

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Ready To Fly

Three baby swallows stare down from their nest outside Shallotte Town Hall last Wednesday, just a few days before flying for the first time. Town Clerk Mary Etta Hewett said swallows have nested outside town hall for at least four or five years. They build up the nest and clean it out each year.

Officer Still Suspended Pending Hearing Results

Shallotte Patrolman George Samek remains suspended pending the outcome of a hearing that was recessed last week after more than three hours behind closed doors.

Town aldermen were scheduled to resume the hearing Wednesday, July 10, at 7:30 p.m. Samek, who has been with the department since April 1989, was suspended with pay June 18.

Police Chief Rodney Gause and Town Attorney Mark Lewis have refused to discuss the reason for the suspension.

Lewis also would not discuss what happened during last week's portion of the hearing. He said he believed the matter would be resolved this week.

Samek also has declined to comment until the issue is decided. He said his attorney, Sheila McLamb, advised him not to make any public statements about the suspension.

"I'm hoping to have a whole lot more to say here in the near future," Samek said last week. "I'm hoping for a real good conclusion."

Jim Merritt, North Carolina district representative with the Police Benevolent Association, also represented Samek during last week's hearing.

Samek said the hearing was recessed last Wednesday because of the time. The proceedings started around 9 p.m. and ended just after midnight.

During the hearing, local residents John DuBoise and Sandy Dye were called into the town board chambers. Several Shallotte police officers waited at town hall during the hearing.

Prior to the hearing last week, the town board and police chief met in executive session for nearly an hour to discuss an undisclosed personnel matter relating to the police department.

Fox Season To Continue, Budget Debate Continues

Open seasons for taking foxes with weapons and by trapping will continue in Brunswick County and other counties with the N.C. General Assembly's passage last week of S.B. 530.

The bill repealed a scheduled "sunset" on open seasons, said Rep. David Redwine in his weekly report.

The law also allows the Wildlife Commission to set a season for trapping beavers. Redwine said he has received many complaints from people in Brunswick and Columbus counties about property damage caused by beavers to woodlands and croplands.

Budget Debate

With their target adjournment date of June 30 come and gone, General Assembly members are still struggling to resolve differences in House and Senate budget bills.

The two houses are mainly at odds in their approaches to raising revenue, according to Rep. David Redwine.

Once those differences are resolved, Redwine said the appropriations committee can begin to go through the appropriation sections of the bills and compromise on those issues.

As chairman of the Justice and Public Safety Appropriations Subcommittee, Redwine said he will be working with the budget conference committee to resolve those differences.

Other Bills To Note

Other bills of interest, said Redwine, include:

■H.B. 965, introduced by Redwine, has been ratified as Chapter 508, 1991 Session Laws. It authorizes advancement of funds for revenue bond projects by political subdivisions to their constituted authorities. It authorizes repayment of such advances from revenue bond proceeds and provides for appointment of county and city officials to governing boards of authorities. The bill relates to an agreement reached between Brunswick County and the Lower Cape Fear Water & Sewer

Authority over repayment of funds advanced by the county for the authority's pipeline project.

■H.B. 1222, relating to the cleanup of leaking petroleum underground storage tanks. It would increase the per gallon fuel excise tax, using the proceeds to help cleanup leaking tanks by providing new money for the Commercial Fund. The fund, created by the General Assembly and financed by tank fees, is running out of money. The bill also gradually increases tank fees, lowers the deductible, changes the thresholds for paying fees and creates a loan fund for tank owners that want to upgrade or replace existing tanks to meet standards set by the EPA in 1988.

■S.B. 688, which deals with underinsured motorist coverage.

If you have an accident which is the fault of the other driver, who has insurance but not enough insurance, you can recover against your own company for the difference between the amount of the third party's insurance and your damages, up to the limits of your underinsured motorist coverage.

However, a recent court decision resulted in a policy with two or more cars with this type coverage having a greater "payout exposure," said Redwine, that had not been anticipated in the state's rate structure. As a result UIM rate increases went into effect March 1.

S.B. 688 gives policy holders the option of buying uninsured and underinsured motorist coverage at whatever dollar amount they desire up to \$1 million, which should lower the rates charged considerably. It also requires the rate bureau to file for rate adjustments to reflect the correction.

Redwine, who is serving on a conference committee to work out House and Senate differences in the bill, anticipates its passage before adjournment.

Redwine can be reached in Raleigh at 919-733-5787 or Room 632, Legislative Office Building, Raleigh, N.C. 27603-5925.

