

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS Commissioners Appoint Nine

Brunswick County Commissioners appointed nine persons to five boards at their June 17 meeting, as follows:

■To the Brunswick Community College Board of Trustees, Lynda Stanley of Southport. She will fill the seat held by Shirley Babson of Bolivia, who was nominated by Commissioner Frankie Rabon, but not reappointed.

■To the EMS Advisory Council, Walter Johnson, Long Beach Rescue; Judy Bryan, Town of Holden Beach; and James L. Poole, Town of Yaupon Beach;

■To the Brunswick County Public Library Board of Trustees, Teddi Neal of Bolivia. Commissioners had no nominees for the post; Mrs. Neal was in the audience and agreed to serve when nominated by Rabon.

■To the Calabash Board of Adjustment from the extraterritorial zone, Robert Crocker of Pine Burr Acres and Anthony Antonucci of Carolina Shores North. The town had recom-

mended appointment of Crocker and Tom Roberts.

■To continue on the Brunswick Interagency Transportation System (BITS) board, Bernie Carlisle of Leland.

Appointed To DSS

Brenda Grissett of Grissettown has been appointed to serve on the Brunswick County Department of Social Services Board of Directors.

She will replace her husband, Malcolm, whose term expires June 30. Malcolm has served on the board six years and was a past chairman.

Ms. Grissett was unanimously selected to represent District 1.

"I have a lot of confidence in her," said DSS Chairman Frankie Rabon. "If I didn't, I wouldn't place her name into nomination."

Two members of the board are appointed by the governor, two by county commissioners and one by the board itself.



PLANTS HELP STABILIZE THE DUNES as they withstand the harsh environment of sun and wind and salt spray. PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

What's Happening In The Sand Dunes?

BY BILL FAVER

One of the harshest of seashore environments is that of the sand dunes. The shifting sand and constant wind that help create the dunes are features that make it difficult for plants and animals to survive.

The summer heat and the elevated areas make a hot, dry surface with loose sand particles swept back and forth every day. The constant barrage of salt spray kills back tender new growth on plants, especially during storms. Soil is low in fertility as little decaying plant and animal material is available to enrich the soil.

Plants that are able to survive in the dunes must have blades that are flexible enough to be whipped about by the wind and must have means to prevent loss of water from the plant tissues. Some leaves curl inward to prevent loss

of moisture while other leaves have waxy surfaces that decrease evaporation.

Plants must also have root systems that go deep to reach the water table below the dunes.

Some common dune plants are sea oats, sea rocket, sea elder, American beach grass, panic grass and croton. Some of these are pioneers for they are the first plants to begin growing on a new dune. The sea rockets grows in clumps with lots of stalks, has fleshy leaves with sharply toothed edges, and flowers that resemble rockets. Sea oats are important plants that cover the frontal dunes and are protected as dune building plants along our beaches. Leaves curl to prevent loss of water and roots reach deep down into the dune to help hold and stabilize the sand as they seek the water table. American beach grass is an introduced plant in our area and was used to plant the dunes following damage from our last storm.

Additional plants found behind the dunes are seaside primrose, a low-growing plant with fuzzy leaves and yellow flowers, and the silver-leaf croton with grayish-white, oval-shaped

leaves. Dune plants may appear in large numbers, though there may be few species.

The lack of available plant materials and the harsh habitat make it impossible for many animals to live in the dunes. Most dig burrows in order to escape the elements or live elsewhere and come to the dunes at night in search of food. Ghost crabs dig into the frontal dunes and mole crickets, earwigs, ants, and wasps may live among the plants on the dunes. Cottontail rabbits, the meadow mouse, raccoons, opossums, and a number of song birds may move in and out of the dunes during the day or night.

Though life in the sand dunes may seem almost impossible, the few species of plants and animals found there are usually very successful. Like most habitat areas, the sand dunes are undergoing constant change and the plants and animals come and go as sands shift, and winds and storms take their toll. These plants and animals help provide the important protection of sand dunes—the only barrier between the sea and oceanfront development. They deserve our understanding and our protection.

Budget Cuts Axe Drainage Projects

Two drainage and mosquito control projects in western Brunswick County have been canceled by the county as a result of state funding cuts.

Last week county officials learned that the projects will not be included in the state budget next year as scheduled.

The state Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources had planned to allocate the county \$29,500 to snag Shallotte Swamp between Shallotte and Grissettown, and \$8,480 to complete snagging of the CawCaw drainage project in the Calabash-Hickman's Crossroads area.

"The budget axe continues to fall," Kelly Holden, chairman, said at the June 17 meeting of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners.

Snagging is an environmentally safe way to clear streams and other waterways by hand-removing beaver dams and fallen timbers and storm-related debris.

Commissioners also voted unanimously to refuse to pay a \$14,065 bill from the N.C. Department of Corrections for psychiatric treatment of an inmate.

The prisoner had been transferred from the Brunswick County Jail to Central Prison in Raleigh for safe-

keeping. However, County Manager David Clegg said the county had not authorized treatment and was not contacted in advance regarding it.

He said other counties are getting similar bills from the state and also are refusing payment.

Citing it as another example of the state trying to pass on costs to local government, Clegg said he anticipates future state legislation to force counties to pay such bills. The county routinely covers emergency treatment and physical medical care of prisoners.

Other Business

In other business at their June 17 meeting commissioners:

■Authorized private sale of a number of burned-out green boxes after proper advertising.

■Appointed Holden as board delegate to the state conference of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners.

■Transferred to Brunswick Community College a small tract left out in the original transfer of property from the school board to BCC for its Southport campus. As required by law, the county had to first refuse the property itself.

■Approved a \$6.1 million capital projects ordinance outlining funding for the Supply Elementary School

project; ■Amended the budget to include \$4,437 from BCC toward purchase of a van through BITS; and an additional \$4,783 from the state for mosquito control.

■Heard a request to reconsider its earlier decision regarding bids for a water line project along Mount Misery Road. Commissioners have thrown out the bids, since all were irregular, and voted to readvertise. Ralph Carmichael of Carmichael Inspections said the change in his bid had been made with the advance approval of the county engineer, who was absent when bids were opened. Noting that his apparent low bid was now public, Carmichael said he would be at a disadvantage if

new bids are taken. ■Met five minutes in an executive session requested by Commissioner Gene Pinkerton "to discuss contracts," with no action taken. Holden voted against going behind closed doors.

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