



### Follow The Action

Follow Brunswick County prep basketball action on the sports pages. Complete coverage is on Pages 4-6B.



### Roasting 'The Best'

South Brunswick High's Joe Best retires from a 30-year career in education, but not before friends and peers have fun at his expense. See Page 3-B.



### Tying Ribbons

Local residents are writing, praying and rallying in support for troops in the Middle East. A partial list of local men and women in the Gulf in on Page 7-A.

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## BUDGET CRUNCH CITED

# County Denies DSS Request; Leland Asks For Police Help

BY TERRY POPE

An anticipated budget crunch in June has Brunswick County Commissioners hesitant to add employees to the county payroll.

That's not what Leland resident and businesswoman Kay Todd wanted to hear Monday night after she addressed the commissioners, asking that the county beef up patrols to help cut down on crime in the northern communities.

It's also not what Department of Social Services Director Jamie Orrock wanted to hear as commissioners voted 3-2 to deny his department three additional workers and 10 computer terminals to help handle an increase in applications for assistance to the poor as the economy enters a spin.

Board Chairman Kelly Holden, Jerry Jones and Donald Shaw voted not to add employees to the DSS payroll at this time, even though funds were already available to cover the cost for the remainder of the fiscal year. Board members Frankie Rabon, who is chairman of the DSS board, and Gene Pinkerton voted to approve Orrock's request. It is the second time this budget year that commissioners have voted down the request, 3-2.

"I think it's just a matter of, right now, everyone being concerned about the budget process in June," explained Holden. "What I'm looking at is down the road. Any of these positions, we would have to fund next year. It's a tough decision to make."

Holden said funding the added positions next year would mean raising county taxes, which he says he doesn't want to be forced to do.

### Three Options Available

Brunswick County Sheriff John Carr Davis told commissioners Monday that Leland residents have three options available to help reduce crime there: 1) for the town to form its own police force; 2) for the town to contract with the county to hire off-duty deputies to patrol the area; and 3) for the county to hire more deputies to work the Leland area.



BRUNSWICK COUNTY SHERIFF John Carr Davis could offer little good news to Leland businesswoman Kay Todd, who asked county commissioners Monday night for help in reducing crime in the Leland area.

STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

"I realize that Leland has a crime wave," Davis said. "Brunswick County has a crime wave. North Carolina has a crime wave."

"When you're calling for more manpower, you're calling for more tax dollars," Davis added.

Davis told the board that when three detectives are added to the staff next month it will put another man working crimes in the Leland area, which incorporated

in 1989. Eventually, Leland will have to organize its own police force, he said.

"I realize that's a big step and it's going to be expensive," Davis said.

Ms. Todd owns a video store outside of the Leland town limits that has been burglarized three times in the past seven months.

"Something's not right," Ms. Todd told the board.

"We're not getting the protection we desperately need." She said the Leland residents were not trying to condemn the sheriff's department.

"The crime wave of Leland now is astounding," Ms. Todd added. "But I know that we're not the only ones."

Jean Speight, a member of the Leland Sanitary District Board, also owns two businesses in the Leland area. She suggested that a task force meet to discuss the options that Leland residents have to improve police protection.

"This crime wave exists from Belville to the Columbus County line," Ms. Speight said. "If a task force involving commissioners would work on this, I'm sure the citizens would feel a lot better. I'm sure business owners would, too."

Commissioner Shaw said he would agree to meet with town officials from Leland, Belville and the Leland Sanitary District.

Regarding his request Monday, Orrock said the cost for the remaining fiscal year for the three workers and computer terminals would be \$16,306. The positions would be partly funded by the state.

Orrock had asked for an additional worker in children's protective services, in the Medicaid unit and to handle applications for Aid To Families With Dependent Children.

In other personnel action Monday, the board approved salary adjustments for County Manager/Attorney David Clegg and Assistant to the Manager Doug Ledgett, who were both promoted to their present positions at the last board meeting.

Clegg will earn \$64,798 per year, an increase of \$10,000 from his current salary, and Ledgett will also receive an additional \$10,000 per year, to \$32,260 annually.

Ledgett also serves as the county's emergency medical services coordinator and is in charge of operation of the county's 911 system, which will begin in January 1992.

# Holden Proposal Would Prohibit Annexation Without Referendum

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach officials have set the wheels in motion to request a state law that would allow island property owners to vote on all proposed changes in the town boundaries.

Commissioner Judy Bryan, who has opposed annexing mainland property in the past, introduced the proposal at Monday night's town meeting.

On a unanimous vote, commissioners instructed Town Attorney Ken Campbell to draft a resolution requesting that a local bill be introduced in the N.C. General Assembly. If it is approved by the town board, the resolution would be sent to State Rep. David Redwine.

Mrs. Bryan said the resolution itself wouldn't be either for or against annexation. The purpose of it would be to request a local act that would give Holden Beach

property owners the right to vote on proposed boundary changes.

Mainland annexation has been a controversial issue at Holden Beach for years and proved to be the deciding factor in the 1989 town election, when four candidates opposed to annexation were elected.

One year ago, those four town commissioners made good on their campaign promises and voted to overturn an annexation ordinance that had been adopted by a previous board in the summer of 1989.

The ordinance would have brought into the town limits about 67 acres of property bordering the mainland causeway. The annexation was scheduled to take effect in June 1990.

Commissioner Bryan said she would like the legislation to be written so the town board would be legally bound by the results of any referendum. That way, the commissioners couldn't change the town

boundaries if the majority of the voters don't want them to.

In a handout distributed Monday night, Mrs. Bryan said the resolution to be sent to Redwine should point out that Holden Beach is a resort community, and the usual rules of annexation should not apply.

She wrote that non-residents or seasonal property owners, who don't have voting rights, own at least 75 percent of the land on the island and pay more than 75 percent of the town taxes.

Commissioner Bryan also wrote that annexation of mainland property would have an adverse effect on Holden Beach. "Environmental protection of the fragile island could be put in jeopardy if mainland voters did not consider the environment a priority with their tax dollars."

She also pointed out in the handout that Holden Beach is surrounded by water, and

future development is limited. "Approximately 400 voters reside on the island which means mainland voters could easily outnumber the voters on the island, in time, due to the island's limited capacity to grow because of its water-bound status."

Mrs. Bryan also wrote that Holden Beach residents shouldn't be forced to elect town officials under the present circumstances. As it stands now, as few as three commissioners can decide to annex.

Commissioner Bryan has asked that the resolution include a petition with the names of people who support the proposed legislation. The petition would be circulated among island residents and be posted at the town hall.

She also wants to include in the resolution minutes from the 1989 Holden Beach Property Owners Association meeting when a majority of the members indicated they oppose annexation.

Commissioner Gay Atkins, who has supported annexation in the past, said she would be in favor of the legislation as long as all property owners, not just residents, could vote on the matter.

Mrs. Bryan said she wants to give all Holden Beach lot owners the right to vote on annexation. But she said state legislators probably wouldn't allow non-resident property owners to vote.

Johnny Craig, whose family owns businesses on the island and mainland, said there needs to be a cooperative effort between the two sides.

Mrs. Bryan said all mainland property owners who spoke at the last public hearing on annexation were against becoming part of the town. "I don't think this would bother them at all," she said. "They'd probably be happy about it."

(More Holden Beach Coverage Page 14-A)

# Board Hears Suspended Supervisor's Complaint

BY SUSAN USHER

A Brunswick County Schools finance office employee who was suspended without pay in November aired her grievance before the county school board Monday night.

The school board conducted the four-hour hearing in public at the request of Payroll Supervisor Jewell McCumbee of Ash.

Mrs. McCumbee was suspended without pay Nov. 2 while auditors investigated insurance payments that had been made through the school system for employees who were no longer eligible for coverage.

According to school system officials, the suspension resulted from Mrs. McCumbee's failure to make state and federal tax deposits on a timely basis and failure to handle group insurance matters appropriately.

Mrs. McCumbee is being represented in the grievance process by her son-in-law, local businessman Ricky Parker.

Parker said Tuesday morning Mrs. McCumbee has been employed by the school finance department for more than 20 years and that her workload and responsibilities had increased to the point where she worked overtime regularly in an effort to keep up.

During the time frame in question, her responsibilities included both the handling of payroll and employee benefits. The school system has since created a new benefits

coordinator position.

Parker said the board had been asked to fund the benefits position previously but had not.

"One of our contentions is that this would not have happened if they had listened to her and provided some help," said Parker.

Referring to the audit for fiscal year 1989-80, he said, "To me, the audit if anything shows that the entire financial department needs to be revamped. This is something she (Mrs. McCumbee) has been screaming about for years."