Grand Jury Returns True Bill Indicting Suspect In Produce Stand Armed Robbery

BY TERRY POPE

A Dublin man who asked for roses at a Longwood store but ended up allegedly robbing its clerk was indicted by a Brunswick County grand jury Monday.

Wilton Edwards, 38, was indicted on a charge of robbery with a dangerous weapon, which carries a maximum of 40 years and a mandatory minimum of 14 years in prison.

He is accused of walking into Smith's Produce on N.C. 904 on April 13 with a sawed-off shotgun and robbing the clerk of \$400.

Edwards turned himself in to the Bladen County Sheriff's Department April 16 and was charged by Brunswick County Sheriff's Lt. Donnell Marlowe.

According to Marlowe, Edwards allegedly entered the store once and asked the clerk if she had any roses for sale. When the victim said she did not, the suspect allegedly left and returned about a minute later with a shotgun.

The suspect allegedly held the shotgun on the clerk and demanded that she open the cash register.

The following were also indicted Monday:

■Leslie W. Jester, 27, David L. Jester, 24, and Johnathan Lawhorn, 18, all of Route 6, Shallotte, were each indicted on charges of felonious breaking and entering, larceny and

possession of stolen goods. They are accused of breaking into a home at Quail Run subdivision at Seaside on Dec. 10, 1990, and taking two handguns, a rifle and shotgun, all valued at \$1,765.

■David L. Jester was also indicted on a charge of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. He is accused of hitting Leslie W. Jester on the head with a blunt object on Dec. 10, 1990.

■Jeanne Jester Lawhorn, 36, of Ash, was indicted on charges of possession with intent to sell or deliver marijuana, sell and delivery of marijuana and maintaining a vehicle to keep or sell a controlled substance. She is accused of selling 33.3 grams of marijuana on Jan. 3 to an undercover SBI agent.

■Jeffery Mark Brown, 29, of Longwood, was indicted on charges of possession with intent to sell and deliver marijuana and sell and delivery of marijuana. Brown allegedly sold 2.1 grams of marijuana to an undercover SBI agent on July 11, 1990.

■Dexter Woodring Hughes Jr., 41, of Longwood, was indicted on a charge of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. Hughes allegedly shot Marvin Evans on June 12 with a .12-gauge shotgun "by shooting

off part of his right hand, and shooting him in the right groin area," the indictment states.

■Chester Brigg Sykes, 30, of Leland, was indicted on a charge of obtaining property by false pretenses. He is accused of obtaining tools and plumbing supplies from Shallotte Electric on March 15 by false pretenses.

The indictment alleges that Sykes entered Shallotte Electric wearing a Culligan's shirt. It also alleges that Sykes presented himself as an employee of Culligan's and charged items to an account when Sykes had not worked for the company since Feb. 16, 1990.

■Henry Leon Stanley, 27, of Route 1, Ash, was indicted on charges of possession with intent to sell and deliver cocaine and sell and delivery of cocaine. He is accused of selling .04 grams of cocaine to an undercover SBI agent on Feb. 14, 1990.

■Glenn Williams, aka, Glenn Dowe, of Route 1, Leland, was indicted on charges of possession with intent to sell and deliver cocaine and sell and delivery of cocaine. He is accused of selling one gram of cocaine to an undercover SBI agent on Nov. 14, 1989.

■Timothy Scott Blackmon, 18, of Long Beach, was indicted on charges of felonious larceny and

possession of stolen goods. On March 30 Blackmon allegedly took a speedometer, oil gauge, bucket seats, tachometer, gas gauge, four door panels and a chrome gear shift knob, all valued at \$935, from a vehicle.

■Tracy Donald Ihlefield, of NW 4th Street, Long Beach, was indicted on charges of felonious breaking and entering, larceny and possession of stolen goods. He is accused of breaking into Walt's Beach Club II in Shallotte on May 9 and taking \$200 in coins.

■Matthew William Kaufhold, 19, of Willis Drive, Southport, was indicted on three counts each of felonious breaking and entering, larceny and possession of stolen goods. He is accused of the break-in at Walt's Beach Club II and two additional break-ins in Southport—one on East Moore Street, where an ice cream sandwich valued at \$1 was allegedly taken, and another at N. Lord Street, where \$6 and a folding lock-blade knife valued at \$45 was allegedly taken.

