

Police Arrests Teens

(Continued From Page 1-A) connection with recent vending machine break-ins at Ocean Isle and Shallotte.

Both teens were also charged with one count each of misdemeanor breaking and entering in connection with a Jan. 8 break-in at Salty's Surf Shop. Todd said nothing was stolen because an alarm went off and apparently scared the suspects away.

The two juveniles arrested were charged in connection with theft of the two newspaper racks and the vending machine break-ins.

Pritchard said officers had been on the lookout for the suspects for about three days before charges were filed. He said the department had a description of the vehicle used in the crimes.

Todd said the four suspects were arrested last Thursday at 10:40 p.m. after allegedly breaking into a vending machine at The Winds. Ocean Isle Beach Sgt. James Stewart assisted Todd with the arrests.

Following the arrests, Benton and Bowers were taken to Brunswick County Jail where they were held under \$2,000 bond. Benton was released from jail Friday, but Bowers remained in custody Monday afternoon.

The filing of charges following the theft of a newspaper rack owned

by *The Brunswick Beacon* was a first, according to Publisher Edward Sweatt.

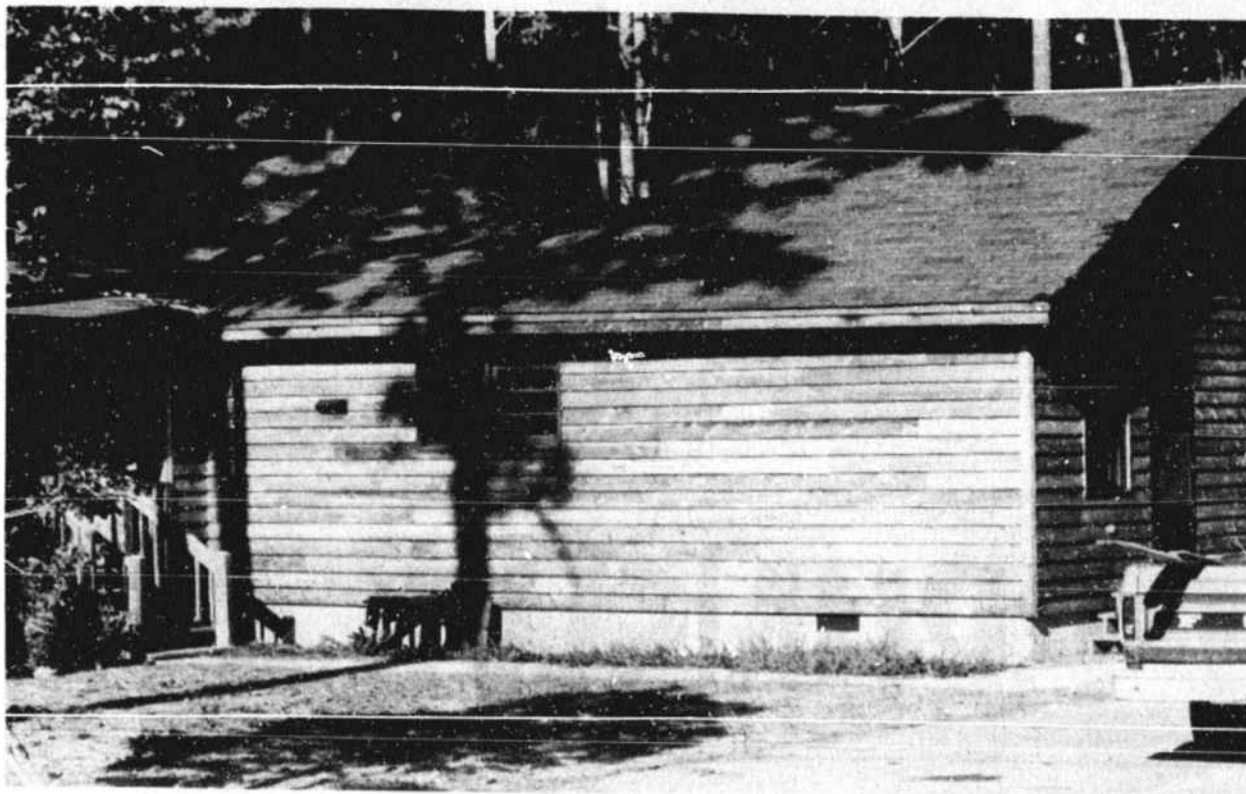
"We've had towns to recover or find racks before, but this is the first police department to arrest someone in connection with the theft of one of our racks," he said. "It's sort of historic in my mind."

