



Police Take Kids Shopping

Brunswick County Fraternal Order of Police members took 40 children to Southport Saturday for lunch courtesy of a local restaurant, then Christmas shopping, with a discount provided by the store patronized. Lunching with the youngsters above are (from left) John Goodwin, Ocean Isle Beach Police, Chief Don Troutman, Village of Bald Head; and Jane Vernon, volunteer. Officers spent \$100 each on the children, many of whom were from foster homes, using proceeds from a summer fund-raising project. "That was Christmas for me," commented Rodney Gause, Shallotte police chief and incoming FOP president, of the shopping excursion. Participating officers came from the Long Beach, Shallotte, Village of Bald Head and Ocean Isle Beach police departments and the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

Fewer Students Choosing To Drop Out

Fewer students dropped out of school in Brunswick County last year, reflecting a statewide trend tied to efforts to keep kids in school.

In Brunswick County, the drop-out rate has shown a steady decline over the past three years, from 6.54 percent in 1988-89 to 3.62 percent last year for grades 9 through 12.

Over the past three years, the county has consistently performed better than the state average annual high school dropout rate. The state rate has declined from 6.6 percent in 1988-89 to 5.6 percent last year. The figures include regular students, as well as those in extended day or alternative programs.

For grades 7 through 12, the county's dropout rate fell from 4.58 percent in 1988-89 to 2.39 percent last year.

In grades 9 through 12, 96 students dropped out last year, along with one student in seventh or eighth grade. The year before, 167 students dropped out, including seven seventh- or eighth-graders. Two years earlier, 189 students dropped out, including 10 seventh- or eighth-graders.

Brunswick County was one of four of the eight systems in South-eastern North Carolina to show a decline in the number of students quitting school. Four others saw increases.

Drop-out prevention specialists say the figures are a sign that at-risk

students are getting the attention they need at an earlier age.

A reduction in the dropout rate is a major goal for school systems and is part of their annual evaluation by the state.

Last year, Anne Mitchell, then drop-out prevention specialist for the county schools, credited several programs in place in the schools with helping reduce the local dropout rate by giving at-risk students the help they need—and giving it to them earlier than in past years.

These include efforts to build student self-esteem, hiring of guidance counselors at the elementary school level, early identification of at-risk students, full-day kindergarten, peer tutoring, supplementary and remedial programs aimed at avoiding grade-level retention, and use of a variety of instructional methods to boost student achievement.

She said the typical dropout in the Brunswick County Schools was a white male high school student. Reasons students typically give for dropping out of school include poor grades, a decision that school is "not for them," a decision to go to work, marriage, not getting along with teachers, having to support a family and pregnancy.

Last week the Brunswick County Board of Education appointed Wendy Milligan, guidance counselor

at Waccamaw Elementary School, as interim drop-out prevention specialist for the schools.

West ROCAME Will Meet Today

West Brunswick High School's ROCAME chapter will meet today (Thursday) at 4 p.m. at Brunswick Bowling Center in Shallotte.

ROCAME is the acronym for Region O Council for the Advancement of Minorities in Engineering.

The chapter participated Nov. 12 in a joint meeting attended by approximately 25 students and coordinators from Shallotte Middle, Waccamaw Elementary and West Brunswick High.

The main purpose of the meeting was to reactivate the ROCAME group at Shallotte Middle.

William Flythe, vice president of the ROCAME board and South Brunswick Chapter advisor, spoke and two videotapes on careers in engineering were shown.

Upcoming activities were also reviewed, including quiz bowl competitions at the local, county and regional levels; a Feb. 29 jamboree; a state conference in early March; a chapter dinner and summer science camp.

Also, a new competition has been introduced in which chapters will compete at their level (middle or high school) for the highest number of honor roll students.

Only active ROCAME students or those who attend at least one third of the meetings can be counted.

Sandra Robinson and Elizabeth Jenrette are coordinators for the West Brunswick Chapter this year. Sheila Smith and Henry Randolph are coordinators at Shallotte Middle and Hilda George at Waccamaw Elementary.

BCC Campus Closes Dec. 23

Brunswick Community College will be closed to the public for the Christmas and New Year's holidays from Monday, Dec. 23, through Wednesday, Jan. 1.

The switchboard and administrative, faculty and student services offices will be closed, said Ann Marie Bellamy, public information officer.

The holiday break for students will begin earlier, at the close of evening classes Wednesday, Dec. 18.

Students will return to winter quarter classes Monday, Jan. 6.

School Displays Holiday Artwork

The students in the Art Department at Shallotte Middle School, under the direction of Lola Jackson, have created special holiday displays for the front windows of the school.

Ms. Jackson said that the artwork was constructed to look like stained glass and that "it takes many days and hours to do this type of display."

The windows were an effort to beautify the school by using a student class project. The results can be viewed through the holiday season at the school.

"I'm very proud of my students at Shallotte Middle," said Ms. Jackson.

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BCC Enrollment Sets Record

A record number of students enrolled for winter quarter classes at Brunswick Community College this month.

As of Friday, Dec. 13, 745 students had registered for classes, a 24 percent increase over winter quarter a year ago, when 600 students registered to set the previous record.

BCC President W. Michael Reaves said the higher figures mean good news for future funding for the college. FTE, or full time equivalent students, is a measure that affects the amount the state budgets each community college.

With a higher count this quarter, Reaves said BCC should be entitled to 15 percent to 20 percent more in

funding in the next budget year, which begins July 1.

"Of course, in order to meet the needs of increasing numbers of students, more instructors and more support services will be necessary," he said.

BCC had 200 new or first-time students among those registering for winter term. Better recruitment, particularly among recent county high school graduates, accounts in part for the increase.

Another factor, he said, is the dual transcript program now offered by BCC's general education program in conjunction with the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

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