



## No Prize Catch Here

The crew of the *Miss Jean* found that a weight in the boat's net wasn't from a load of shrimp, but rather from part of a log that became entangled in the net.

STAFF PHOTO BY BOB HORNE

## Chapel Loop Road Annexation Vote Repealed Among Talk Of 'Unfairness'

BY SUSAN USHER

Leland's July 5 annexation of the Chapel Loop Road area is no more. The town's action was repealed this week—not just once, but twice—among accusations of unfairness and betrayal by several parties involved in the fray.

Monday night the Leland Town Council repealed its earlier vote after a proposed "cooling-off" agreement between the town and residents of the area unraveled at a meeting earlier that day, Mayor Russell Baldwin said.

Tuesday the state legislature adopted on third reading a bill that also repealed the annexation, which Rep. E.

David Redwine said he thought would have been "unfair" to both residents of Chapel Loop Road and the nearby town of Belville.

Mayor Baldwin said the net result of the two rescissions is that Leland's "worst fear" has been realized: the Chapel Loop Road area is "open territory for anybody now"—including possible annexation by the nearby town of Belville. "Redwine just hasn't been fair with us," he said Tuesday. "He made promises and didn't keep them."

Baldwin said he no longer feels the town of Leland is (See LELAND, PAGE 2-A)

## Brunswick Takes Lead Role Opposing State DSS Policies

BY BOB HORNE

Brunswick County is taking a lead role in soliciting statewide opposition to state policies that reportedly are stifling county Departments of Social Services in the state, according to Brunswick County Social Services Director Jamie Orrock.

Monday night, the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution presented to them by Orrock. It was adopted by the Brunswick County Social Services Board June 25.

Tuesday morning, Orrock said he is sending the resolution to Departments of Social Services in the other 99 counties in the state and that the North Carolina Social Services Association, a 4,000 plus-member organization, is expected to rewrite and adopt the resolution under its name Friday. If it does, it will lobby the state for relief from the state mandates, Orrock said.

The resolution stems from what is known as the Alexander vs. Flaherty settlement agreement, an agreement from a lawsuit that originated in 1974 when Legal Aid sued the state for non-compliance in meeting time frames in serving clients. Thirteen of the 100 Departments of Social Services in the state were found to be out of compliance, Orrock said.

As a result of an eventual settlement, Orrock says, the state has gradually added measures in an attempt to force compliance from the county DSS agencies until those agencies are so overburdened with paperwork and legwork they cannot provide proper service to their clients. The last changes were made

## Petitions Call For Ouster Of Seniors Director

The Brunswick Board of County Commissioners Monday night accepted, without comment, petitions calling for the removal of Ronnie Robinson, Brunswick County's director of older adults.

Harold Watson of Long Beach presented the petitions to the commissioners. He said that Robinson, when attending a meeting of the Brunswick County Senior Citizens Advisory Committee as guest speaker, nominated his choices for several officers positions in the organization.

He also told the commissioners that Robinson had threatened senior citizens by saying he would take them off the eligibility list if they gave him any trouble and that senior citizens who opposed Robinson apparently were "boycotted" when no vans were provided for transportation to a June 19 Senior Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

Robinson was a source of controversy when about 60 senior citizens were transported to a June 4 commissioners meeting in county vans. Some said they didn't know why they were there, while others said they were there to support Robinson. Robinson provided the county vans to transport them to support him, because he expected the petitions to be presented at the meeting, some said.

Commission Chairman Gene Pinkerton said that since interim County Manager David Clegg handles personnel, he would be the person to deal with the matter.

Clegg said he had no comment at this time.

last October, he said.

Orrock said the county income maintenance workers met in January or February and wanted to express their concern. He agreed, he said, and told them they needed to put something in writing, which resulted in the resolution.

"Somebody had to do something to get the state's and other agencies' attention," Orrock said Tuesday morning. "I don't know if the state is even aware of the burden it's putting on the counties."

"Thirteen of 100 didn't comply," Orrock told the commissioners. "In-

stead of penalizing those 13, they (the state) penalized everyone."

The departments now have more than 80 different forms, some as long as eight pages, to complete on applicants, Orrock said. "And six months later you have to fill out the same form again for what is called redetermination," he told the commissioners.