■George Edward Warren, 20, of Lord Street, Southport, was indicted on two counts of felonious breaking and entering, larceny and possession of stolen goods. He is accused in the two break-ins in Southport for which Kaufhold above was also indicted.

Shallotte Board OKs Taxi Service

BY DOUG RUTTER

A taxi service is expected to start operating in Shallotte within the next two months, after gaining the approval of the town board last week.

J.M. Warren, who has run a taxi service in the Southport-Oak Island area for 14 years, will expand his business into the South Brunswick Islands.

Following a public hearing last Wednesday, Shallotte Aldermen issued a "certificate of public convenience and necessity" that will allow the service to operate in town.

Warren said he plans to dispatch calls from Oak Island to a driver in Shallotte, who will either patrol the streets or wait at home for calls.

A ride in the taxi cab will cost \$5 in town and \$1 per mile outside town. Warren said the service will be available 24 hours a day. He plans to start with one cab in Shallotte, but may add more later.

Warren won't be the first businessman to run a taxi service in Shallotte. Town officials said a taxi service that operated several years

ago didn't last long, mainly because the need wasn't great enough at that time.

Town aldermen could revoke the certificate at any time if they think the taxi cabs aren't serving the public adequately and efficiently.

The certificate also could be revoked if the business owner fails to keep the cabs in good repair, pay town taxes and license fees, report accidents or carry liability insurance and bond as required by state law.

If drivers violate traffic or safety ordinances or state laws relating to

the safe operation of taxi cabs, the certificate could be revoked.

Other Business

In other business last week, aldermen:

■Voted to change the insurance carrier for worker's compensation. Town Clerk Mary Etta Hewett said the old carrier, Wausau of Charlotte, increased the annual premium from around \$7,000 to more than \$16,000. The new company, Hewett, Coleman and Associates of Raleigh, will charge around \$10,000.

■Referred a request for annexation to the planning board. Jan Dale has asked the town to annex property off N.C. 130 West behind Shallotte Manor.

Homes Near County Plant Want Water Service Too

BY TERRY POPE

Some residents of Mt. Misery Road in Leland are just steps from the county's Malmo water treatment plant.

But water lines that leave the plant head in a different direction, leaving them to wonder if they'll ever get county water.

Bill Browning and Ira Butler presented a petition signed by a number of residents of that community to the Brunswick County Utility Operations Board Monday asking for county water.

"It's a shame we've got this beautiful water plant where we can throw rocks over there and hit it," said Browning, "but we can't get county water."

The county will extend a line along part of Mt. Misery Road east to the Jennifer subdivision this summer. Jennifer residents are served water by a tanker truck because gasoline has contaminated their wells.

Browning asked the board if residents who live west of the water plant could be added to the project somehow, either as a special assessment district (SAD) or part of the capital improvements project.

"It's an opportune time, it seems to me. The end result is, we'd like to have county water," said Browning.

Browning said his water turns the sinks in his house red. Butler said the water turns his sinks green.

Browning estimates a line would have to extend about .65 miles west of the water plant, stopping short of Hood Creek. The area is rapidly developing, he said.

The improvements project already approved by county commissioners will extend a line about three miles down Mt. Misery Road east to Jennifer. Residents who live along that route may become another SAD.

Chairman Al Morrison said the board would have to study Browning's request and confer with Public Utilities Director Jerry Webb before making a recommendation.

"All of this is hitting the board for the first time tonight," said Morrison.

In other business, the board: ■Upon commissioners' final approval, set a second public hearing on SAD 12, a collection of 10 subdivisions between Ocean Isle and Calabash, for July 29, 7 p.m. in the public assembly building at the government complex in Bolivia. Some lots have been added, necessitating another hearing. Residents unanimously voiced support for the pro-

ject at a previous hearing.

■Heard from Anna Hughes, whose two lots off the Holden Beach causeway were omitted from SAD 9. She will consult with project engineers Houston and Associates on how to connect to the system.

■Heard from Bob Black of Shell Point, who asked how soon his community could expect county

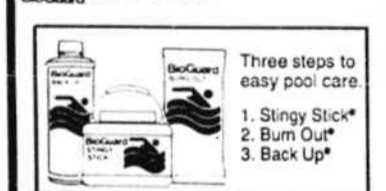
water. Webb said the capital improvement project to extend water to Shell Point was not funded in the county's 1991-92 budget.

■Met in executive session for about 15 minutes with board attorney Michael Ramos to discuss litigation, but took no action afterwards.

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