Sweatt said the weekly newspaper has three to five circulation racks stolen and many others broken into each year. To discourage theft, the rack taken from Ocean Isle Beach Shop had been embedded in a 120-pound slab of concrete and attached to a nearby post with cable.

Police Chief Curt Pritchard said he recovered the newspaper racks last Friday around 2:30 a.m. The damaged racks were found on the island side of the Atlantic Intra-coastal Waterway in an isolated spot off Shallotte Boulevard.

He said the suspects apparently dumped the heavy racks over a seawall to hide them. "The racks got wet, but I don't think they ever were submerged," said Pritchard.

Officer Todd said the suspects got approximately \$7 out of *The Brunswick Beacon* rack coin box, \$9 from the *USA Today* rack and \$1.10 out of the last vending machine broken into. "It wasn't worth the crime," he said.



AN ACCIDENTAL FIRE burned through the roof of Shallotte Alderman Jody Simmons' residence on Pender Street Sunday afternoon.

STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

Weekend Blaze Guts Dwelling

An accidental weekend fire gutted the home of a Shallotte alderman, according to Shallotte Police. There were no injuries.

A report on file at the police department indicates that Shallotte Volunteer Fire Department was dispatched to the Jody Simmons residence on Pender Street Sunday at 12:20 p.m. Civietown VFD also responded.

Police Sgt. C.B. Yager said Simmons and his family were not home at the time of the blaze, which was spotted by a passer-by, Shallotte Mayor Jerry Jones. The mayor lives nearby on Columbus Street.

Yager, the first public safety officer to arrive on the scene, said he initially observed smoke boiling from under the eaves of the single-

story, cedar-siding house, then saw the fire begin to burn through the roof.

"There wasn't much they (fire-fighters) could do," Yager told the *Beacon*. "They got there a minute after I did."

He said firefighting efforts lasted about an hour. The blaze was investigated by Shallotte Fire Chief Tim Carter. County Fire Marshal Cecil Logan was not called to the fire scene, because Carter determined that no foul play was involved, said Yager.

He said the blaze apparently started from an electrical short, since the fire appeared to have originated at a circuit breaker box. The house was a total loss from fire, smoke and water damage.

Simmons said Monday he was getting ready to watch a football game at a friend's house when the fire was reported. He added that fire officials initially notified Mrs. Simmons, who was visiting a relative early Sunday afternoon.

Although the shell of the house withstood the blaze, few of the family's belongings inside the structure were salvageable after the fire. "What the smoke didn't get, the water did," Simmons noted.

He indicated that the couple and their five-year-old child moved into a house at Shallotte Point Sunday. "We have had 50 offers (of help)," he said. "People have been very generous, and we appreciate every one of them."

'January Thaw' Stalls Winter

The Shallotte area should see a temporary break late this week in what has been an abnormally cold winter, according to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady.

Though this brief "January thaw" should cause nighttime temperatures to average in the low 40s and daytime temperatures in the low 60s through the weekend, Canady advised local residents "to keep coats and shovels ready" for winter's return.

Canady noted that the National Weather Service's 30-day extended forecast calls for slightly above average temperatures in southeastern North Carolina. However, Canady said he believes the region will see more frozen precipitation this winter.

Precipitation in the Shallotte area over the next several days should be near normal at about one-half inch of rain, he added.

For the period of Jan. 9 through 15, the daily average temperature here was 46 degrees, which Canady said was near normal.

The daily average high temperature was 59 degrees, and the daily average low temperature was 34 degrees.

