

BEACON FILE PHOTO
A DOUBLE-FATALITY ACCIDENT in November where the Shallotte bypass crosses N.C. 130 West renewed talk of the need for an overpass at the intersection, which is close to West Brunswick High School.



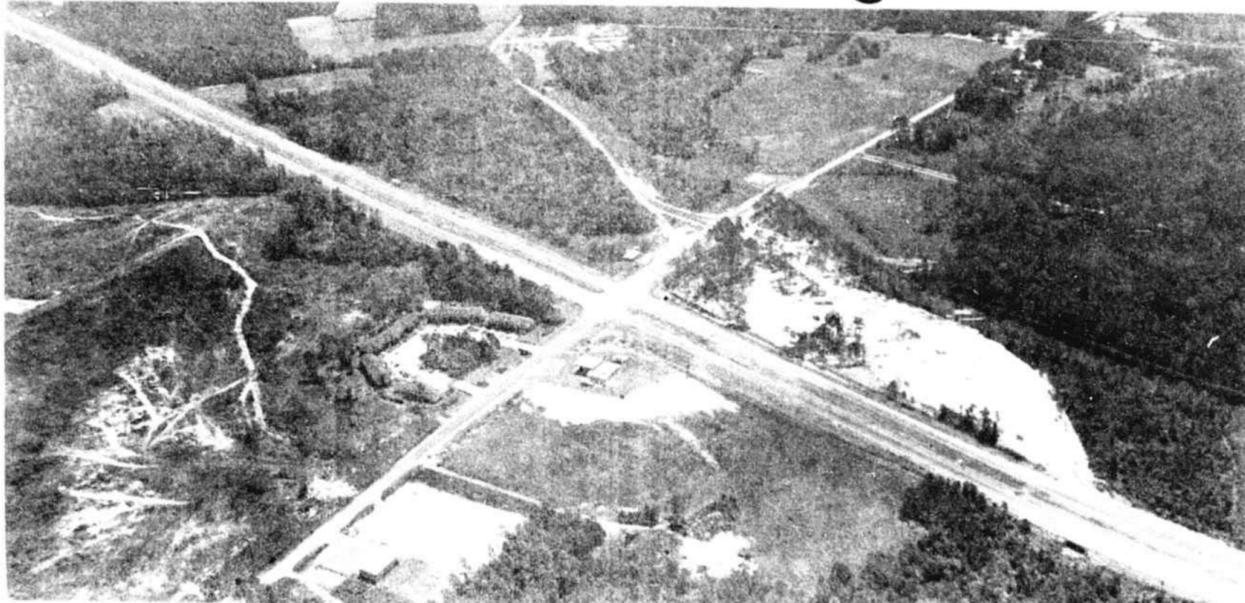
BEACON FILE PHOTO
LIKE NEIGHBORHOODS across America, Brunswick County welcomed home its troops who served in Operation Desert Storm in Saudia Arabia. Brothers Andre Perkins (left) and Myron Perkins of Leland were honored at Navassa's annual homecoming celebration.

YEAR IN REVIEW CONTINUES

Property Owners Continue To Beg For County Water

(Continued From Page 1-A)

gered some.
Cut were Environmental Health Supervisor Gary McDonald, five from the water department (including an assistant director) and long-time Clerk to the Board of Commissioners Regina Alexander.
Black leaders insisted Ms. Alexander was fired because she is black. Democratic leaders accused the all-Republican board of picking on Democrats and asked District Attorney Rex Gore to investigate.
"We are disturbed, dumfounded, flabbergasted and downright insulted by what we perceive to be racial unfairness," said Jesse Bryant, past president of the Cedar Grove-Brunswick County Chapter of the NAACP.
Two sides to the issue emerged, and prosecutors dismissed the claims.
Pinkerton and District 4 Commissioner Frankie Rabon had performed a "show and dance" for the crowd, said Holden. "I have always voted for the budget—all three years," he noted, but with a pained expression.



BEACON FILE PHOTO
THE U.S. 17 SHALLOTTE BYPASS opened May 22 to the delight of area residents who waited a lifetime for a route that was first proposed in the early 1960s.

Let It Flow
Property owners continued to beg for county water in 1991, but in some communities the price was more than some residents were willing to pay.
The county financed \$7 million in bonds to pay for water lines to Seaside and Shallotte Point, where residents became part of a long-awaited Special Assessment District

(SAD) in December. Wells there have gone dry while growth south of Shallotte dangerously cut water pressure during peak periods.

Another water line, along Mt. Pisgah Church Road to serve the Civictown and Shell Point communities, was put on hold until 1992. Shell Point residents have petitioned for water.

"It hit me like a freight train," was Clegg's reaction when commissioners, citing unnecessary delays, voted in August to fire Houston and Associates of Shallotte, the engineering firm at work on water expansion.

The county regrouped by hiring Ken Dresser and Associates to finish designs as a disgruntled Houston and Associates filed suit, seeking \$397,000 in fees and damages.

In other communities, requests for water were mixed. Commissioners ordered a policy to charge main line customers a fee when tapping onto the water system.

Smaller SADs proceeded off the Holden Beach causeway, in 10 sub-

divisions along N.C. 179 between Calabash and Ocean Isle Beach and in the Jennifer subdivision near Leland, where a \$30,000 state grant helped fund an emergency line to replace the residents' gasoline contaminated wells.

In Town Creek and Winnabow, residents turned down water, saying assessments for the mostly rural area were too high.

Residents in Varnantown also let aldermen know that they did not desire county water.

Hard Times
Nationally, talk focused on a possible recession. Locally, the news wasn't all good either.

In February, 43 percent of Brunswick County's employees had not paid their 1990 taxes, perhaps an omen of hard times in 1991.

From a 10-year period, \$4.1 million was still owed the county in back taxes and \$2 million from 1990 alone.

Anticipating a \$700,000 cut in state funds, commissioners panicked

and voted to garnish wages and to attach cash assets for residents who still owed.

Clegg chopped \$7.5 million in departmental requests from the budget before commissioners even saw the figures. New offices for the driver's license examiner and magistrate were cut and a central warehouse for the government complex put on hold. The Brunswick Clean County Department was dissolved.

Also cut were \$1.5 million from Emergency Medical Services, \$1.4 million from the County Engineer's department and \$231,516 from a

Department of Older Adults meals program, which drew complaints from senior citizens.

"The next two or three years is going to be very critical for our aging program," said Older Adults Director Ronnie Robinson, whose department is 48 percent county funded.

Commissioners rejected parcel fees and tipping fees as ways to fund solid waste and instead dug deeper to find the \$1.8 million.

Recyclers were disappointed in October when an independent hauler announced he could no longer afford to collect goods at Brunswick Coun-

ty's eight sites, which were forced to close.

A few towns like Sunset Beach and Calabash were able to find independent recyclable waste pick-up for their communities.

In December commissioners tack-

(See COMMISSIONERS, PG. 11-A)

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