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MARCHERS PARTICIPATING in the Domestic Violence Awareness Day rally last Thursday stressed the need to speak out against abuse and to make the public more aware of the problem in Brunswick County.

Victims Tell Of Domestic Violence

BY TERRY POPE

The people gathered at the roadside rest area near Supply last week were not there to rest. Instead, they picked up banners and signs and marched down U.S. 17 to Brunswick Community College to speak out against domestic violence.

Last Thursday was Domestic Violence Awareness Day in Brunswick County. Following the march, a candlelight service was held at the college for victims who have lost their lives in the struggle against domestic violence.

Sponsored by Hope Harbor Home of Brunswick County, a shelter for domestic violence victims and their children, and the Brunswick Community College Vocational-Technical Honor Society, the rally was attended by about 50 people who gathered to hear testimony from two women who escaped violent situations.

Keynote speaker Kitty Fitzgibbon, weather anchor for WWAY TV-3 in Wilmington, surprised the audience when she told of being exposed to domestic violence as a little girl. Amanda McDonald, shelter manager for Hope Harbor, wasn't aware that Ms. Fitzgibbon was a survivor when she asked her to be

guest speaker.

"It just shows the extent of the problem," Ms. Fitzgibbon said, "when you can call a speaker at random and find someone who has been affected by domestic violence."

Education and counseling are needed to help battered women, Ms. Fitzgibbon said. Women have to know that there is help available.

"Most people don't realize that when they watch the weather, they are watching a survivor," Ms. Fitzgibbon said. Domestic violence is a topic that's not easy to talk about and is often overlooked by the media, she added.

"I was scared to death coming in here today," she said. "I had no idea what I was going to say. It's not easy to break the cycle."

Hope Harbor is only one of 61 domestic violence programs in North Carolina. Ms. McDonald said Monday that the shelter is in need of donations, such as infant and children's Tylenol, diapers of all sizes and cleaning supplies.

This year, each shelter received a \$15,000 grant from the state. In the future, funding for the shelters must come from other sources.

"We did that even in a very tough year," said State Rep. E. David Red-

wine. "Frankly, I'd like to see us do more next year if we can, and that's a mighty big if. All state programs can expect to suffer somewhat."

Redwine said he believes the shelter is the "very necessary first step to help victims of domestic violence on the road to a better life."

René McGill, an employee of the domestic violence shelter in Wilmington, also gave testimony of how she struggled away from the control of a batterer.

"All he wanted was power and control," Ms. McGill said. "He would say that I was stupid, ignorant and ugly. I really had become nothing to myself or my children."

She suffered from a fractured jaw, broken fingers and toes before she managed to flee.

"Those were the easiest scars for me because I could see some physical healing," she said. "I was lost. I was confused."

Ms. McGill admitted herself into a psychiatric hospital. She had to fight for custody of her children. With \$23.15, she found an attorney who believed in her.

"Start a new beginning today because tomorrow you may not have a chance," she urged victims at the rally.

Election Headed Toward Countdown

BY SUSAN USHER

After a fast-paced final week, a relatively low-key election season will peak Tuesday in Brunswick County when as many as 27,743 voters could go to the polls to elect leaders at the local, state and national level.

Local voters will mark two large ballots front and back Tuesday. Among the offices to be filled are the following:

- County Sheriff;
 - Clerk of Superior Court;
 - County Commissioners from Districts 2 and 5;
 - Board of Education members from Districts 2 and 5;
 - State Senator, 18th District;
 - State Representative, 14th District;
 - U.S. Congressman, 7th District;
 - U.S. Senator;
 - Chief Justice, Associate Justice, N.C. Supreme Court;
 - N.C. Court of Appeals—seven judges;
 - N.C. Superior Court—27 judges, including a new 13th District seat;
 - 13th District Judge; and
 - County Soil and Conservation District—two supervisors.
- Voters will also decide a bipartisan issue—should the state issue \$200 million in bonds to build new prisons and youth services facilities. While county commissioners and school board members run from and

represent the district in which they reside, they are nominated and elected by voters countywide.

Several of the races on the ballot are uncontested: Rep. E. David Redwine won a Democratic primary and is unopposed for re-election to the 14th District seat in the N.C. House of Representatives. The district includes all of Brunswick County, plus one township each in New Hanover and Pender counties.

