

All In A Sandwich

There's more to making a sandwich than meets the eye, at least for one class of Union Primary School first-graders, including Carlis Hankins and Chris Stephens. For a look at how the local school is teaching communication skills across the curriculum, check the story on Page 5-B.



Eyes On The Crown

Miss Brunswick County 1990 will be crowned Saturday, with five women competing for the title and scholarships. An impressive list of Miss America contestants and Miss North Carolina round out the entertainment at Hatch Auditorium. Page 4-B.

Water Follows Growth

Just as Brunswick County's population is steadily growing, so is its water distribution system. Special assessment districts (SADs) accounting for the most recent spurt of activity. Recently-compiled statistics tell the story on Page 11-A.

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FORMER COUNTY COMMISSIONER Rozell Hewett (left) listens as N.C. Institute of Government Assistant Director Jake Wicker answers Shallotte Point residents' questions about incorporation last Thursday.

Shallotte Point Residents Question Officials About Incorporation Plan

BY RAHN ADAMS
At times last Thursday night it seemed that Shallotte Point residents couldn't see themselves as a riverside town for the water—not the water that bounds the proposed municipality, but the water service it hasn't received from Brunswick County.

Approximately 100 residents turned out last Thursday at Shallotte Point Volunteer Fire Department to discuss possible incorporation with state officials. State Rep. E. David Redwine and N.C. Institute of Government Assistant Director Jake Wicker were present to field questions from the gathering.

However, many of the questions and statements during at least the first half of the two-hour meeting were directed at a local leader who attended on his own initiative, Brunswick County Commissioner Kelly Holden. As they have asked for the past five years, residents wanted to know why the county water system doesn't already serve the community of more than 1,000 households.

No decision about incorporation was made last Thursday. Joyce Land, a member of the community's incorporation steering committee, said a petition probably would be circulated soon to determine if definite support for incorporation exists. A videotape of last Thursday's meeting was to be shown Tuesday (Nov. 14) to residents who could not attend the initial get-together.

One resident, Dr. Ray Williamson, underscored the need for water service by testing water he drew from a tap at the fire department minutes before the meeting. After separating impurities with an electrical device, Williamson held up a container of murky, green water for the people to see.

For several years, Shallotte Point residents have complained to the county that their groundwater is in short supply and that the well water they are able to pump is of poor quality. In early September, a group called Shallotte Point After Water Now (SPAWN) picketed a county commission meeting.

Vernon Ward, chairman of the incorporation steering committee, explained at the outset of last Thursday's meeting that the committee recommends incorporation as the better means of bringing water service to Shallotte Point, as opposed to formation of a sanitary district.

Members of the steering committee also include former county Commissioner Rozell Hewett, Robert Hoff, Daught Tripp, Maurice Milliken, Margie Milliken, Mr. and Mrs. R.C. Eaton and former county Utility Operations Board member William English.

The committee's suggested boundaries for the proposed town are Middle Dam Road, then west along Copas Branch to N.C. 179; south along N.C. 179 to Saucepan Creek, then east along the Intracoastal Waterway and around Monk Island to the Shallotte River; and up the river to Middle Dam Road.

The only question about the proposed boundaries was why Monk Island, an uninhabited dredge spoil area, was included in the incorporation area. Ms. Land said the island was included so that the town could establish a "no wake" zone on the waterway.

She stated that the estimated tax base for the town, with the suggested boundaries, would be more than \$14 million.

The tone of the first hour of the meeting could be summed up by the comments of one man, who noted that local beach areas have water service while Shallotte Point doesn't. "How come they got water and we didn't?" he asked. "We pay taxes to the county, and we're getting nothing."

Responding to another question of that sort, Hewett—who was a commissioner when the county passed a \$37 million water bond referendum in the early 1980s—explained that the bond money went to construct the county's new Northwest Treatment Plant and main trunk lines, not water lines into communities such as Shallotte Point.

Holden noted that getting county water to Shallotte Point through the current special assessment district (SAD) method of extending water lines at property owners' expense "would be slow." He added that he was "inclined" to support installation of a main trunk line to Shallotte Point, "but I can't speak for the other commissioners."

In August, commissioners defeated on a 3-2 vote Holden's motion to build a \$1.2 million water line to Shallotte Point. Benny Ludlum was the only other commissioner to support the motion. Other commissioners cited financial restraints as their reasons for voting down the project.

At the county commission's instruction, county Public Utilities Director Jerry Webb presently is working on cost estimates for a large SAD that would include the Shallotte Point area. His proposal has not yet been presented to either the UOB or commissioners.

However, when the SAD proposal was mentioned last Thursday, Hewett told the gathering, "It is not worth it to be in an SAD district. Brunswick County is not going to pay one red dime to get you water."

(See ABC, Page 2-A)

Meeting Scheduled To Outline 'Countywide' ABC Applications

BY RAHN ADAMS
Brunswick County officials said they were surprised that the county's Nov. 7 ABC referendum passed. They also apparently were surprised to find out Nov. 8 that the alcohol vote was literally a "countywide" action, affecting even formerly dry municipalities.

Due to a rush of inquiries about ABC permits, Alcoholic Beverage Control and Alcohol Law Enforcement officials will hold a public meeting Monday, Nov. 20, at 10:30 a.m., at the Public Assembly Building in Bolivia, to answer questions and explain the application process to local individuals and business owners.

