



Headed To Chapel Hill

Players and fans surround West Brunswick Head Football Coach Marshall Seay (center) after the Trojans beat East Bladen 27-7 for the N.C. Eastern 2-A High School Championship last Friday. The Trojans play for the state 2-A championship against the Thomasville Bulldogs Saturday in Chapel Hill. For details, turn to Pages .6-B to 9-B.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Commissioners Reverse Vote On Subdivision

BY TERRY POPE

Brunswick County Commissioners voted Tuesday to reverse their controversial decision last week that lifted a subdivision restriction for a former county commissioner.

But the change in vote came too late to affect the subdivision involved in the appeal.

At its meeting last Monday night, the board voted 4-1 to override a Brunswick County Planning Board decision that would have, as a safety measure, required turnarounds on lots under development by former District 2 commissioner Benny Ludlum and his partner, W. Alfonza Roach, a current member of the planning board.

The controversial fallout from that decision prompted a special meeting Tuesday, Dec. 10, when commissioners admitted they acted too quickly on the matter and voted 3-0 to reverse the variance for Lakeside subdivision on Oxpen Road near Holden Beach.

However, County Attorney David Clegg said after the meeting that the vote came too late to keep in place the restriction on Lakeside Subdivision.

Based on commissioners' action last week, Ludlum recorded a plat for the subdivision the following morning. The plat was signed and recorded by Planning Director John Harvey.

"It is recorded once and for all," said Clegg. "Any attempt of reversal has come after the fact."

Commissioners Donald Shaw and Gene Pinkerton were absent Tuesday. Chairman Kelly Holden, who made the motion to reverse the decision, said Shaw had a previous commitment and that Pinkerton was out of town on business.

Holden was the only board member who voted against lifting the restriction, saying it was a matter for

the Planning Board to handle.

In his motion Tuesday, Holden noted that any request for a variance from the subdivision ordinance should be appealed to the Planning Board first. If the matter remains unresolved, petitioners can appeal Planning Board action to commissioners, who have the final say.

District 2 Commissioner Jerry Jones, who serves on the Planning Board, admitted Tuesday that the vote to lift the subdivision restriction wasn't handled properly by commissioners. He said the matter should have been appealed to the Planning Board, as outlined in the ordinance.

He and Commissioner Frankie Rabon questioned whether the commissioners' vote last week was legal since the proper appeal procedure wasn't followed.

"Action coming on the 10th cannot invalidate that recording," noted Clegg. "What the action did do was forestall an avalanche of appeals."

Holden had indicated that the vote could open up "a Pandora's box," with numerous persons seeking subdivision variances directly from commissioners.

Rumors had also circulated that Planning Board members, upset at having their policy mowed down by commissioners, would resign from the board. Clegg said Tuesday he had heard the same rumors but had not received any resignations.

Ludlum approached commissioners during their public comments forum last week and asked that the restriction be removed. The requirement was placed on the plat in July 1986 as a measure to prevent residents from backing their cars onto the highway from a string of lots under development along Oxpen Road.

The N.C. Department of Transportation encourages the plat. (See SUBDIVISION, PAGE 2-A)

Community Fired Up About Trojan Football

BY DOUG RUTTER

Bobby Williamson remembers watching the N.C. 2-A High School Football Championship in Whiteville four years ago and thinking how great it would be if he could see West Brunswick play for the title.

The West Brunswick Booster Club president gets his chance Saturday, along with hundreds of other fans who have followed the Trojans through a 13-1 season and the eastern 2-A championship.

West Brunswick faces Thomasville at noon Saturday in Kenan Stadium on the University of North Carolina campus at Chapel Hill. The winner becomes state champ.

The last West Brunswick team to win a state championship was the 1974-75 basketball team, which won the 3-A title.

South Brunswick won the state 2-A baseball championship in 1988. But Brunswick County hasn't had a state football champ since Southport High won three straight eight-man football titles starting in 1962.

"It's been a dream season," Williamson said of the Trojans' year of the gridiron. "It's been just fantastic."

Williamson said the Shallotte community has gotten fired up about its Trojans. Everybody's talking about West Brunswick football, he said, and the impact in the community has been immeasurable.

"It's incredible," he said. "This electricity in the community has never been experienced before. It's been growing and gaining momentum each week."

After putting together a 9-1 regular season, the Trojans have upended Farmville Central, James Kenan, Whiteville and East Bladen in the playoffs.

Williamson said each win has built more and more excitement and pride in the team and in the community as a whole.

"It's something that other communities have had but not something we've ever had to this degree," Williamson said.

The Thomasville Bulldogs, the only team standing between West Brunswick and a state championship, know what community pride is all about.

The football team has been to the 2-A championship game four times in the last five years, win-

ning the title in 1988.

West Brunswick Athletic Director Jerry Small said students at the school can't stop talking about their football team.

"There's a general mood of excitement and a lot of pride in what we've accomplished," Small said. "It's carried over into other areas of the school."

Williamson said fan support will be very important Saturday in Kenan Stadium, which holds about 50,000 people.

He said support at the last two Trojan playoff games has been great. West Brunswick fans have equalled or outnumbered the home crowds at Whiteville and East Bladen.

"The more success you have the more than community gets involved," he said. "Without the fan support, it's hard to be super competitive."

Williamson said the excitement in the stands has apparently spilled onto the football field and infected the players.