The maximum high temperature during the period was 67 degrees on Jan. 15. The minimum low temperature was 25 degrees on Jan. 14.

Canady measured no rainfall during the seven-day period.

Finance Officer Dismissed

(Continued From Page 1-A) she said is required by the IRS. However, Kaufhold said that the school board attorney and board chairman recommended against the change and that the auditor had not recommended it. In checking with five other superintendents, Kaufhold said none were following the practice recommended.

He also noted that Shappell had sought, and was denied, reclassification to assistant superintendent for financial operations.

Shappell also said the superintendent had purchased, with "school money" 40 pound cakes for staff gift-giving; Kaufhold said the money was taken—and appropriately—from the central office miscellaneous fund which is also used for flowers, after-hour staff meals and the like.

And while Shappell said that all invoices "turned over to her on time" were kept current, Kaufhold

said that staff is currently finding "many bills that have not been paid" under her administration and that have since been paid. "We are a solvent school system and there is no excuse for not paying our bills," he said.

Citing the turn-around of business office affairs during her tenure, Shappell asserted the superintendent "really has no conception of what I did in keeping the Finance Department running." However, Kaufhold said he should share credit for the turn-around since the relevant reports were prepared jointly by the two.

Kaufhold said that Shappell would be paid through the 16th, including sick leave taken, but that the check would not be released until office keys and \$2,000 in school equipment Shappell kept at her home are returned as well as personal access codes to computer software.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Goodbye, Christmas Tree

Jenna Quigley of Sunset Beach bids a fond farewell to her family's Christmas tree Saturday as she and her father, Joe, add it to those lined up behind sand fence on the beach. Jenna's mother, Debbie, videotaped the two dragging the tree to the beach, where it will help rebuild dunes wiped out last September in Hurricane Hugo. The Quigleys moved to Sunset Beach from New Jersey last August.

Drug Tax Gets No Takers

(Continued From Page 1-A) fines, as is required by state drug trafficking laws. A sentencing judge can lower or do away with a defendant's fine, if the individual is found to have provided "substantial assistance" to investigators.

"I like the idea that if we can't get them one way, we'll get them another way," Brunswick County Narcotics Squad Lt. David Crocker said last week. Still, Crocker said he had a "wait-and-see attitude" about whether or not the new law will be effective here.

County Narcotics Agent Pam Hunt commented, "I am definitely for it, and I don't know of anybody who wouldn't be for it except drug dealers, because this is another way (of fighting drug trafficking). But I think it should have been done a lot sooner."

Wolak noted that one former drug-trafficking defendant, Dale Varnam of Supply, pleaded guilty in 1988 to charges involving five kilograms of cocaine. If the drug tax had been in effect then, for instance, Varnam might have owed \$1 million in taxes alone.

While no one had inquired about the tax in Brunswick County as of Friday, 100 individuals had picked up applications to buy drug tax stamps elsewhere in the state, said Raines. "We don't really expect anyone to come in," he noted, adding that the three different drug tax stamps may be popular with avid stamp collectors, though.

Raines indicated that he suspects most drug dealers probably won't buy tax stamps until after they are

arrested with drugs in their possession. According to the law, the drug tax "is payable within 48 hours after the dealer acquires a non-tax-paid controlled substance or counterfeit controlled substance," not counting Saturdays, Sundays and legal state holidays.

If the tax isn't paid within 48 hours, the delinquent dealer will have to pay the tax as well as a penalty equal to the tax and interest. The dealer must then make immediate payment or face having his personal property seized by the revenue department.

Also, violators of the drug tax law can be charged with a felony offense punishable by up to five years in prison.

The excise tax affects only individuals who possess fairly large quantities of drugs: at least 42.5 grams or 1 1/2 ounces of marijuana; at least seven grams or one-quarter ounce of other controlled substances that are sold by weight, such as cocaine; and 10 dosage units of drugs—such as crack cocaine—that are not sold by weight.

The tax is \$3.50 per gram of marijuana, translating to \$148.75 for 1 1/2 ounces; \$200 per gram of cocaine, translating to \$1,400 for a quarter ounce; and \$400 per 10 dosage units of controlled substances.