Last week's referendum cleared the way for on- and off-premises beer and unfortified wine sales, operation of ABC stores and mixed beverage sales in hotels, restaurants, private clubs, community theaters and convention centers. All four issues passed by relatively wide margins.

The Brunswick County Board of Elections certified the referendum results last Thursday after canvassing the returns, according to Elections Supervisor Lynda Britt. The official results, which varied slightly from election night totals, were: beer—4,742 for, 4,177 against; unfortified wine—4,675 for, 4,222 against; ABC stores—5,155 for, 3,803 against; and mixed beverages—5,114 for, 3,855 against.

Wilmington ALE Officer Joe Briley, whose office will investigate local applications, said he received "quite a few" calls last Wednesday and Thursday about ABC permits in general.

According to local officials, the permit process takes about 30 days

for beer and wine licenses, depending on the number of applications that are filed. Briley said county commissioners must appoint an ABC board and open an ABC store before mixed beverages licenses can be issued.

Briley said he also fielded two calls last week from officials at Holden Beach and Varnamtown—two of the municipalities whose businesses can now apply for alcohol permits as a direct result of the Nov. 7 referendum.

Other formerly dry towns in that category include Leland, Bolivia and Sandy Creek. Towns that had not previously approved all four types of alcohol sales also were affected. Businesses in Shallotte, for example, can now apply for on-premises beer, unfortified wine and mixed beverage permits.

N.C. Alcoholic Beverage Control laws state that "if a majority of voters vote in favor of certain alcoholic beverage sales in a county election, sale of that kind of alcoholic beverage shall be lawful throughout the county, regardless of the vote in any city at that or any previous election, and regardless of any local act making sales unlawful in that city..."

Also, a city cannot subsequently call for ABC election of its own, unless "...the vote in the last county election was against the sale of that kind of alcoholic beverage..." according to the statutes.

Confusion about the actual implications of last week's referendum has stemmed, in part, from the wording and apparent intent of Brunswick County Commissioner Frankie Rabon's August 7 motion to request the ABC vote.

According to the board's audiotape of the meeting, Rabon stated that the referendum would involve the four types of alcohol sales "within the unincorporated areas of Brunswick County." But in the board's official minutes, that phrase simply reads, "within Brunswick County"—consistent with state ABC statutes.

However, Rabon told the *Beacon* Monday that the intent of his motion and his impression of the referendum was, in fact, that it would affect only unincorporated areas. "I don't think the intention of it was to interfere with the towns," Rabon said. "To me, they run their own towns... I don't feel the county should try to supersede any town government."

Both Rabon and Kelly Holden, the only other commissioner who could be reached for comment, said they were "surprised" that the referendum passed.

Holden said Friday that his "initial impression" also was that municipalities would not be affected by the Nov. 7 vote. But after receiving several inquiries last Wednesday, Holden contacted County Attorney David Clegg, who in turn called the N.C. Institute of Government about the matter, Holden said.

Based on information Clegg received, Holden also commented that the only apparent way to alter the impact of the referendum would be through special legislation setting up "dry zones." The General Assembly is not scheduled to meet again until late May.

ABC Commission Legal Specialist Ann Fulton confirmed Monday that "the county vote prevails" over municipal alcohol votes and that the referendum could not have been limited to only unincorporated areas. "The county commissioners cannot restrict the election in that manner," she said.

She also noted that special legislation to set up dry areas in a wet county could possibly be found "unconstitutional as local acts regulating trade," if challenged in court.

Ms. Fulton added that as long as the Nov. 7 ballot stated the ABC issues correctly, the referendum probably would stand. Ms. Britt said Tuesday that the ABC referendum was uncontested and no possible irregularities were reported.

Deadlines Earlier For Next Issue

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday next week, the *Beacon* will publish a day earlier, on Wednesday, Nov. 22.

Deadlines will be a day earlier for news and advertising. Real estate advertising deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 16. Classified and other advertising must be in by noon Monday, Nov. 20.

Subscribers who generally get their paper on Thursday should get delivery on Wednesday next week.

The *Beacon* office will be closed next Thursday for Thanksgiving and will reopen for business as usual on Friday morning.

Calabash Board Cancels Meeting

Calabash Town Council died quietly Tuesday night.

Mayor Doug Simmons was forced to cancel what would have been the final regular meeting of the present five-member town council when he was the only elected official to show up at town hall.

Councilmen Ed Rice, Keith Hardee, John High and Landis High were all absent from the regular monthly meeting. The mayor said Rice and John High were out of

town on vacation. He didn't know where the others were.

After waiting 30 minutes, Simmons called off the session and offered his apologies to the three commissioners-elect from Carolina Shores—Ed Schaack, George Anderson and Jon Sanborn—who had shown up for the meeting.

A new seven-member board of commissioners that will include five residents of Carolina Shores will be sworn into office Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 5:30 p.m.



AFTER SEPARATING IMPURITIES with an electrical device, Dr. Ray Williamson of Shallotte Point displays a murky container of water that he had drawn minutes earlier from a tap at Shallotte Point Volunteer Fire Department.



Ready To Roll

Rolls and rolls of sand fence stacked under the water tank outside Holden Beach Town Hall should soon be moved out onto the beach, where town officials hope they will help rebuild the dune flattened in Hurricane Hugo. The town is accepting bids through Friday for the installation of about 35,000 feet of sand fence and the planting of 700 bundles of beach grass. Town commissioners are expected to move forward with the project later this month.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER