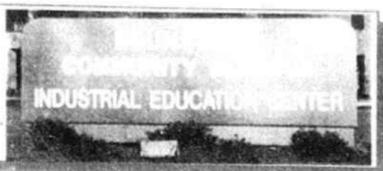


In Training
BCC's Industrial Training Center at Leland is up and running, a one-of-a-kind cooperative venture between industry and government. The story's on Page 12-B.



On A Streak
Both the Trojans and Lady Trojans posted their fourth wins under the hoop last week and are looking sharp. The stories are on Pages 8-B and 11-B, in the Sports section.



Knapp Makes Offer
Calabash Planning and Zoning Board Chairman Warren "Bud" Knapp is offering to provide the town a new logo—if it pays him \$1,500 in costs. Read the story on Page 5-A.



THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

Twenty-ninth Year, Number 6

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Shallotte, North Carolina, Wednesday, December 13, 1990

25¢ Per Copy

36 Pages, 3 Sections, 1 Insert

Varnamtown Meets At New Town Hall

There won't be any cookies or punch served, but the Varnamtown Board of Aldermen will hold its first official meeting at the new town hall Thursday, Dec. 20, at 7:30 p.m.

Gathering at the town hall will be a change of pace for the town board, which has held its monthly meetings in two local churches since the community incorporated just over two years ago.

Town officials recently voted to buy a home on Varnamtown Road, which they plan to convert into a town hall with a meeting room, conference room, office, two restrooms and a kitchen.

Aldermen had hoped to tear down several walls and have the town hall spruced up in time for their December meeting so they could hold an open house for community residents.

But Mayor Judy Galloway said last week there is work to be done that won't be finished until after the holidays. "We might as well go ahead and do it right while we're doing it," she said.

Judge Fails To Appear

BY TERRY POPE

The judge failed to appear in Brunswick County Superior Court Monday, causing a delay in a special criminal session.

"I plead guilty," said Dallas Cameron Jr., assistant director of the N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts in Raleigh.

A mix-up in assignments meant a special session of Superior Court was halted. The District Attorney's office was ready to begin prosecuting. The grand jury reported. Defendants and lawyers shuffled in and out of the courtroom Monday waiting for the judge to appear.

They were later told to return Tuesday.

Lynn Johnson, resident Superior Court judge in Cumberland County, was scheduled to appear in Brunswick County, said Cameron. Johnson was assigned to replace Judge Dexter Brooks when a regular rotation of judges was suspended in June.

"Apparently, he was not aware that he was assigned there," Cameron said. "Johnson was assigned for months and months."

Judge Johnson had a civil session in Fayetteville Monday morning, said Assistant District Attorney Napoleon "Poli" Barefoot Jr. Barefoot said he was as surprised as everyone else when a judge failed to appear.

"We'll do it again tomorrow," Barefoot said. "We'll just be a day late. I hope we're not a dollar short."

Cameron said Brunswick County wasn't the only court lacking a judge Monday morning. The mix-up also caused Cumberland County to be short a Superior Court judge.

"It happens, in my opinion, rarely," Cameron said. "It's worse in a place like that where you have one superior courtroom. The lawyers are there, the jurors are there and it needs to happen."

Cameron said it was back to the drawing board Monday to figure out how the mix-up occurred.

"It's costly," Cameron said, "when you have jurors coming in that don't serve."



Pelican's Perch

A pelican looks out over the Shallotte River Sunday afternoon from a wooden rail on the bow of the *Miss Angela*, a shrimp boat docked at Shallotte Point.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Larger Post Office Under Way To Serve Growing Supply Area

BY SUSAN USHER

Construction will begin soon on a new and considerably larger Supply Post Office, which should be available for occupancy by early fall 1991 at the latest, according to U.S. Postal Service officials.

The new post office will be located away, but not far away, from busy U.S. 17, which is scheduled for four-laning.

The facility will be built at the northeast corner of the intersection of N.C. 211 and "old" U.S. 17, Blanton Road, which runs behind Supply Baptist Church, said Chester Hansen, a real estate specialist principal with the U.S. Postal Service in Greensboro.

Norman Rachels, Supply postmaster for the past four years, said the new location is well-suited to the task. "It's a nice site for us. We don't have to be out there on the busy four-lane and it should be safer (for customers to reach)."

A rental contract was awarded Nov. 26 to Mrs. E.M. Powell of Valdosta, Ga., who will build the new facility and rent it to the U.S. Postal Service for \$38,000 a year. Jeffrey Seria, a senior real estate specialist, is manager for the project, Hansen said.