"I think the players are picking up on it," he said. "The confidence level that it instills in the kids is just great. They're charged up and they

(See COMMUNITY, PAGE 2-A)

Vehicles Crash At Bypass Intersection—No Serious Injuries This Time

BY DOUG RUTTER

A log truck and automobile collided Monday night at the intersection of the U.S. 17 Shallotte bypass and N.C. 130 West—the site of a double fatality accident last month.

Nobody was seriously injured when the loaded truck, southbound on the bypass, entered the intersection and struck the front of a Chrysler traveling east on N.C. 130, said Shallotte Police Det. Tom Hunter.

The wreck was almost identical to a Nov. 1 accident in which Shallotte businessman Steve Smith and West Brunswick High School student Misty Carmichael were killed.

In that accident, a log truck traveling south on the bypass allegedly ran a red light and hit the Smith and Carmichael vehicles on N.C. 130.

"The point of impact was almost the same spot," Hunter said Tuesday. "The car had not got quite as far out as Steve got. Had it got out that far, it probably would have been the same situation."

The accident occurred at 9:15 p.m. Monday as Elwood Bell, 23, of Route 2, Shallotte, was driving a 1985 Chrysler on N.C. 130 toward Shallotte and attempted to cross the bypass.

I think we have something wrong with our drivers, not our lighting system. I'm afraid we're going to have more deaths out there.

—Shallotte Det. Tom Hunter

"They met in the middle of the intersection," Hunter said of the truck and car. "They just clipped front bumper to front bumper."

The driver of the truck, 28-year-old James Dalton Brown of Cove City, was charged with failing to stop for a red light, Hunter said.

"The witnesses stated that Bell had the green light and that the truck went through the red light," said the officer.

Shallotte Volunteer Rescue Squad transported Bell to The Brunswick Hospital in Supply, where he was treated and released. Brown and a passenger in the truck were not injured.

The truck driver told police he saw the traffic signal turn yellow when he was 25 feet from the intersection and didn't attempt a full stop because he feared the truck

would jackknife, said Hunter.

Hunter said the traffic signal appeared to be working properly Monday night. Strobe lights recently added at the intersection and a flashing yellow light on the bypass north of the intersection also were in operation.

The detective said the log truck traveled 1,584 feet after impact, and he estimated it was going 50 mph when it entered the intersection.

The speed limit on the bypass, which opened in May, is 55 mph. Signs posted north and south of the N.C. 130 intersection warn motorists to slow down to a recommended 45 mph, but the actual speed limit is 55.

Police closed the southbound lane of the bypass for about 30 minutes after the wreck to clear debris from the road, Hunter said. Traffic was re-routed through downtown Shallotte.

The Chrysler sustained about \$4,000 in damage, Hunter said. Damage to the log truck was estimated at \$1,000. The truck is owned by John Taylor Woolard of Vanceboro.

Following last month's fatal wreck, local officials and area residents called for state transportation officials to build an overpass at the intersection, which is near West Brunswick High School.

An overpass was discussed before the bypass was built, but it was never included in plans because it would have been costly and would have delayed construction of the four-lane road.

The N.C. Department of Transportation did install strobe lights at the intersection and flashing yellow lights along the bypass after the fatal wreck. Rumble strips also were added on N.C. 130 on both sides of the bypass.

Hunter said the intersection would be safer with an overpass, but he said the biggest problem is the way that some people drive.

"I think we have something wrong with our drivers, not our lighting system," he said. "I'm afraid we're going to have more deaths out there."

Two Killed In Calabash Wreck Saturday Evening

BY TERRY POPE

Two Calabash residents were killed and two people hospitalized following a wreck at Carolina Shores Saturday evening.

Mary Katherine Bachmann, 69, of Carolina Shores Drive, and Henry Schefer, 74, of East Pine Court, were killed in the two-car collision at the intersection of Calabash Road (S.R. 1168) and Carolina Shores Parkway about a half-mile west of Calabash, State Trooper C.E. Ward reported.

According to Ward's report, both victims were passengers in a 1982 Chevrolet station wagon operated by Mrs. Bachmann's husband, Harry George Bachmann, 70, of Calabash.

Bachmann had stopped his car at a stop sign on Carolina Shores Parkway before pulling into the intersection to cross Calabash Road, Ward stated. The car was struck in the passenger side by a 1986 Toyota pickup driven by George Aaron Stanaland, 22, of Route 1, Ash.

Stanaland did not have time to apply his brakes, said Ward in the report.

Mrs. Bachmann, a passenger in the right front of the car, was pronounced dead on arrival at The Brunswick Hospital in Supply.

Schefer, a passenger in the right rear of the car, was transferred to New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington where he later died.

Bachmann was also seriously injured and taken to New Hanover Medical Center where he was remained in critical condition Tuesday morning, said Iris Baker, hospital spokesperson.

Another passenger, Katherine Schefer, Schefer's wife, was also seriously injured and taken to The Brunswick Hospital where she was listed in stable condition Tuesday morning.

Stanaland received class B injuries, which are serious but not incapacitating. He was treated and released Saturday from The Brunswick Hospital.

The accident happened around 5:45 p.m. Damage was listed at (See TWO KILLED, PAGE 2-A)



Santa Came To Town

Santa Claus came to town Saturday morning, perched atop a Shallotte fire truck. From his lofty perch in the town Christmas parade, the jolly fellow exchanged waves with David Bowens (right) of Grissetown and other excited youngsters along the Main Street route. More parade coverage is on Pages .8-A and 9-A.

BEACON STAFF PHOTOS