

Students Will Be Rewarded When Caught Being Good

BY TERRY POPE

Students at Lincoln Primary School this fall will be rewarded when caught doing something good. The school's Parent Teacher Organization plans to implement a "Caught You Being Good" program with the help of a \$1,000 donation from the Leland Town Council.

The funds are part of \$6,000 set aside in the 1991-92 town budget to be awarded by the town's education commission. It was Leland Mayor Russell Baldwin's idea to help fund educational projects within the community, but the commission hasn't yet formed.

Council members voted 3-1 last Thursday to bypass the commission and to give the PTO \$1,000 because of its approaching school deadline. Baldwin said he was forced to vote against the grant and accused two members of the council of trying to take control of the commission.

PTO spokesperson Letha Thomas had originally requested \$1,500. Baldwin asked that the group sign a contract for the money and be required to show matching funds. Such guidelines should be in place for everyone, Baldwin said, because other groups that apply might not be fundraising organizations.

"Caught You Being Good" will be funded primarily by the PTO. The money will be used to buy prizes that students will receive when caught doing something good at school.

Good students will also be treated to meals with the principal during the school year, said Ms. Thomas.

"It is intended to enrich our children's education," said Ms. Thomas. "Most people in the community see us as a fundraiser."

The town budget requires that a person or group sign a contract if more than \$500 is allocated, said Baldwin. A simple contract can be worded, said town attorney Glen Peterson, requiring Ms. Thomas to give the board two reports on the program's progress and how the funds were spent.

Ms. Thomas said the PTO will be tracking the program during the school year to see if it improves conduct at the school. She said the town would receive reports in January and June.

"We want this program to succeed," said Ms. Thomas, "and we want to be able to say that Leland was a part of it."

She had approached the board on several occasions asking when the commission would be in place. The PTO is in an emergency situation, she said, because student prizes

have to be ordered and shipped before the school year begins in late August.

"I really hate to go against what we've agreed," said Baldwin. "There's going to be such a huge demand for the limited resources we've got."

Councilwoman Jane Gilbert's

motion to approve the grant passed when Councilman George Yates voted yes and Councilwoman Lynette Carlisle did not vote. Her non-vote was counted as a yes.

Yates' motion to appoint Ms. Thomas and Ms. Gilbert to the commission failed, 2-2. He wanted the two women to recruit additional

volunteers from the northeast part of Brunswick County and to develop a charter for the commission.

Baldwin said both Ms. Gilbert and Yates had previously voted against the commission.

"Now you're trying to take control of it and totally wreck it," said Baldwin. "It's too important to be

made a political issue, which is what you're trying to do to it."

Ms. Gilbert, a school teacher, said she voted against the commission not because she was against education.

"You know why I voted against it," she told Baldwin.

Yates said he opposed the com-

mission not because he was against funding school projects, but because he felt it would cause animosity among educators.

"I could say I told you so, but I won't," he told Baldwin during the debate. "This commission has been a commission in name only for four months."

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No fee is charged to take the course, said Vicki M. Jenrette, driver education specialist with the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles.

Students must have a valid North Carolina driver's license, must be 18 years of age and must attend all three days of class.

More information is available from Ms. Jenrette at 754-5098.



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