of 18, and would cover between 2,500 and 3,000 square feet. While primarily for Brunswick County residents, it could be opened to mentally retarded adults in New Hanover and Pender counties, the two other counties served by SMH, if room were available.

An admissions committee which would include at least some local

representation would determine which adults would be allowed to live at the home. All would be mentally retarded but able to function in the community, and the selection process would be designed to keep out persons with chronic medical or behavioral problems.

SMH representative Claire Emerson said, "We will accept very capable people into our group home and we will have very capable people to look after them."

The primary purpose of the home would be to teach skills needed to live independently such as cooking and cleaning. The home would be under 24-hour-a-day supervision.

Adults who live in the home would either work during the day or participate in the Brunswick Interagency Program at Brunswick Community College in Supply.

The proposed location is on the dirt road extension of John Street on a piece of land which SMH currently has an option to purchase from town board member Jody Simmons.

Pressured by a few citizens at last week's hearing, Simmons said he would ask his attorney if there were any way he could prevent the purchase from going through.

He added, however, that he knew of the proposed group home when he

entered into the contract with SMH. Fielding a question from the audience, Simmons said, "I felt if it was next door to me, no, it would not bother me."

However, fellow board member Paul Wayne Reeves, who lives on John Street, supported the residents' views that there may be a better site in Shallotte for the facility. Reeves had first mentioned the concerns of his neighbors when SMH introduced the group home at a meeting last month.

Last week, he suggested that the home be built in a less populated area such as Hinson Street where its affect would be less "disruptive" to the neighborhood.

While three other locations in Brunswick County were considered, A.J. McClure of SMH said no other sites in Shallotte were given serious consideration.

"This site was found, it was in the price range and it was chosen," he said, noting the requirements for a group home location. Group homes must be built in residential areas which have water and sewer service and are close to stores and emergency services.

During the public hearing, citizens voiced concerns primarily about the

(See HOME, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

CLAIRE EMERSON of Southeastern Mental Health makes a point about the proposed group home for mentally retarded adults during last week's public hearing while Rex Gore, left, looks on. About 40 area residents, most of whom were from the John and Milliken street area where the home has been planned, packed Shallotte Town Hall to oppose that location.