

DSS WORKERS STILL UPSET

New Building Offers No Magical Solution

BY TERRY POPE
Four weeks after the Brunswick County Department of Social Services moved into its new \$1.3 million building, some employees have hardly noticed the change.

Heavy caseloads, computer shortages and an outdated telephone system have followed workers into the new building.

Many had visions that somehow conditions would magically change after the move, said Evelyn Johnson, supervisor of adult health services.

"To tell the truth, I prefer the old building," said Ms. Johnson.

The department had grown too large for its space in the public health building. The new facility at the government complex in Bolivia is projected to meet the department's office needs for the next five years; however, all space will likely be filled by the end of the 1991-92 fiscal year, said DSS Director Jamie Orrock.

The DSS board heard from one worker Monday who complained that her new office is smaller than the one she had before.

"This place is driving everybody crazy," said Mary Randolph, 58, a worker in the adult services program. "We do not have any leadership. I wouldn't come before this board if I wasn't deep down hurt by what's going on around here."

Ms. Randolph joined the department in March 1985. She accused Orrock of harassing her and assigning her to an office too small.

Noting several health problems, such as high blood pressure and diabetes, Ms. Randolph said her 9 feet by 9 1/2 feet office only added to her problems of needing air and space to meet with clients. She was in the hospital when new offices were assigned.

"Fire me, do anything you want," said Ms. Randolph, "but I'm going to tell it like it is."

Orrock told the board that he assigned the seven departmental areas within the building while supervisors assigned individual offices. Offices that generate a higher traffic count were targeted for the front of the building, closer to the waiting area, he said.

"The location is logical, in my opinion," said Orrock. "There was no intent on anyone's part to handle it any differently."

Orrock asked Ms. Randolph how many clients she saw on Monday.

"Probably one, or two," said Ms. Randolph.

"Or, how many did you see the last time you were here?" asked Orrock.

Ms. Randolph said her client load is higher in the winter months when she accepts applications for the emergency assistance program.

"The money's not here now," said Ms. Randolph. "We don't have any clients because we don't have any money. They turn them back at the front door."

Following a 15-minute recess, during which the board toured the building and inspected the disputed office space, Chairman Frankie Rabon asked that Orrock do what he could to transfer Ms. Randolph temporarily if it didn't interfere with other employees.

"This employee's got a problem healthwise," said Rabon. "If there's any way in the world we can help, I'd like to do so. It may be one of us tomorrow in this same situation."

Ms. Randolph's husband, Franklin Randolph, addressed the board. He said his wife's condition was "thrown back" when she left the hospital and felt her office wasn't large enough for her to get air.

"I mentioned, one time, the harassment with Mr. Orrock," said Randolph. "This was between the two of us. I meant that then and I mean it today. I won't back off of that. I am asking the board to consider her request."

Randolph said a person should not have to work under constant tension or turmoil.

"A lot of people have a tendency to bring it home," said Randolph. "I'll do whatever is necessary to see that it's stopped."

As for staff members' other concerns, Orrock said the department hopes to upgrade the telephone system during the next fiscal year and route more clients away from the receptionist's station.

"The simple process of getting phone calls through is still hectic," said Orrock.

The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) department, which processes applications for food stamps, still has an urgent need for five computer terminals and a printer, according to a report in the board's meeting packet.

"Workers are having to share terminals," it states. "Time is lost going from office to office to find a terminal not in use. Twenty people are printing on one printer."

Orrock said this puts a major inconvenience on workers.



STAFF PHOTO BY CECELIA GORE

Blaze Damages Residence

Fire caused extensive damage to the Kenneth King residence on Kingtown Road near Ash last Wednesday morning. Waccamaw, Shallotte, Calabash, Sunset Beach, and Horry County Volunteer Fire Departments responded to the 10:33 a.m. call. No one was home at the time of the blaze. Firefighters were unsure of the exact cause of the fire. Betty Warren, chief of Waccamaw Volunteer Fire Department, said that the cause is believed to be a thermostat on a waterbed. Only one room and a hallway were a total loss.

Thief Leaves Lion's Paw With Gloves, Cash

BY TERRY POPE
An estimated \$1,266 in cash and merchandise was taken from the pro golf shop during a break-in at Lion's Paw Golf Club near Grissetown.

