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BRUNSWICK COUNTY'S 911 emergency communications building remains under construction, scheduled for completion in April 1992.

## GETTING READY FOR 911

# Calabash First To Lose Its Rural Postal Routes

BY TERRY POPE

Brunswick County's rural postal routes will begin phasing out this week, starting in the Calabash area.

A house numbering system will replace rural route numbers to enable a swifter response for emergency vehicles under the county's new enhanced 911 system, which may begin operating in April 1992.

Calabash residents will receive their new addresses by mail this week, said Doug Ledgett, director of Brunswick County's Emergency Medical Services.

About 1,300 postal patrons in the Calabash zone have already received one notification, but it should be ignored because of some errors, said Ledgett. On some letters, the street names were either wrong or accidentally omitted, he said.

"Like any new system, there may be errors and ongoing problems," said Ledgett. "Everybody's human." After residents receive their new addresses this week, they can begin using them immediately. If there are errors, they are asked to contact the Brunswick County Planning Department.

New addresses will be mailed to rural route residents next in Sunset Beach, Ocean Isle Beach and Leland, in that order, said Ledgett. Every two to three weeks, a new batch of addresses will be mailed until the county has been covered, approximately 30,000 mailings over the next four months.

After receiving new house numbers, residents have one year in which to change addresses and to begin the lengthy process of getting new driver's licenses, ordering new checks and notifying utility companies, friends and relatives. The post office will not forward mail with ru-

*As county residents receive their new addresses, they can begin using them immediately.*

—Doug Ledgett  
EMS Director

ral route addresses after a year has passed.

"For residents, it becomes a major project," said Ledgett. "It's a major change, but it happens just once."

The address information will arrive at homes in official U.S. Postal Service stationery, for the post office is working with the Brunswick County Planning Department to coordinate mailing.

The letters explain how residents should display numbers on their homes and mailboxes. Towns that do not have house numbering are working with the county to drop rural routes also.

County officials hope all improved lots or parcels of land will have a number by April 1, target date for starting 911.

Calabash was chosen to receive new addresses first because it was labeled by postal officials as the county's most troublesome area for mail delivery, said Ledgett.

County government agencies are also working together to help residents change addresses at departments there. Changing an address at one office, such as the tax department or board of elections, will change the address for all county mailings, said Ledgett.

"But the person must initiate the change," he added. "They must contact one department."

Ledgett expects most questions will arise from confused residents

who get their mail at a post office box or a second residence. They must still mount house numbers on their homes or mailboxes, he said.

Some persons use a roadside mailbox that is not located on the official address road. Often, the mail carriers will not travel down roads that are not passable. In that case, the house number and road name must be placed on the mailbox, said Ledgett.

Following are some facts about the house numbering system:

- No new addresses will exceed five digits, the highest in the 10,000 range;
- Supply is considered "ground zero," which means house numbering will start in the 100s at the U.S. 17 and N.C. 211 intersection there in all directions;
- The county is divided into four quadrants—Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest—designated as NE, NW, SE and SW at the end of each address and must be used as part of the address;
- The Northwest community near Leland will be located in the Northeast quadrant;
- Numbers must be at least three inches in height and in a color that contrasts with the surface on which they are mounted;
- A number has been assigned or reserved along each street for every 25 feet of property, in case homes pop up in between existing houses.

# School Board To Adopt Tougher Weapons Ban

BY SUSAN USHER

Brunswick County principals may soon have tougher, more uniform policies in place for dealing with violence and potential violence on campus.

Revamped policies on weapons and fighting are among the expected outcomes of a three-hour work session Monday night attended by Brunswick County Board of Education members, 10 principals and assistant principals and some central office staff members.

The session dealt mainly with board policies that affect daily operation of the schools. The school administrators had been invited to express their concerns to the board and to offer suggestions.

Board members and principals generally supported a request by South Brunswick Middle School Principal Les Tubb to bring county policy in line with a new state law that makes it a misdemeanor offense to have a weapon on a school campus—including a common pocket knife.

"I'm not afraid to walk on my campus and I don't think any of my teachers are," said South Brunswick Principal Sue Sellers. "It's just that we want something to deter this kind of behavior, something to avert that."

