

Shallotte Audit Shows Big Improvement In Tax Collections

BY DOUG RUTTER
A recent crackdown on overdue taxes has literally paid off for the Town of Shallotte.
The town's tax revenues have jumped from about \$269,000 two years ago to \$357,000 last fiscal year, which is an increase of 25 percent.
The collection included taxes that were as much as 10 years overdue, said Mike Chandler, auditor with Brock, Berry and Padgett of Shallotte. He reviewed the 1989-90 audit report with town officials at last Wednesday's meeting.
The tax collection rate last fiscal year was 93.2 percent, which was a 1.8 percent increase over the previous year. Chandler said the tax collection rate should be at least 95 percent, but the town is on the right track.
"You've definitely taken the right steps," Chandler said. "You couldn't continue to go the way you were."
The town collected approximately \$47,000 in overdue taxes last fiscal year, compared to \$9,800 in fis-

cal year 1988-89. "It shows that somebody has put forth that effort," the auditor said.
While Chandler commended the town for its tax collection efforts, Alderman Wilton Harrelson pointed out that some landowners are upset with the way the town has handled its collection of overdue taxes.
The town has filed a number of lawsuits this year to collect unpaid taxes, and some people have complained that they weren't aware they owed town taxes until after the lawsuits were filed.
At last week's meeting, aldermen met in executive session for 35 minutes to discuss three pending lawsuits with the town attorney, Mark Lewis.
The suits had been filed to collect taxes from Billy Tripp, Roger Smith and Larry Shreve. The taxes were later paid, but all three landowners asked that they not be required to pay attorney fees and court costs.
Following the closed session, Mayor Sarah Tripp said no action

"You've definitely taken the right steps. You couldn't continue to go the way you were."

—Mike Chandler, auditor

was taken and that the attorney would handle the lawsuits. "We'll let the court decide," Lewis said.
Harrelson indicated last week that he thinks the town's tough stance on overdue taxes has been effective. "I think a message has been sent," he said.
"I think so," Chandler added. "And it should make this year and forward easier. Let's hope so."
Chandler also commended the town for increasing its fund balance last fiscal year. The general fund balance was about \$90,000 in June 1989, but had grown to around \$258,000 by the end of June 1990.
The auditor recommended the town have at least four or five

months worth of operating expenses on hand at all times in the fund balance. "This is something you needed just in case of emergencies," he said.
All of the financial news wasn't good for town board members last week. Chandler said the town needs to generate more operating revenue in the water fund, either through higher water rates or administrative fees.
Water fund operating expenses exceeded revenues last year by about \$36,000. The town uses state sales tax money and other outside sources to fund the water department, Chandler said, but needs to increase revenue generated within the water department.

Roof Needs Repairs
Police Chief Rodney Gause said the roof of the police department building leaks in four rooms and needs to be fixed.
The flat roof has been patched five or six times in the last two or three years. Gause said a local roofing contractor recommended the town replace the flat roof with an A-frame roof.
But two town board members said that a guaranteed liner on the flat roof should work just as well and cost less. A decision on the matter was tabled until January when cost estimates should be available.
Town Clerk Mary Etta Hewett said the town budgeted \$10,000 this year for public buildings. Part of the money was earmarked for new stucco and shingles on the town hall, but she said repairing the leaky roof is more urgent.
In another matter relating to the police department, aldermen voted last week to allow Det. Tom Hunter

to drive an unmarked police car as long as the insurance on the vehicle checks out.
Hunter uses the vehicle as chief of the Sandy Creek Police Department. Gause said Sandy Creek is willing to continue paying insurance on the car as long as Shallotte helps pay for repairs and gasoline.
The town attorney was asked to check out the town insurance policy to make sure Hunter can drive the vehicle while he is on duty for Shallotte.
Other Business
In other business last week, aldermen:
■ Voted to release \$446.50 in 1990 taxes billed to United Carolina Bank. The town clerk said the taxes had been charged on personal property located outside the town limits.
■ Changed the deadline for getting items on the agenda. The deadline was moved back 24 hours from the Friday before each meeting to the Thursday before each meeting.