David Wall is unopposed for election to the 13th District judge's seat soon to be vacated by William C. Gore Jr. Gore is unopposed for election to a new Superior Court judgeship.

Two candidates, incumbents James D. Bellamy Jr. of Shallotte and Harold Robinson of Supply, are unopposed for two seats on the non-partisan Brunswick County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors, though a blank is included on the ballot for write-in votes.

Voters can vote a straight Republican or Democratic ticket or split their ticket. To split a ticket, a candidate can mark a straight ticket, then mark the ballot for one or more candidates of the other party. The votes will count straight ticket except for those items, which will be counted as marked.

Profiles of the candidates in major local, district and state races are included in today's edition of *The Brunswick Beacon*.



It's A Ringer!

Shirley Driver lands a ringer Saturday in the women's doubles horseshoe pitching competition at the N.C. Festival By The Sea at Holden Beach. More coverage of festival events is inside:

- Costume Contest.....6-A
- Horseshoes.....12-C
- Surfing Contest.....13-C
- Volleyball, Run.....14-C
- Parade.....8-A

Where Do The Candidates Stand?

Find out candidates' positions on the issues before voting Nov. 6. Profiles are inside on Pages 10-A and 8-B through 12-B.

Congress Allots \$200,000 For Lockwood Folly Study

Money for an impact study designed to find out if navigation projects near Lockwood Folly River have affected water circulation in the river has been included in the 1991 federal budget.

Federal legislators appropriated \$200,000 for the impact study in the budget approved last week, said Keith Pitts, spokesman for Congressman Charlie Rose (D-N.C.).

The Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency that will do the study,

has estimated its cost at \$265,000. However, Pitts said the work can be done for the amount budgeted.

The impact study will focus on Eastern Channel, which is situated between the west end of Long Beach and Sheep Island at the mouth of the Lockwood Folly River.

Eastern Channel served as the inlet between Lockwood Folly River and the Atlantic Ocean before the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway was dredged and a new inlet was cut.

Brunswick County fishermen say the Eastern Channel has filled in with sand in recent years, and the sand has restricted water flow and prevented bacterial pollution from escaping the river, which is often closed to shellfishing.

The impact study will use a "numerical flow model" to determine whether Corps navigation projects near Lockwood Folly River have had adverse impacts on water circulation. The study is expected to last about nine months.

Tom Jarrett, head of coastal engineering with the Corps in Wilmington, said recent aerial photos and photos dating back to the 1800s before the waterway was constructed would be compared to see how Eastern Channel has changed over the years.

If the impact study determines that construction of the waterway has had negative impacts on water flow through Eastern Channel, Jarrett said the Corps would develop mitigation alternatives to compensate for the effects.

The impact study is just one part of a two-prong Corps of Engineers proposal involving the Eastern Channel.

(See CONGRESS, Page 2-A)

Holden Board Upholds Suspension Of Officer

BY DOUG RUTTER

Following a closed-door grievance hearing Tuesday Holden Beach Commissioners voted to uphold the recent suspension of a town police officer who was earlier convicted of assault and trespassing.

Commissioners voted unanimously to uphold the town manager's suspension of Policeman Gary Dancy after meeting in executive session for more than an hour Tuesday afternoon.

Dancy was suspended without pay from the police force after he was found guilty of simple assault and second-degree trespassing Sept. 25 in Brunswick County District Court. The case has been appealed to superior court.

Town Manager Blake Proctor suspended the policeman until the case is settled. He said at the time of the disciplinary action that Dancy would be reinstated with full seniority, benefits and back pay if he is found innocent in superior court. Proctor said the police officer would be fired if found guilty in superior court.

"Nobody, including myself, wanted to do it, but it had to be done," Proctor said Tuesday of the suspension.

Mayor John Tandy said commissioners thought the town manager had acted correctly when he sus-

(See HOLDEN, Page 2-A)

Welcome Center Will Greet 1,000-Plus Visitors A Day

BY SUSAN USHER

When the Southeastern Welcome Center opens in 1992 its staff can expect a thousand visitors a day, State Transportation Secretary Tommy Harrelson told a group of about 75 people Tuesday at groundbreaking ceremonies for the \$1.1 million facility.

"Probably more than that," Harrelson said later regarding the figure. "People don't realize how many people this road is going to be carrying."

"The center in Macon County is already doing more than that during its peak season."

The four-lane bypass of U.S. 17 around Shallotte is scheduled to open before the start of the 1991 tourist season next May.

