

She's The Best!

Lady Trojan Kelly Stanaland, a three sport stand-out, is the first female Brunswick County Athlete of the Year. For more on Kelly and her male counterpart, Grover Gore, see Page 9-B.



Dateline: China

Ginny Hawkins of Shallotte recently returned from her first visit to China, where she saw the beginnings of a muffled revolution. Her story's on Page 3-A.



Willard's A Winner!

Twelve-year-old Willard Causey collected \$1,500 Saturday after winning the Shallotte Point VFD Flounder Tournament on his sixth time out. Tournament results are on Page 10-C.

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

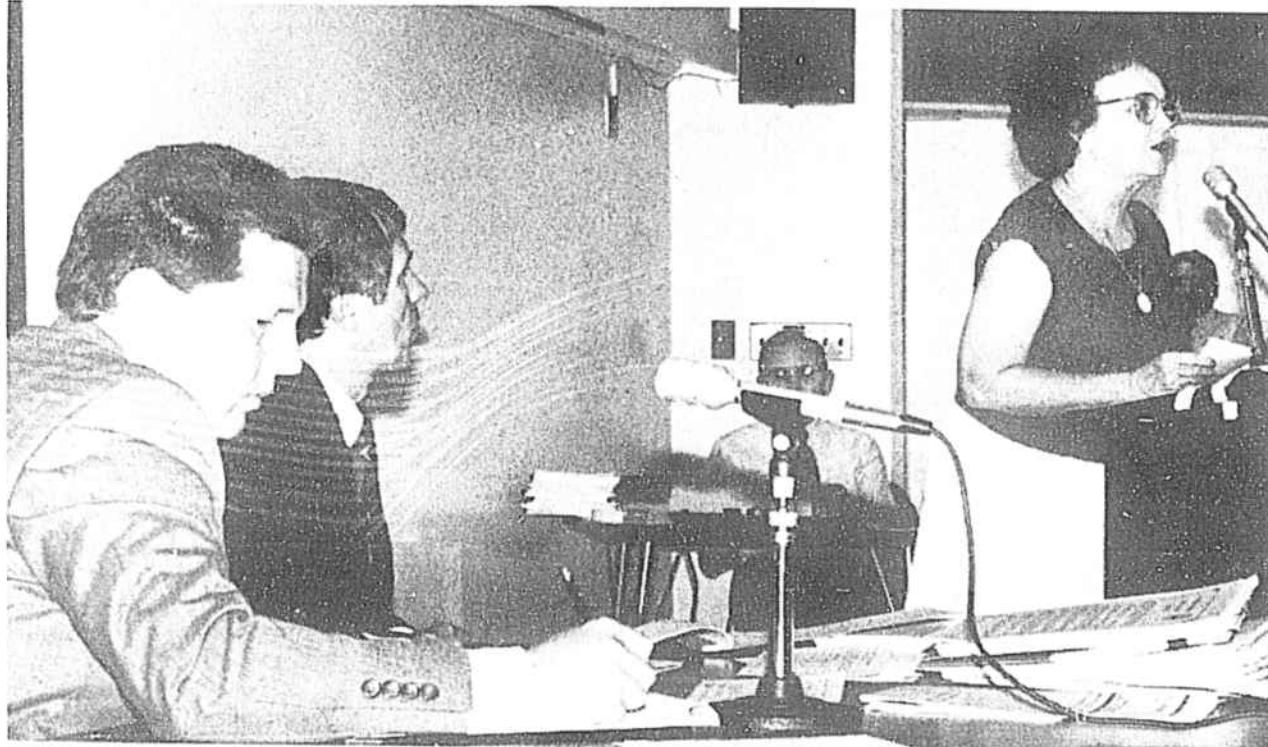
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STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

MARLENE VARNAM of Varnamtown speaks in support of designating lower Lockwood Folly River as an Outstanding Resource Water during last Thursday's public hearing in Wilmington. Pictured at left are state Division of Environmental Management employees Don Safrit and Alan Klimek.

Calabash Council Favors Merger Referendum

BY DOUG RUTTER

On a 2-1 split, Calabash Town Council Tuesday night voted to proceed with a proposal that, if approved by voters, will lead to consolidation of Calabash and its neighbor, the golf course community of Carolina Shores.

The council agreed to seek state legislation that would bring the consolidation proposal to a referendum of residents of both communities. The plan already has approval of the Carolina Shores Property Owners Association Board of Directors.

Calabash Councilman John High cast the opposing vote and said following the meeting that he does not believe Calabash voters will support the proposal because of an uneven distribution of power.

Councilmen Ed Rice and Keith Hardee voted in favor of the proposal.

Under the consolidation plan, Carolina Shores would have five members on the seven-member town council, while the existing Town of Calabash would have two representatives. The mayor would be elected at large.

Officials explained this week that the 5 to 2 split on the council is based on the population difference in the two areas, while still allowing some voice from residents of the existing town. There are an estimated 1,000 residents in Carolina Shores and 200 in Calabash.