Thieves Take Crime Watch Sign

BY TERRY POPE
Some local residents hoping to take a bite out of crime were bitten last Friday.
Someone stole the Community Watch crime prevention sign at the High Hill Subdivision off of Holden Beach Road.
The sign belonged to the High Hill Property Owners Association of Route 3, Shallotte, reported Katherine Shawver, its vice president. A "Private Property" sign was also taken in the larceny, according to Brunswick County Sheriff's Deputy Becky McDonald's report.
Both signs were later found in the roadway to the entrance of the subdivision off of N.C. 130 east of Shallotte. Ms. Shawver was told by her brother-in-law that the signs were missing.
Damage was estimated at \$25.
In other reports on file at the Sheriff's Department:
■ Someone took more than \$370 from a cash register at the Quick-N-Easy Cigo store at Holden Beach last Thursday, reported employee Susan Rogers. The drawer came up \$370.18 short, Deputy Richard Long reported. Detectives have a suspect in the case.
■ Someone broke into a storage shed at a home on Pine Drive off of N.C. 130 east of Shallotte and took about \$5,075 in property, reported Deputy McDonald. George C. Wilson of Dallas, N.C., said the break-

CRIME REPORT

in occurred between Nov. 18 and Dec. 5. A boat motor, fish finder and rods and reels were taken.
■ Rods, reels and tools were taken from a residence at Little Shallotte Estates between Nov. 27 and Dec. 8, reported Deputy Long. Buddy Franklyn Robbins of Greensboro could not give deputies an estimate on the items, which were taken from his residence when someone cut the lock off a storage shed.
■ A paint sprayer valued at \$650 was taken Sunday night from a van parked in front of a Bolivia residence. Richard Ewins Powers of Route 2 reported someone broke the window to gain entry to the van, according to Deputy Joseph Scoggins. A customized sun visor was also taken from the van.
■ Someone used a cinder block to break the glass front door of B&M Fashions at Clairmont Plaza in Leland and took \$380 in clothes. The incident occurred around 1:30 a.m. Sunday, reported Deputy Brian Sanders. A burglar alarm sounded, but the thieves managed to escape with jeans, shirts and skirts. Damage was estimated at \$400 to the door.
■ Bums Babson of Ash reported someone took two gas tanks off his peanut cooker between Nov. 25 and Dec. 4. The cooker was parked at his residence on N.C. 130 west. The tanks were valued at \$28 each, reported Deputy George Stanley.

■ Walter McDonald Ewing of Hickory reported that his residence on Dale Drive off of N.C. 904 in Seaside was vandalized between Nov. 11 and Dec. 5. Someone broke the front window at his home, causing \$100 in damage. Nothing was taken, reported Deputy Hoagland.
■ A person who shoplifted a cassette tape from the Roses store in Southport is being sought. Store Manager Sam Pittman reported a woman put a tape in her back pocket and set the alarm off when she left the store without paying for it. She fled from the scene, reported Deputy McDonald.
■ A 1969 Ford was reported stolen from a Cedar Grove residence late Friday. Perry Randolph Bryant told Deputy Stanley that he left the keys in his car, which he noticed was missing around 9:10 p.m.
■ Another car was reported missing from a Supply residence. Olivia Williams Morgan of Route 2 said someone took her 1973 Impala from the front yard of her home on U.S. 17, reported Deputy Johnny Earp Jr. The car is valued at \$1,000.
■ A Shallotte woman reported someone stole two checkbooks from her, one from a closed account and one from an open account, and has cashed checks by forging her name at several area businesses. The victim was made aware of the checks last Thursday. Checks were cashed at the NCNB, Ella's Restaurant and Minute Mart in Calabash, Deputy Hoagland reported.