It won't be the first time a post office has stood at that corner.

Ethelyn Hawes, who served as Supply postmaster from 1943 until her retirement in June 1972, said the post office was previously located on the family-owned land from 1936 to about 1946, in two different buildings. One of those structures still stands, but is to be torn down to make way for the new project.

The new facility will be 4,073 square feet in interior size, substantially larger than present 1,400-square-foot office that was dedicated in 1975.

Plans also call for a separate storage area and a large parking lot. Part of the tract, which is about about

two acres in size, cannot be built on because of a Department of Transportation easement and a septic drainage field, said Hansen.

The Supply Post Office serves Supply, Holden Beach and Varnamtown. Its four full routes serve 2,574 families and 73 businesses and require 287 miles of driving a day, according to Postmaster Rachels.

That's up from three full routes and one part-time route, 221 miles and 2,446 families in January 1985.

The office has 388 post office boxes, of which 108 are "carousal" type boxes added in the past four years. Only five or six boxes are unrented at this time, Rachels said.

The office also operates a contract station at Holden Beach. Its routes cover an area that extends along U.S. 17 north to Grapevine Road and south to near Royal Oak Road and the old Radio Shack store, and along N.C. 211 east to the Lockwood Folly River Bridge and west, at present, as far as the Prospect community. "We'd deliver farther up (N.C. 211) if there were enough houses for delivery," said the postmaster.

Supply is located in Lockwood Folly Township, which the Brunswick County Planning Department says has been the second-fastest-growing township in the state's second-fastest growing county. For the period 1980 to 1988, said Planner Don Eggert, Lockwood Folly Township saw the addition of 5,200 housing units, an increase of 70 percent. Only Shallotte Township, with 6,400 units and a 98 percent increase, experienced a greater growth rate in Brunswick County.

Rachels can see that growth. "Every time I go away and come back there's another road cut or a new mobile home park being developed," he said. "And it's all toward the beaches."

With the four-laning of U.S. 17 scheduled, Rachels expects the growth to only continue.

Seaside Neighbors Carry Dog Dispute Into District Court

BY TERRY POPE

Some residents of Seaside say their neighborhood has gone to the dogs, literally.

A man charged with shooting and killing a neighbor's dog in Seaside Station II was found guilty of cruelty to animals in Brunswick County District Court Tuesday.

Jim Wilkerson, 52, of Bayberry Street, says the neighborhood is still overrun by stray dogs that come in to his yard to attack and kill ducks he raises. The dog Wilkerson shot and killed Oct. 3 was a black male Labrador retriever owned by Currie Batchelor, also of Seaside Station II.

Batchelor took out warrants on Oct. 8 charging Wilkerson with cruelty to animals.

Following more than an hour of emotion-charged testimony Tuesday, Judge D. Jack Hooks Jr. gave Wilkerson a 29-day suspended sentence and ordered that he pay Batchelor \$350 for Roscoe, the dog. Judge Hooks also fined the defendant \$250.

Assistant District Attorney Melody Hayes called the shooting a "needless killing". She said the N.C. General Statutes do not allow someone to kill another person's dog, even if that dog is on someone else's property.

"The facts are, he killed a dog," Ms. Hayes said. "He didn't have permission to kill this dog. If this is not a blatant violation of the statutes, then I don't know what is."

It was the second time within weeks that the matter has entered the courtroom. Last month, Wilkerson sued Batchelor in Brunswick County District Civil Court for payment of ducks he says have been killed on his property by dogs. That case was dismissed for lack of evidence.

According to Brunswick County Animal Control Supervisor Zelma Babson, she received a call from a Seaside resident on Oct. 3 in reference to a man running through the neighborhood with a shotgun shooting dogs.

When she arrived at the Wilkerson residence, she spotted the black Labrador lying about six feet from a pond in the back yard.

"The dog was dead," Ms. Babson said. "There were no signs of feathers or dead ducks in his mouth. All of the ducks appeared to be well and fine."

"The facts are, he killed a dog. He didn't have permission to kill this dog."

—Melody Hayes
Assistant D.A.

There is no leash law in effect in the Seaside area, Batchelor testified Tuesday. He said Wilkerson called him once and came by his home on another occasion to warn him about the dog being in his yard.

Wilkerson, who represented himself in court Tuesday, testified that he has had 19 ducks within the past year killed. He told Judge Hooks that he used buckshot to kill Roscoe and also described how on Oct. 3 he injured, with smaller No. 8 shot, a puppy that had been chasing ducks in his yard. When the puppy started smelling the dead Roscoe, Wilkerson said he shot the puppy in the behind.