At South Brunswick so far this year, staff members have confiscated four knives, a box cutter and a corkscrew. The school doesn't randomly conduct searches; if a student is suspected of having a weapon he or she is asked to empty pockets and other belongings.

Principals handle weapon possession differently campus to campus, especially when it comes to items such as pocket knives that are not specifically identified as weapons in the county policy and are commonly owned by students of varying ages.

Principal Ed Lemon of West Brunswick High School said he plans to follow the law "until told otherwise."

"It says weapon possession is a misdemeanor," he said, including pocket knives.

"The first time we have a killing from one of those 'little pocket knives,'" he cautioned, "the board of education will change its policy."

Principals would no longer have the option of whether to involve a law enforcement agency when a student is found with a weapon in his or her possession, but hasn't used it.

"This is something we can all follow instead of each of us doing something different," said North Brunswick High School Principal Robert Harris. "I think it will be good."

In a first offense, the weapon would be confiscated, the student suspended for 10 days and parent and student required to attend a conference with the principal before the student is allowed to return to school. School authorities would notify police and the student would be charged.

A second offense would result in long-term suspension, while a third offense would result in expulsion from school.

One possibility would be for a student and parent to have the right to petition the school board to show why the student should be allowed to return to school after the suspension.

For use of a weapon, a student would be expelled from school, the weapon confiscated, police notified and the student charged appropriately.

Current policy provides that the school, on a first offense possession, confiscate the weapon, notify the parents, and take action that might range from "verbal discipline to expulsion." For use of a weapon, the policy also calls for placing the child in police custody.

"Going through the legal system tends to have more impact on students and parents," South Brunswick High School Principal Sue Sellers wrote the school board, than in-school or out-of-school suspension or parent conferences.

However, she said the approach has drawbacks that include staff time spent in taking out warrants and making court appearances.

Superintendent P. R. Hankins reminded board members and principals that when students are sent to jail it (See BOARD, Page 2-A)

# Rescue Squads To Soon Offer Advanced Care

BY DOUG RUTTER

Brunswick County's Emergency Medical Services team and volunteers with area rescue squads will soon be able to offer better care when they respond to emergency calls.



LEDGETT

All but one of the county's 10 rescue squads will be going to Advanced Life Support (A.L.S.) in January or early February, according to Doug Ledgett, county emergency medical services director.

The move to A.L.S. requires more training for rescuers and more equipment on the ambulances. It will be a step up from the type of care that is presently provided—which is known as Basic Life Support.

Ledgett said the end result will be that rescue workers will have more training and be less limited in the

kinds of treatment they can render when they respond to life-threatening calls.

A.L.S. will allow the trained volunteers to draw blood, use intravenous (IV) fluids, use semi-automatic defibrillators for heart attack victims and offer other advanced types of treatment.

With Advanced Life Support, rescue workers will have to be in constant radio contact with a physician or mobile intensive care nurse at the hospital.

Doctors and nurses will give information over the radio about how to treat victims as they are being transported to the hospital.

"It more or less extends the emer-

gency room," said Danni Moore, a member of Shallotte Volunteer Rescue Squad. "It sort of brings the hospital to the victim rather than making them waiting until they get there."

All of the volunteer rescue squads in the county are making the change except Bald Head Island, which doesn't have the full-time personnel it needs to offer Advanced Life Support.

Ledgett said about 40 rescue workers in the county have been certified as Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediates (EMT-I), the minimum training required to start

(See ADVANCED, Page 2-A)

# Gunmen Rob Two Area Stores

BY TERRY POPE

Masked gunmen robbed two area businesses of an undetermined amount of money over the weekend, prompting the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department to issue a warning to local merchants.

"With the holiday season approaching, they need to be extra cautious," said Phil Perry, chief of detectives. "If they should see something the least bit out of the ordinary, they should call the sheriff's department, and we'll have someone check it out."

Two men armed with a sawed-off shotgun and pistol entered the pro shop at the Sandpiper Bay Golf Course around 4:40 p.m. Sunday near Ocean Isle, reported Deputy George Stanley.

They held the guns on two employees there and demanded money, said Stanley. One employee was grabbed around the neck and dragged into the building, where a suspect held a gun to his head.

Another suspect pointed a shotgun at an employee behind the counter, forced her into an office to open a safe, Stanley reported.