When a drug seizure is made by law enforcement agencies, they must report the seizure to the SBI, who in turn reports it to the revenue department. Local branches—such as Raines' office on N.C. 130 East—are then notified of the seizure, to check whether the excise

tax has been paid and collect any taxes that are owed.

Crocker and Ms. Hunt said last Thursday that no drug seizures had been made in Brunswick County since the tax law went into effect Jan. 1. "We intend to file on every seizure of any amount that is taxable," Ms. Hunt said, later adding, "I feel confident that we will not run into any (controlled substance) that has been (tax) paid."

As might be expected from a drug agent, Crocker said the only drawback he sees in the new law is that dealers can buy tax stamps without identifying themselves. Stamps, which are stored in Raleigh, can be applied for anonymously at the local revenue office or by mail.

"I think that (confidentiality) is an aspect of it that's working against us," Crocker said, "but if there are any catches in it, maybe they'll be caught and can be worked out."

Also, according to the tax law, any personal information obtained by the revenue department is confidential and "cannot be disclosed or, unless independently obtained, used in a criminal prosecution" other than one involving the drug tax itself.

"We know it (drug dealing) is an illegal activity," Raines said, "but we're bound by the law not to reveal any information. It's one of those 'Catch-22' situations."

Holden Board To Review Policies

A review of policy statements included in the town's 1985 land use plan update is on the agenda for tonight's (Thursday's) meeting of the Holden Beach Planning and Zoning Board.

Existing policies on marina development, development of sound and estuarine islands, septic tank suitability, public sewage system, solid waste disposal, transportation, beach and water access and contiguous growth will be among those discussed at the meeting, which starts at 7 p.m. in town hall.

Holden Beach is in the process of updating its CAMA Land Use Plan, which includes policies used to guide future development and growth. A questionnaire will be mailed to property owners next week to gather input that will be incorporated in policies in the land use plan update.

CLASSIFIEDS
Good News
People Can Use

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Established Nov. 1, 1962
Telephone 754-6890
Published Every Thursday
At 4709 Main Street
Shallotte, N.C. 28459

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

IN BRUNSWICK COUNTY
One Year\$10.30
Six Months.....\$5.50
ELSEWHERE IN NORTH CAROLINA
One Year\$14.80
Six Months.....\$7.85
ELSEWHERE IN U.S.A.
One Year\$15.95
Six Months.....\$8.35

Second class postage paid at the Post Office in Shallotte, N.C. 28459. USPS 777-780.

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE TO
THE BRUNSWICK BEACON
POST OFFICE BOX 2558
SHALLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA 28459

FOR AWARD-WINNING NEWS COVERAGE

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES BY MAIL:		Sr. Citizen
In Brunswick County		
	□6.30	□5.30
N.C. Sales Tax	.32	.27
Postage Charge	3.68	3.68
TOTAL	10.30	9.25
Elsewhere In North Carolina		
	□6.30	□5.30
N.C. Sales Tax	.32	.27
Postage Charge	8.18	8.18
TOTAL	14.80	13.75
Outside North Carolina		
	□6.30	□5.30
Postage Charge	9.65	9.65
TOTAL	15.95	14.95

Complete And Return To Above Address

Name.....
Address.....
City, State.....
Zip.....

SEA COAST TRADING CO.

Candlelight Cabinets by Aristokraft
BRUCE CONSTRUCTION
Ocean Isle Beach
Jim Suggs House
Seaside, NC
SEA COAST TRADING
754-6630 • 120 Blake St., Shallotte

Bring your appetite
and a friend...

Every Day Special
Fiddler's Platter
Shrimp, fish, deviled crab, clam strips,
French fries, cole slaw & hushpuppies
(no substitutions)

\$7.95 . . . Buy One Get One FREE!

SANDFIDDLER
SEAFOOD RESTAURANT
HWY. 130 EAST • SHALLOTTE • 754-8168
HWY. 211 • SOUTHPORT • 457-6588