Brunswick County Sheriff's Deputy John Ingram said the suspect pried open the rear door to the pro shop and also cut a telephone line.

Owner Ed Gore told detectives the suspect scattered merchandise on the floor, broke a glass display shelf and broke into a drink machine once inside the building while the shop was closed late Saturday.

An office door had been pried open, Ingram reported, and 20 chrome golf club racks had been damaged.

Approximately \$880 in cash was taken from the office along with 19 sets of golfing gloves valued at \$266 and 30 bottles of insect repellent lotion valued at \$120.

Detectives are still investigating the break-in.

In other reports on file at the sheriff's department:

■A burglar broke into several buildings at the N.C. Baptist Assembly at Ft. Caswell Sunday, reported Sgt. Charlie Miller. Fire extinguishers were removed from a girl's barracks and sprayed inside. Other buildings broken into including the conference center and the Oleander, Pal-

metto, Riverside and Driftwood buildings.

■A Leland man awakened by someone on his porch late Saturday fired a shot at the fleeing suspect, reported Deputy Robert Allen. The Eagle's Nest Road resident said the suspect had a crowbar or ax handle in his hand. He did not know if a bullet hit the man.

■A woman entered the Citgo Quick-N-Easy store on Holden Beach Road Saturday around 6:10 p.m. and took a business license from the wall along with several file folders from the office, reported Deputy Georgia Phelps.

■A Lebanon, Pa., man told Deputy Robert Hoagland last Thursday that someone stole his \$150 raincoat while he was golfing at Sandpiper Bay Golf Club near Sunset Beach.

■Someone returned to their home on N.C. 179 south of Shallotte Saturday to find 24 plants missing from their yard. The azaleas, rose bushes and fox gloves, valued at \$122, had been dug up from the front yard, reported Ingram.

■An inflatable swimming pool and rods and reels, all valued at \$111, were taken from a Dutchman Village home. Damage was listed at \$22 to a window, reported Deputy

CRIME REPORT

Phil Hewett.

■A window air conditioner valued at \$250 was stolen from a home at Varnamtown, reported Deputy Charles Crocker on Friday. The victim, from Liberty, had not checked the home since May 22.

■A concrete statue was reported stolen from a Forest Hills subdivision home near Leland, Crocker said. The statue is of a little boy holding an unpainted basket and has a leg broken at the knee. It is valued at \$35.

■Someone broke a garage door window at Bill's Wrecker Service on U.S. 17 near Supply Friday, reported Sgt. Carl Pearson. Damage was listed at \$75. No items were taken.

■A 28-year-old Shallotte man reported early Sunday that he was beaten outside a local nightclub by a suspect that followed him home and then beat him again around 4:40 a.m., reported Deputy Richard Long. No charges have been filed. The victim was heavily intoxicated, the report states.

■Someone broke into a drink machine inside Smitty's Produce on Long Beach Road late Saturday, reported Hewett. Damage was listed at \$300 and \$40 in coins was missing.

Sgt. Pearson reported a video machine at Wilson's Old Fashioned Hamburgers on the same road was

broken into late Friday, resulting in the theft of \$75 in coins and damage of \$150.

■Three break-ins in Leland are under investigation. Two homes on Mt. Misery Road were burglarized over the weekend, reported Deputy Richard DuVall. A \$400 generator was removed from one home. A .357-magnum revolver and video recorder, all valued at \$330, were taken from another home. Jewelry, a gun and shoes valued at over \$755 were taken from an Old Mill Road home Friday, Long reported.

■Silverware, a computer, television and satellite receiver, all valued at \$5,625, were stolen from a Goodman Road home, reported Deputy Randy Robinson on Sunday.

■Jewelry valued at \$1,386 was reported missing from a Stone Chimney Road home Friday, Crocker reported. A front door had been forced open.

■A love seat, heater and bed frame were taken by a renter at a home on Village Point Road, reported Deputy Phil Bryant. The renter left a \$200 deposit. Items taken were valued at \$650.

■A utility shed and home at Ocean Trails II were broken into, Hewett reported Saturday. Items valued at \$1,645 were taken, including rods and reels, radios and a microwave. Damage was listed at \$245.

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