And much of the paperwork is duplication, Orrock said. For instance, he said applicants who want to apply for different forms of aid must be interviewed by different

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## I-40 Opening Is Expected To Boost Tourism In The County

BY DOUG RUTTER

Brunswick County tourism leaders expect a big boost in the years to come, thanks to the recent completion of Interstate 40, a highway that has connected North Carolina's inland counties and the coast.

The final stretch of I-40 between Raleigh and Wilmington opened June 29 after decades of planning and work. The highway, which was first proposed more than 40 years ago, runs from Barstow, Calif., to Wilmington.

"I think it will have a very positive impact as far as the tourism is concerned," said South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce President Dean Walters. "We're very positive about the whole thing."

Besides tourists, Walters said he hopes the interstate attracts more "clean" industry and jobs to Brunswick County. Transportation and access are two of the things industry leaders look for when they are considering a possible location, he said.

Holden Beach Commissioner Gay Atkins, who

works as a real estate broker with Alan Holden Realty, said more families from Raleigh and Research Triangle Park are coming to the area this summer than before, presumably because of the opening of I-40.

"I think it makes us more accessible," Ms. Atkins said, estimating that the interstate cuts out between 45 minutes and one hour of travel time from Raleigh to the coast.

Walters said many families from the Raleigh and Chapel Hill areas have traditionally gone to the beaches near Morehead City, because there was better access to that area.

That's likely to change, however, now that Interstate 40 offers a "direct corridor" from Raleigh to the beaches in New Hanover and Brunswick counties, he said.

Walters said the interstate also provides better access to Myrtle Beach, S.C., and more people will pass through Brunswick County than ever before. With more promotions and billboards, the local beaches and golf courses should see an increase in vacationers, he said.

"When people start finding out where we are and what we have to offer, I think they'll start responding accordingly," Walters said.

He said completion of the interstate will force the state to plan and construct other transportation improvements in southeastern North Carolina to deal with increased traffic.

"Anytime you bring more people, you bring more traffic...," he said. "I see it as a basically positive thing in the long run."

Ocean Isle Beach Commissioner Bill Benton, who works in land development, says he expects the interstate to have a "tremendous impact" on the county, especially when the four-laning of U.S. 17 is completed in a few years.

"It's really going to bring the people here," Benton said. "I'm very excited about it."

Holden Beach Mayor John Tandy said his oldest daughter and her family took I-40 from the Winston-Salem area to Holden Beach last week.

The interstate offers a safer and quicker way to travel to the coast, Tandy said, and it will have a "swelling effect" on all of Brunswick County.

"It's going to mean an increase in visitors and permanent population," he said. "There's going to be growth in both of those areas."

Brunswick County Resources Development Director Thomas Monks also says he expects the opening of I-40 to be a boost to the county.

Brunswick County Planning Director John Harvey said he thinks there will be a "significant" impact in Brunswick County once the state constructs a direct exchange between I-40 and a planned U.S. 17 bypass around Wilmington.

"Then we'll have excellent accessibility to I-40 that we do not have today," he said.

In addition to the effect of Interstate 40, Harvey said planned highway improvements in the Myrtle Beach area will make traveling to Brunswick County safer and more convenient in the next decade.

## CORN LOSSES 35-40%

### Late Rainfall Is The Key To Local Tobacco Harvest

BY SUSAN USHER

Rainfall between now and late August will make the difference in overall yield and quality of the 1990 tobacco crop, which local producers will begin marketing next week.

"Things started out pretty well, but then this dry weather stopped it," said Billy Barrow, Brunswick County agricultural extension agent. "We're kind of waiting to see what this rain will do."

To varying degrees, drought conditions also have affected other Brunswick County crops, especially corn.

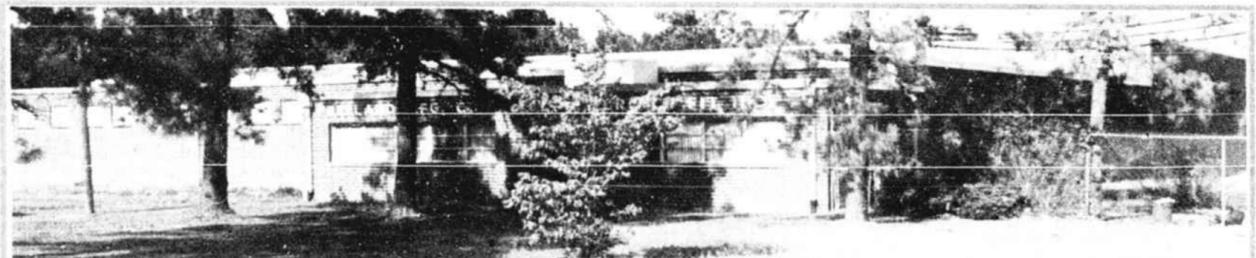
Barrow estimates corn losses will average 35 percent to 40 per-

cent countywide, with damage as extensive as 60 percent to 65 percent in some areas.