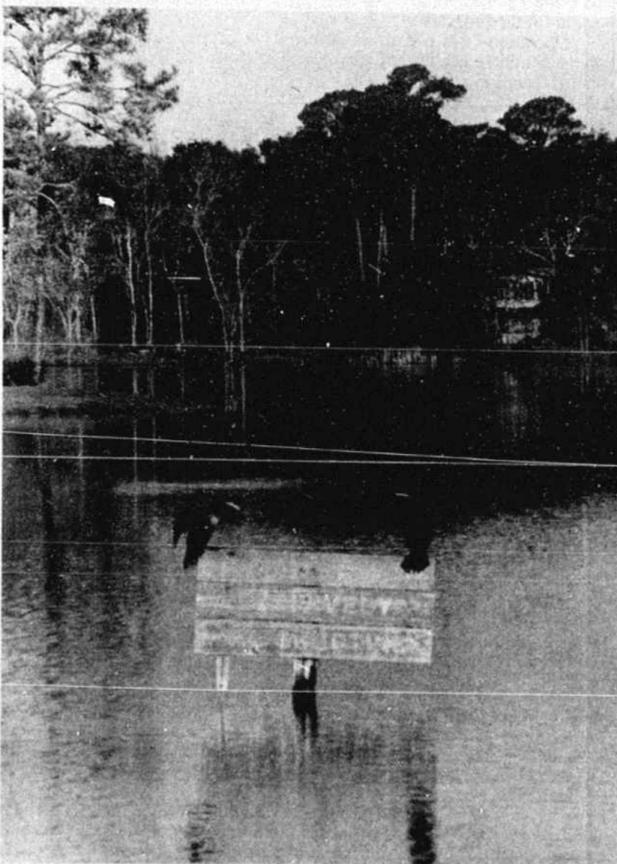
"Our contention is that the entire system has failed," he said. "If she were fired, should not some others be also?"

Further, Parker said that Mrs. McCumbee's primary responsibility was payroll and that payroll "was always on time."

While tax deposits had been made late on occasion, it was because she had to wait for a check from the accounts payable unit after working up a deposit. "If it was late that was the reason and she was never penalized by the state for that."

Parker also questioned the board's decision to suspend Mrs. McCumbee without pay, given that she had never received a letter of reprimand until two days prior to her suspension and that, according to his research, no other school system employee has ever been suspended without pay.

(See BOARD, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

TWO ANINGAS or water turkeys bask in the sun at Twin Lakes Tuesday morning on a sign with faded lettering that proclaims "POSITIVELY NO SHOOTING."

# Sunset Pledges Help To Owners In Maintaining The Twin Lakes

BY SUSAN USHER

Sunset Beach Council members Monday night stopped short of pledging funds for care of the community's Twin Lakes, but said the town will work with property owners to maintain the mainland lakes.

Wording in the original resolution drafted by the Twin Lakes Residents Conservation Association would have had the town "contribute in such amounts and manner as determined by the Town Council..." The more cautiously worded revision states that the town may, at its discretion, contribute.

The resolution is part of an ongoing effort by the two-year-old association to protect and improve the condition of the lakes. It provides for improvements to be made under the auspices of the town, which would obtain any necessary permits in its name.

It also recognizes the benefit to the entire town in preserving and improving the lakes, described as a scenic asset, bird sanctuary, natural area and potential recreational area that also increases surrounding property values. A portion of Eastern Lake borders N.C. 179 near Oyster Bay Golf Links.

"What the town needs to be careful of is that it doesn't get contractually bound to do anything," town attorney Michael Isenberg advised the council. "This simply expresses your intent to help in taking care of the lakes, not ownership."

Councilman Mary Katherine Griffith has lived on Twin Lakes for

18 years. During that time she has seen the lakes' condition deteriorate rapidly at one point, then begin a comeback last year.

"Up until the time the lakes used to be pumped by the golf course we had no problem," she recalled Monday night. "We had water in the lakes all year. I don't remember any fish kills before then, though there may have been some, or the extreme growth of algae we had."

But the water level in the lake has begun to stabilize, she said, since Oyster Bay Golf Links, after a threat of legal action by the residents association and others, stopped drawing water from the lakes to irrigate the course. "I think we've seen great improvement in it."

Councilman Ed Gore agreed, suggesting that the addition of algae-eating carp to the lake and the end of irrigation pumping should alleviate most of the problems seen in recent years. Most other needs cited by the association can be addressed as needed by working with other government agencies, he suggested.

The association says ongoing care is needed for the lakes because of their nature—shallow, with an irregular shoreline and no known natural source of replenishment other than rainfall, with plant growth and eutrophication encouraged by a steady diet of nutrients and sedimentation from the surrounding residential areas, warm water temperatures and light penetration.

(See SUNSET, Page 2-A)