After the contents of the safe was dumped into a bag, the suspects made the employees lie face down on the floor, telling them not to move or they would be shot, said Stanley.

The suspects, described as two black males around 5 feet 10 inches tall, also grabbed some shirts from the pro shop while fleeing the scene.

One suspect was wearing a red

Halloween mask, blue jeans and gloves. The other suspect was wearing a dark blue ski mask.

Perry said it is possible that the suspects are also responsible for an armed robbery Saturday evening at the Acme Convenient Mart at the intersection of U.S. 17 and N.C. 904 at Grissetown.

Three armed men entered the store around 7:10 p.m., pointed a gun at the clerk and demanded money, reported Stanley.

One suspect, wearing a brown motorcycle helmet, pointed a gun at the clerk and announced the holdup. The victim put his hands in the air, said Stanley.

A second suspect went behind the counter and tried to open the cash register. He then forced the clerk to open the register and forced him to go to the rear of the store, where they told him to lie on the floor, Stanley reported.

One of the suspects searched for the victim's wallet, but the clerk did not have one, said Stanley.

The victim told Stanley that he heard the three men talking, the door close and a car drive away.

The other suspects were wearing dark ski masks, said Stanley.

Should merchants notice suspicious persons loitering around businesses, or cars passing by a business in a suspicious manner, they should call the sheriff's department, said Perry.

"People need to be observant," said Perry. "Anything that makes them feel uneasy should be reported."

## HEARING CUT SHORT BY EMERGENCY

# Winnabow, Town Creek Fight County Water

BY TERRY POPE

At a public hearing cut short by a medical emergency Monday night, about 200 Winnabow and Town Creek residents told county officials they do not want county water in their neighborhoods.

Just after the meeting began, a man suffered an apparent heart attack in the public assembly building at the Brunswick County Government Complex in Bolivia.

When Brunswick County Utility Operations Board Chairman Al Morrison later asked if anyone was in favor of Special Assessment District 19, no one spoke. When he asked for people opposed to the project to raise their hands, the vote was unanimous.

"I've never spoken, even in my church, and had everyone leaning in one way," said Morrison. "This is quite an event."

SAD 19 would include assessments for 574 property owners in the Winnabow and Town Creek communities. If approved as a project, water lines would be installed along Zion Church Road, Town Creek Road, Old Town Creek Road, Green Hill Road, Crabapple Road, Snowfield Road, Goodland Drive, Maco Road to Oakview Estates, Cherry Tree Road and

Governor's Road.

Residents say they are opposed to the project because of the high cost of installing the lines along large tracts of land in the mostly rural communities.

UOB member D.V. Jones said it was "pretty obvious" which way the board, which meets Monday, Dec. 5 at 5:30 p.m., will vote on SAD 19.

Two people had spoken against the water project when the apparent heart attack victim fell to the floor. Brunswick County Sheriff's Deputies Gene Browning and Becky McDonald, along with a number of volunteers, helped give the man cardiopulmonary resuscitation until rescue personnel arrived.

Morrison asked for a moment of silent prayer before ending the meeting.

Speaking on behalf of the UOB, he stated, "I think we all realize just how you feel about this project. I really don't think it's appropriate to continue the meeting tonight. We're just like anyone else—we listen to your comments."

The board will send its recommendation to Brunswick County Commissioners on whether to proceed with SAD 19 or to drop it. The vote cannot be taken at a public hearing.

A petition, headed by Lois W. Smith, has been presented to the UOB with the names of 127 residents opposed to SAD 19. District 4 County Commissioner Frankie Rabon said an estimated 94 percent of Town Creek residents have signed petitions opposing the water project.

Resident Willie B. Henry said the actual number of people on the petition can be misleading. Persons who own many parcels may have signed the petition only once, he added.

"The ones who signed the petition were the ones who had road frontage," said Henry. "A lot of people got the letters but don't have road frontage."

Resident Sarah Bennett stated that people were opposed to the project because others in the county have connected to county water lines in the past but did not have to pay an assessment.

About 200 Town Creek and Winnabow residents attended a community meeting in September where a majority spoke against the water project. However, a public hearing was scheduled by commissioners, as required by the state, to gather official input, said Morrison.

(See WATER, Page 2-A)