"And acreage in corn in Brunswick County was up significantly this year," he said, probably in response to market conditions.

Pollination of corn occurs within a relatively small "window" or time period—a week to two weeks depending on the variety. It is affected by high temperatures and dry weather, Barrow said, noting that the county has had "plenty" of both recently. Rainfall now and in coming weeks, however, will help fill out ears that were produced.

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The Perfect Fit plant at Ash will close on or before Aug. 18, officials say.

STAFF PHOTO BY BOB HORNE

## Resources Development Director Optimistic That A Prospect Will Purchase Ash Plant

Brunswick County Resources Development Director Thomas Monks is hopeful that instead of the Perfect Fit plant at Ash shutting down, the plant can merely shift gears from one company to another.

Monks says there is one "excellent" prospect that has expressed interest in the plant, which is scheduled to close on or before Aug. 18. He declined to identify the company at this time, but said it is a similar type of sewing operation and that he is optimistic that the company will open an operation in the facility.

The prospect is "a similar-type operation, looking for something about that size, with about the same size workforce," Monks said. He said the company's operation would be virtually exactly the same as Perfect Fit's, with a need for the same employee skills. "We would hope they could come in and put all of the employees to work," he said. He also said the compensation package that would be offered would be similar.

If the company should open operations in the Ash plant, it would be an expansion of the company's operations, not a relocation, Monks said. He said the Ash plant is within a two-hour

drive of the company's headquarters, which he said is another reason for his optimism. He said he expects to have a final decision from the company within two weeks.

The building, located on N.C. 130 is an attractive building for such an operation, Monks said, "with 28,320 square feet, brick over concrete block, completely air-conditioned, on 7.2 acres of land and is nicely landscaped."

"But what really impressed me when I visited was the morale of the employees," Monks said. They have been very positive about the closing and the prospect of going with another company.

Monks also praised Perfect Fit, saying he has received "100 percent cooperation" from the company in trying to come up with another use for the facility. "They've been very good to work with."

Although he says he's optimistic about the unidentified company, Monks said he was also listing the building with the state Department of Economic and Community Development's listing of facilities.

"The No. 1 criteria these days is an existing

building. Most everyone is looking for one," he said.

Perfect Fit, which has headquarters in Monroe, is closing the Ash plant "purely for economic reasons," said David Weathers, vice president of Human Resources.

The Ash plant manufactures mattress covers, pillow covers and infant bedding, Weathers said. The plant was built in 1969 and expanded in 1979, according to Weathers.

When the closing was announced, the 68 employees were given the option of relocating to one of Perfect Fit's other six plants that are located around the country, Weathers said. But as of Tuesday, none of the employees had elected to relocate, Weathers said. He said most of the employees live within 10-12 miles of the Ash plant.

The closest Perfect Fit plants are located in Monroe, Richfield and Rock Hill, S.C., Weathers said. M.L. "Chip" Fontenot, president of Perfect Fit, has said the company is looking for a qualified buyer. He said the plant and the land it sits on are valued at about \$350,000 to \$400,000.

## Dennis Crocker Resigns From Resources Development Board

Dennis Crocker, a senior executive with NCNB in Charlotte, has resigned from the Brunswick County Resources Development Commission, citing personal and business reasons.

"I just don't have the time to do it like it should be done," Crocker told *The Beacon* Tuesday afternoon. He said nothing else had anything to do with his resignation. "When you don't have enough hours to do the job and you've been on it (the board) a long time, it's time to let somebody else on it."

Crocker, who completed four years on the board in March, turned

his letter of resignation in to County Commissioner Kelly Holden last week, effective July 10. Holden sought to fill the appointment, which is his district appointment. Monday night, but the commissioners tabled the appointment 3-2, with Holden and Benny Ludlum dissenting, on a motion by Grace Beasley.

Crocker said he has missed several board meetings recently for business and professional reasons and came to realize he didn't have the time. His term would have expired in 1992. He also resigned from the Economic Development Corp., of which he was president.