What is now Calabash would be known as District 1 in the consolidated town, and Carolina Shores would be called District 2.

This week's action in southwestern

Brunswick County is expected to get quick movement from state legislators in Raleigh.

State Sen R.C. Soles is expected to amend House Bill 323, which would have allowed for the incorporation of Carolina Shores subject to a referendum of that community's voters, to reflect the proposed consolidation.

State Rep. David Redwine introduced the Carolina Shores incorporation bill in early March, but later proposed consolidation of the two communities into one municipality after learning of opposition to the incorporation bill from Calabash officials. The state legislature typically does not favor incorporation of a town immediately adjacent to an existing town.

The Carolina Shores bill passed through the State House of Representatives last week. It will have to be amended and approved by the Senate and then sent back to the House for ratification as amended.

If the amended bill passes, registered voters in both communities would be able to vote on the consolidation proposal, possibly within 45 days of the passage of the bill.

If either side rejects the plan, then it would die and both communities would remain as they are.

However, if the referendum passes in both communities, all council members in the consolidated town—which would still be known as Calabash—would be elected by all registered voters in November.

Elected council members would take office at the first town meeting in December when officials at other towns are also sworn into office. The

consolidation would take effect at that time.

As proposed, the consolidated town would operate under a town manager form of government.

Officials from both areas pointed out this week that rejection of the plan by residents of one community and acceptance by the other community would leave the group willing to merge at an advantage.

For instance, if Carolina Shores supports the proposal and Calabash voters are against it, then Carolina Shores would probably be able to go through with incorporation. Calabash would likely have to drop its plans for annexation of the golf course community.

On the other hand, if residents of Calabash favor the plan and Carolina Shores voters oppose it, Carolina Shores would have little hope of incorporation and Calabash would be at an advantage in terms of possible annexation.

Councilman High said Tuesday that the proposal will "never pass" in Calabash and that the town will be wasting its money to hold a special election for it. An election will cost about \$400.

Landis High was the only town councilman absent from this week's meeting, while newcomer Ed Rice was sworn in at the start of the session and later made the motion to put the consolidation proposal to a vote.

Rice served on the town committee that worked out the consolidation proposal with Carolina Shores representatives during three joint private sessions held before Tuesday's meeting.

River Supporters Blast Developers At ORW Hearing

BY DOUG RUTTER

Environmentalists and developers who verbally assaulted one another at three public hearings last week can do nothing now but wait and hope their side wins.

It will be about three months before the two groups learn which coastal areas in North Carolina will be designated as Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and given special protection from development and pollution.

Approximately 70 people—including three from Brunswick County—spoke last Thursday during a four-hour public hearing at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Those favoring the special protection for coastal waters outnumbered opponents of the proposed rules by a margin of four to one. Throughout the hearing, speakers who protested the proposed restrictions on development were booed, while persons supporting protection of the waters were applauded.

Varnamtown residents Annie Smigiel and Marlene Varnam urged special protection for lower Lockwood Folly River, while Shallotte lawyer and developer Mason Anderson argued against the proposed designation.

Lower Lockwood Folly River is one of eight areas along the North Carolina coast being considered for the ORW classification and the only one in Brunswick County.

The designated areas would be protected from degradation through special regulations on building. However, Lockwood Folly has not been recommended by the Division of Environmental Management staff

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—Annie Smigiel, President Save Our Shellfish

for the designation because of water quality problems.

The existing pollution problem in the river was the major point brought out last week by Anderson. He is a principal in Channel Side Corp., developers of an existing golf course community on Lockwood Folly River that also hopes to build a marina.

During the hearing, Anderson said he supports protection of the state's coastal waters, but pointed out that lower Lockwood Folly River does not meet the water quality requirements for ORW classification.

"The issue here tonight is not whether you or I or any of us support clean water," he said. "The lower Lockwood Folly River simply does not qualify as an ORW."

Anderson said "politics" is the only reason the river is being considered for the special designation—a contention that was later denied by a state fisheries official.

"I find that particularly offensive," said Fritz Rohde, a biologist with the state Division of Marine Fisheries. "The Division of Marine Fisheries originally nominated that area and we still support classification of that area because of the outstanding resource there."

In order for a body of water to qualify for ORW status, there must

be no significant impacts from pollution and the water quality must be rated as excellent.

A state Division of Environmental Management report released in March recommended against ORW classification for the lower Lockwood Folly River because of its pollution problems, which have intensified over the past few years as hundreds of acres of shellfish beds have been shut down. Off and on since last August, all of the river has been closed to harvesting due to pollution.

Mrs. Smigiel, president of the local river preservation group Save Our Shellfish, said later in the hearing that Anderson's comments were made out of greed since he is developing both sides of the river.

"The developers do not care about the fishermen," she said. "All they are interested in is making a dollar."