Tuesday's afternoon ceremony was held along the unfinished bypass, off N.C. 130 West at what will be the entrance to the new facility from the westbound ramp.

Dean Walters, president of the Southeastern Welcome Center Inc., the non-profit organization that will operate the visitors center, said its construction is "a long-awaited dream" for many area residents. It was a natural project for the area, he said, given its rich heritage, the ease with which southeastern North Carolina residents welcome visitors, and the importance of tourism to the coastal economy. "It made sense

that our state and this southeast region would develop a partnership," he said.

The project is a joint effort of the public and private sector.

Located approximately 12 miles north of the South Carolina-North Carolina border along the U.S. 17 bypass at Shallotte, the regional center is being built with state funds. The center will operate and staff its visitors center in 1,400 square feet of the facility. A state rest area will occupy the remaining 1,000 square feet. The N.C. Department of Transportation will operate the rest area and provide site maintenance.

The facility will promote attractions and amenities across the entire region, as well as providing information about the rest of the state.

In turn, Harrelson said the state hopes financial support will be forthcoming from all eight counties—Brunswick, Bladen, Columbus, Craven, Duplin, Onslow, New Hanover and Pender.

Participants in Southeastern Welcome Center Inc. to date include the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce, Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce and Cape Fear Coast Convention & Visitor's Bureau. Brunswick County has channeled \$60,000 to the center through the two chambers of commerce and

the Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce has chipped in \$10,000.

"We'll start our funding program today," Susanne Sartelle, executive vice president of the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce and treasurer of the center operating group, told the *Beacon*. "We're going to be working mainly through chambers of commerce and visitors centers."

Mrs. Sartelle, Walters and Harrelson joined other officials in tossing shovelful of dirt alongside the bypass with a chrome-plated shovel. Also digging in were Southeastern Welcome Center board members Joe Augustine, of the Greater Wilmington chamber; Secretary Sabrina Hodges, visitors center director for the Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce; Judy Shaffner of the Governor's Office; Vicki Spencer and Dave Kelly, Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce, and Annette Odum, South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce; and Charles Tomlinson, assistant head of DOT's roadside unit.

"I think it's great. I'm excited that the location is so close to the South Brunswick Island beaches," Ocean Isle Beach Mayor Betty Williamson said following the groundbreaking. "It should help our local economy a great deal."

Varnamtown Officials Hope To Open Town Hall As Early Christmas Gift

BY DOUG RUTTER

With some help from residents, Varnamtown officials think they'll be able to open the community's first town hall to the public as an early Christmas present.

The town board of aldermen last week voted to buy a lot and house along Varnamtown Road for \$51,000. With a few changes, officials say the house will make a nice town hall that should meet the town's needs for many years.

Carol Etheridge, who owns the property, had rejected an identical offer from the town board in September. Mayor Judy Galloway said last week that the real estate company trying to sell the property accepted the town's offer.

The town board will use \$30,000 from the town building fund as a down payment and borrow \$21,000 from United Carolina Bank. The

loan will be for two years, and the interest rate will not exceed 8 percent.

Town Clerk Paul Vealey said last week that the town has about \$40,000 in the bank. The board of aldermen budgeted \$55,863 in its building fund this fiscal year, plus \$2,400 for town hall rental.

Since Varnamtown incorporated in September 1988, town meetings have been held in the community's two churches. Last Thursday, when aldermen approved purchase of the property, an electrical problem caused them to meet in a small side room in Dixon Chapel United Methodist Church rather than in their usual room.

The future town hall property is located next to an acre of land the town already owns. The lot is about one-third of an acre, and the 1,400-square-foot house has four bed-

rooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, dining area, living room and utility room.

Mayor Galloway said the closing date will be no later than Nov. 15. "If all goes according to plan, we can meet there and start knocking out walls," she said last week.

Alderman John David Dawson was authorized to change the locks on the doors as soon as the town takes over ownership of the property.

Town officials said last week they hope town residents will volunteer their time to renovate the building if the town pays for the lumber and other materials.

Although the purchase is still incomplete, town officials already are talking about holding an open house when renovations are done and dressing up the town hall with a Christmas tree.

(See VARNAMTOWN, Page 2-A)



VARNAMTOWN ALDERMEN approved the purchase of this house last week, which they plan to convert into the community's first town hall.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER