

## Brunswick Gets State Funds For Maternity Care Program

Two Brunswick County physicians have received help in an effort to keep and encourage appropriate medical care for pregnant women through a state pilot program.

According to Brunswick County Health Director Michael Rhodes, the two local physicians involved in the program are Dr. Robert Hassler, an obstetrician, and Dr. Marilyn Boehm, a family practitioner.

Across the state, 52 physicians serving 22 rural counties are participating in the pilot program, which was funded in 1988 for one year by the General Assembly.

The program's aim is to help pay malpractice insurance premiums of family physicians and obstetricians who agreed to provide prenatal and obstetrical services in counties where such services are insufficient.

Rhodes said that the purpose of the program, which will begin in April, is to "increase the number of live births" in Brunswick County. He noted that with the recent death of Dr. Nora Hsu, Hassler and Boehm are the only two doctors who offer obstetrical services in the county.

The legislature appropriated \$240,000 to fund the pilot program. Compensation for participating physicians is limited to the difference up to \$6,500 between malpractice insurance with and without obstetrical care coverage.

Earlier this year, Brunswick County received \$9,286. No county could receive more than \$19,500.

Other counties in the program include Ashe, Cherokee, Columbus, Craven, Currituck, Duplin, Gates, Greene, Johnston, Jones, Macon, Martin, Pasquotank, Randolph, Sampson, Stokes, Swain, Tyrrell, Washington, Yadkin and Yancey.

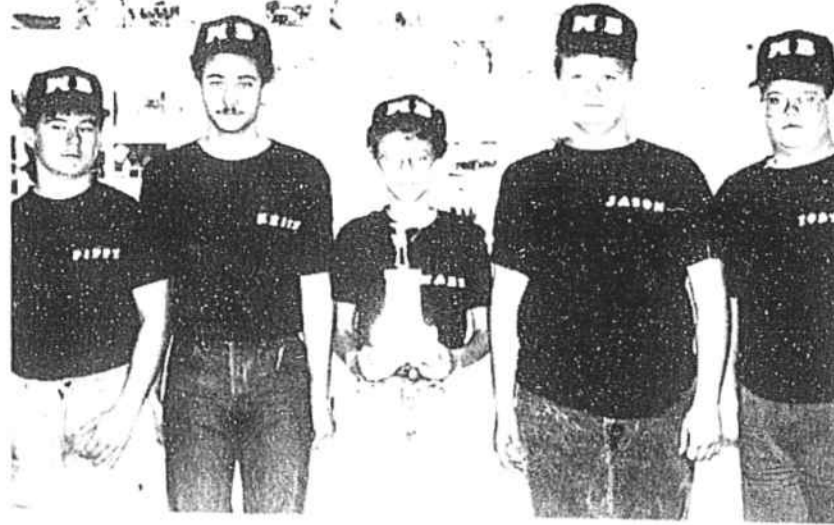
Rules for qualifying counties were adopted by the Commission for Health Services last November. Qualifying counties include those with no public or private prenatal services; those with no public prenatal clinic; or those whose prenatal clinic has no physician as either staff or back-up for nurse practitioners. Counties whose obstetrical services might be discontinued for lack of funds were also considered.

Participating physicians are required to provide complete obstetrical care, including prenatal and delivery services. They may not refuse to provide obstetrical care for any patient based on the patient's economic status or ability to pay. However, physicians are not required to take patients whose care is beyond their professional competence.

Obstetricians are concentrated in large urban and suburban areas, according to a survey recently released by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. That situation leaves a large number of rural areas throughout the nation without any obstetrical care at all.

The survey suggested that 27 percent of all obstetricians limited the number of high-risk patients they would care for due to malpractice concerns—an increase of 50 percent from 1983. More than 12 percent of all trained obstetricians have stopped practicing obstetrics altogether.

Malpractice insurance premiums have increased some 240 percent over the last five years. The premiums, which can run as high as \$52,000, averaged \$37,000 in 1987—up from an average of \$11,000 in 1983.



SIX STUDENTS make up the hunter safety teams for the West Brunswick High School FFA chapter. From the left above are Pippy Evans, Keith Logan, Mark Logan, Jason Bellamy and Toby Russ. Matthew Chappell is not pictured.

## FFA Archers Win At District

Future Farmers of America hunter safety teams from West Brunswick High School recently earned 1,991 overall points in three district contests, including a first in archery, to advance to state competition.

Teams competed in skeet shooting and rifle as well as archery.

The archery team consisted of Mark Logan, Toby Russ, Jason Bellamy and Keith Logan and won district competition with 704 points. Bellamy and Keith Logan tied for third place in individual competition with 184 points each.

The skeet/rifle team—Matthew Chappell, Keith Logan, Jason Bellamy and Pippy Evans—scored 600 points in skeet shooting and 687 in rifle.

Chapter officers will be installed and special recognitions made at the chapter's annual Parent-Member banquet on May 17, at 7:30 p.m. at Jane's Seafood Restaurant.

## Walk-A-Thon Is Scheduled

A walk-a-thon to raise money for cystic fibrosis research will be held Saturday, April 8, at 2 p.m., at Zion Baptist Church, Ash.

According to event co-chairperson Lottie Ludlum, support for the walk-a-thon is needed through both donations and active participation.

"Cystic fibrosis is the number one genetic killer of children, but new research discoveries now offer hope for a cure," Mrs. Ludlum said. "Research is the only answer for the 30,000 children and young adults in this country who suffer from cystic fibrosis."

Each walk-a-thon participant who collects \$35 will win a CF shirt. Additional prizes are available.

For more information on the event, contact Mrs. Ludlum at 287-3876.

## Support Group Plans Meeting

A newly-formed Head Injury Support Group at Doshier Memorial Hospital, Southport, will hold an organizational meeting on Tuesday, April 4, at 7 p.m., in the hospital conference room.

The organization is open to all Brunswick County residents who have survived head injuries and to their families.

For more information on the support group, contact Doshier Hospital speech pathologist Beth Conrad at 457-9588.

## Lumber Sale Set

A special sale of lumber will be held at the Military Ocean Terminal, Sunny Point, on April 6 and 20 from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Offered will be long pieces of lumber, including some hardwood. Price will be \$100 per cord, said Myrtle D. Meade, public affairs officer.

## Brunswick To Receive Weatherization Funds

Brunswick County Public Housing Authority will receive a \$20,000 grant from the N.C. Energy Division to weatherize homes of low income, elderly and handicapped citizens throughout the county.

According to Public Housing Authority Director Perita Price, the funds will be available beginning April 1. The county will have three months to use the money.

In another three-month cycle that was recently completed, the county used a separate \$20,000 grant to weatherize 15 homes, most of them in the Bolivia and Supply areas.

percent of the poverty level (\$17,475 for a family of four).

Homes eligible for the program are evaluated to determine the most cost-effective measures to be installed. Ms. Price said Ford Enterprises of Shallotte was the subcontractor on the just-concluded program.

Brunswick County Public Housing Authority is one of 45 community action and public, nonprofit agencies across the state which implements the weatherization program at the local level.

## Chorus Boosters Serving Dinner

A chicken dinner on Friday, March 31, will be the last in a series of fund-raising events by the West Brunswick High School Choral Boosters.

The dinner begins at 10 a.m. at the school cafeteria and will offer dinners for \$3.50 each.

Proceeds will help finance a trip by the school chorus to New York City to enter national choral competition, said Leanne Smith, chorus director.

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