The local shellfisherman requested that marinas, golf courses and certain types of buildings not be permitted near Outstanding Resource Waters.

"The people who make their living from the river know what pollution can do to the natural resources," she added. "We have the most productive river on the East Coast, and it deserves the protection of an ORW."

Mrs. Varnam, whose family owns (See RIVER, Page 2-A)

County Continues Budget Work; Eyes Way To Cut Tax Increase

BY RAHN ADAMS

Faced with the threat of having to raise property taxes to fund a proposed capital improvements program, Brunswick County Commissioners are considering a way to cut at least one new building out of the plan.

Near the close of a four-hour budget session Tuesday night in Bolivia, the board instructed County Manager John T. Smith to approach Brunswick Community College officials about the possibility of the county putting offices in the college's old continuing education building at Supply.

According to Commissioner Kelly Holden, who also is a college trustee, the building site on U.S. 17 is privately owned; however, the lease for it

remains in effect as long as the property is used by the county. The county owns the building itself.

But even if the college were to agree to let the county share the building, the county board still would be faced with deciding which offices to locate there.

Commission Chairman Frankie Rabon, Emergency Management Director Cecil Logan and Smith respectively mentioned the possibilities of using the space for Social Services, for Emergency Management and a 911 emergency telephone system communications center or for agencies that may have to be moved from the county courthouse to make room for additional court personnel.

The five-year capital improvements program that Smith proposed in May includes at least \$1.5 million for a new Social Services Building and at least \$800,000 for an Emergency Management/911 facility. The plan would require a 10-cent property tax rate increase to 64½ cents.

Meals Bid Awarded

In other action Tuesday, commissioners voted 3-2 to award the annual contract for the Department of Aging's congregate meals program to the county cafeteria, despite an apparently lower bid from a Southport catering firm.

Commissioner Grace Beasley made the motion to award the bid to (See BUDGET, Page 2-A)

LOCAL REALTORS 'UPSET'

Real Estate Commission Warns Bellamy, Reprimands Roberts

BY RAHN ADAMS

Almost two years after both men pleaded guilty to cocaine charges, two Holden Beach residents were on trial again last week, not to decide guilt or innocence, but to determine whether or not previous drug convictions should affect their standings as licensed real estate brokers.

After lengthy hearings last Thursday afternoon in Wilmington, a panel of four N.C. Real Estate Commission members ruled that Greg Bellamy should be sent a warning letter and that Virgil Roberts should be sent a letter of reprimand. The actions do not affect the men's licenses.

"I've had a lot of calls (from local Realtors) about it," Brunswick Islands Board of Realtors President Betty Pait said Monday. "I think a lot of people are upset with the decisions."

She said she contacted members of her organization's board of directors Monday to see if they wished to issue an official statement on the commission's action. However, a majority of the directors said they felt

"I think the N.C. Real Estate Commission has a duty to its members to keep our profession as legal and as professional as it can."

—Betty Pait, President Local Board of Realtors

that no such statement was necessary, since neither Bellamy nor Roberts is a member of the local Realtors group, she explained.

But Ms. Pait said Monday that she personally was writing Gov. Jim Martin and the commission to protest

the "slap on the wrist" that Bellamy and Roberts received last week. "It's bad for the profession, and it makes us look bad in the public eye," she commented. "I think the N.C. Real Estate Commission has a duty to its members to keep our profession as legal and as professional as it can."

Prior to the rulings, the assistant attorney general representing the state in last week's hearings had asked the commission to put Bellamy on a two-year probation and to revoke Roberts' license, to send a "signal" to the real estate profession that drug involvement will not be tolerated.

The complaint against Bellamy was dismissed last Thursday, in much the same manner as was an earlier complaint against James D. Griffin Jr., another Holden Beach real estate broker who—like Bellamy—pleaded guilty to a single cocaine possession charge two years ago and received a suspended sentence. The real estate commission also sent Griffin a warning letter.

Roberts—who had pleaded guilty to 12 trafficking-level counts and had served five months in prison before

being paroled—testified last week that Griffin, Bellamy and himself "were partying a lot with it (cocaine)" in 1985 and 1986. Bellamy also admitted using cocaine in social settings with Griffin, Roberts and other unidentified individuals over a period of "several months."

Bellamy's Hearing

The commission members—Elmer Jenkins, Gilbert Boger, Patricia Casey and Grace Steed—deliberated in private for five minutes before announcing their decision in Bellamy's case.

The hearing lasted two hours and included testimony from Bellamy, as well as character witnesses Sheriff John C. Davis, Wilbur Rabon, Roy Trest, Phil Bowling and Tom Morgan, all of Brunswick County. Bellamy's attorney, William Shell of Wilmington, also presented letters of support from 10 other local residents and Resident Superior Court Judge Giles Clark of Elizabethtown.

Bellamy, who resigned as Brunswick County Clerk of Court after pleading guilty in August 1987, explained that he did not actively enter the real estate business until (See COMMISSION, Page 2-A)