"As long as he (Roscoe) was laying up there in Mr. Batchelor's yard, he was a gentle animal," he said. "But when he got with a pack of dogs, he was a holy terror. Roscoe would chase the ducks out of the water so the other dogs could kill them."

Wilkerson said he has owned a dog for 14 years, that he is an animal lover.

"I didn't want to shoot the dog," he added. "I'm just not going to let them kill another duck. I feel like the North Carolina animal control laws say I was within my rights."

However, Ms. Hayes said there is no evidence that Roscoe ever killed a duck. She pointed out a property owners' ordinance that prohibits the keeping of horses, poultry and fowl in the neighborhood. Wilkerson's raising of ducks, she said, could be interpreted as a violation of the home owners' ordinance.

In her closing arguments, Ms. Hayes said that Wilkerson's comment during testimony about shooting the puppy "angered me to no end."

Wilkerson had told Judge Hooks that the puppy had "lost the taste of a duck" after he was shot in the rear.

Wilkerson's wife, Martha, testified. (See DOG, Page 2-A)

Look For Holden Beach Boating Carolers Sunday

A hearty crew of Christmas carolers plan to make their annual rounds at Holden Beach by way of the water this Sunday.

For the sixth consecutive year, the carolers will be boating along the canals and Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway at Holden Beach.

The following is a schedule of stops:

Harbor Acres: arrive 5:45 p.m., depart 6 p.m.

Heritage Harbor: arrive 6:20 p.m., depart 6:40 p.m.

Holden Beach Harbor: arrive 6:55 p.m., depart 7:40 p.m.

Waterway at Holden Beach Bridge: arrive 8:10 p.m., depart 8:25 p.m.

The best sites for viewing along the waterway are at the regional parking lot under the bridge, Holden Beach Marina and Captain Pete's Seafood.

The carolers will be on a sailboat this year and will be able to enter only the main inlet at Harbor Acres and Heritage Harbor and the main feeder canal at Holden Beach Harbor.

Regulators Won't Fine CP&L For Brunswick Plant Shutdown

BY SUSAN USHER

Carolina Power & Light Co. won't be fined by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for an August incident in which mistakes by two operators led to automatic shutdown of the plant, a notice from the NRC indicates.

Utility spokesman Elizabeth Bean said last week that CP&L has already completed steps it had outlined to the regulatory agency last fall as its plan to keep such an incident from occurring again. The utility's answer to the NRC notice of violation will outline those steps formally, she said.

In the Aug. 19 situation, which occurred at the Unit 2 reactor, two technicians were involved in a routine monthly surveillance test of electrical circuits. Plant procedures call for participation of two technicians throughout the test, though nuclear regulations require

that two persons conduct only a part of the test. The entire test on that date was performed by only one technician while the other was in another room.

The operator conducting the test made a mistake which triggered a chain of events that caused the unit to "scram" and subsequent automatic shutdown of the plant. Then a series of nuclear steam system safety/relief valves failed to open when challenged following the reaction shutdown and staff delayed in declaring an "unusual event" at the plant as required by CP&L procedures.

Afterwards, the two instrumentation and control technicians lied about what had occurred. The first technician skipped some steps in the testing but signed off that they had been completed. The second technician, who was not present during the test, signed off

that he had performed the required second-party independent verification.

"The seriousness of this event cannot be overstated," wrote Regional NRD Administrator Stewart N. Ebneger in the Nov. 30 formal notice of violation. "A significant series of inappropriate actions on the part of the technician performing the test resulted in an unnecessary challenge to plant safety systems and related equipment."

The regulatory agency also cited the plant for less severe concerns: failure to follow procedures, failure to make required notifications and various issues dealing with inadequate procedures.

NRC officials, however, decided not to levy a civil fine in the incident for several reasons, said Ebneger. These included CP&L's investigative efforts and quick corrective actions, as well as the NRC's position of en-

couraging utilities to identify problems and correct them on their own initiative.

CP&L fired the two employees who were involved. And, as outlined at a conference at the NRC's Atlanta office immediately following the incident, CP&L has since taken steps to improve training and communications at the plant.

"The staff (of the NRC) recognizes that much is being done to address the specific problems," wrote Ebneger. "However, management should be more aggressively involved in correcting the pressing problem of procedural compliance."

The NRC chided CP&L for apparent gaps in communication and effective interaction among work groups and lapses in standard operator protocol.

(See REGULATORS, Page 2-A)