Board Approves Personnel Actions

At its Nov. 30 meeting, the Brunswick County Board of Education approved a number of routine personnel decisions by staff.
The board hired, on an interim basis, Jennifer Johnson of Long Beach as third grade teacher and Laurie Sillings of Southport as a teacher assistant. Both will work at Southport Elementary. Cynthia Bryant of Leland was hired as a four-hour cafeteria employee at North Brunswick High.
Also approved were leaves of absence for Wanda Lofton of Leland, a first grade teacher at Lincoln Primary, and Marsha Utterback of Wilmington, a special education teacher at Shallotte Middle.
Ernest Walker of Longwood retired from the maintenance department as a grounds worker. Approved as substitute teachers were Tina Butler of Leland, Arden Gaddy of Wilmington and Ralph Shelton of Supply.

Correction

A photo caption in the Dec. 6 issue of *The Brunswick Beacon* wrongly identified an entry in the Shallotte Christmas Parade as Safety Pup.
The dog in the photograph was actually the mascot of WDZD radio station.

TRANSMISSIONS
Complete Transmission Service

Free Towing
Nationwide
Warranty

BURROUGHS AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION SERVICE
Midway between Whiteville & Tabor City, Hwy. 701
PHONE (919)653-9404

SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$

SAVE \$\$\$ ON QUALITY FURNITURE

✓ Gifts for Her
✓ Gifts for Him
✓ Gifts for Home!

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Gun Cabinets • Desks • Secretaries • Curio Recliners • Swivel, Boston & Glider Rockers

27,000 SQ. FT. SHOWROOM

Entertainment Centers • Sleeper Sofas
Occasional Tables • Lamps • Foyer Pieces

✓ Check Us Out!
WAREHOUSE FURNITURE DISTRIBUTORS Easy Financing Terms • 90 Days Same As Cash

Wholesale/Retail • Delivery Available
803-249-8874 • OPEN MON.-SAT. 9 TO 5
Hwy. 90 Nixon's Crossroads, North Myrtle Beach

SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$ SAVE \$

Mike's Auto Repair Service

Holiday Special

Regul XL Steel Radial

• Two Full Steel Belts-Polyester Cord Body for Smooth Ride
• Low Rolling Resistance Tread Compound
• Desirable Combination of Good Mileage and Economy Pricing

155-80R-13	\$37.95
165-80R-13	\$37.95
175-80R-13	\$38.95
185-80R-13	\$38.95
185-75R-14	\$39.95
195-75R-14	\$41.95
205-75R-14	\$41.95
205-75R-15	\$41.95
215-75R-15	\$43.95
225-75R-15	\$43.95
235-75R-15	\$45.95

*Computer Balance \$3.00 Per Tire

Hwy. 17 N., Shallotte ★ While Supplies Last
754-5380
Mike Arnold—Owner • 18 Years Experience

SUNDAY BUFFET

All-You-Can-Eat
Homestyle Cooking
at
Brunswick County's Favorite
After-Church Eating Place

Serving Every Sunday
Noon to 2:30 PM
Reservations Suggested

Adults \$6.95
Children Under 10 \$3.95 Under 5 FREE

at
JONES/BYRD CLUBHOUSE
SEA TRAIL PLANTATION

North Entrance—Old Georgetown Rd., Sunset Beach, 579-2112

Christmastime is here

Holiday Shopping Hours
Open til 8 PM thru Dec. 22

All Men's
Long Sleeve Shirts
Dress, Oxfords, Turtlenecks, Knits
20% Off

All Men's Cardigan & Pullover
Sweaters
20% Off

Stylish Men's Winter
Sport Coats
25% Off

All Men's Winter
Heavy Jackets
20% Off

Stocking Stuffers:
Scarves, jewelry, belts,
handbags, hosiery,
lingerie & craft items!

Stocking Stuffers: Ties, belts,
hats, wallets, socks,
underwear & more!

Kirby's
DEPARTMENT STORE
and BEN FRANKLIN

Main Street • Shallotte • 754-4846