



DIGGING IN May 21 to break ground for Supply Elementary School are (from left) Brittany Sellers, Josh Sellers, Shaun Lennon, Bryant Price, Blake Stone and Kristen Price. The \$5.2 million model school is to be ready for occupancy Aug. 1, 1992.



AN ALL-REPUBLICAN Brunswick County Board of Commissioners was divided on key issues. Voting 3-2 to adopt the county budget are, from left, Frankie Rabon, Donald Shaw, Kelly Holden, Jerry Jones and Gene Pinkerton.

## Commissioners Approve Controversial Subdivision Ordinance

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led both solid waste concerns, voting 3-2 to hire a private contractor, Waste Management, to handle trash disposal and to operate 10 recycling stations, at an expected cost savings. The move, however, left uncertain the jobs of 10 to 15 county employees that the contractor hired provisionally for three months.

### Major Changes

Growth continued to bring with it major changes for Brunswick County.

Construction of a \$1.6 million 911 center in Bolivia began while a major road naming and house numbering system replaced the county's ancient rural postal routes—all designed to get emergency vehicles to homes and accidents quicker.

"It's a major change," noted Doug Ledgett, Emergency Medical Services director, "but it happens just once."

To regulate growth and to keep tabs on developers, commissioners approved a new and controversial subdivision ordinance that set minimum lot sizes and paving requirements for new projects.

"I read it, and I don't understand what I'm reading," said Shallotte surveyor Bobby Long.

A lot of reading went into the final draft that replaced an August 1980 edition.

"It's people like myself that come here to retire that's getting ripped off," said resident Ed Hardin.

Debate lingered for months following that April public hearing, with the Planning Board and commissioners finally reaching a "happy meeting ground," as Planning Board member Michael Schaub phrased it.

A progressive Board of Health

adopted rules to regulate low pressure pipe sewer systems blamed for coastal and groundwater pollution. The state had postponed its own rules until 1992. Developers say LPPs, placed on lots where conventional septic tanks won't work, do not have a history of malfunctioning.

"This is a national problem," noted Long Beach's Rosetta Short, a member of the Coastal Resources Advisory Council who lobbied the board for the LPP rules.

Meanwhile, fallout from November's election and optional exit poll renewed an interest in county zoning. Placement of a pet crematory in a Winnabow residential neighborhood also emphasized the need for zoning.

"I'm going to push for it as hard as I can," noted Holden, after the vote was three to one in favor.

Residents also voted for fire and rescue service districts to fund volunteer units and a non-controversial electoral redistricting plan.

But perhaps the most important vote was in favor of two-year terms for commissioners and school board candidates.

The vote left both residents and politicians alike uncertain that two-year terms would make an impact locally in 1992.

### Education In Transition

The year was one of transition for education in Brunswick County, with both Brunswick Community College and the Brunswick County Schools relying more heavily on local funding in the face of state cutbacks while looking for new ways to accomplish their missions.

Faced with increased enrollment, both educational systems found themselves trying to do "more with

less" while making plans to accommodate continued growth.

After two years of delays, construction began at BCC on a 1,500-seat auditorium authorized in an earlier county bond referendum. The building, however, will be named the Odell Williamson Auditorium, after the man who endowed a fund for its management.

In May, the county board of education broke ground for Supply Elementary School, a \$5.2 million facility that will relieve overcrowding at three existing schools when it opens in fall 1992 while serving as a pacesetter for the entire school system. The school board got the go-ahead from county commissioners to begin laying plans for a new central office to be built at the government center in Bolivia—more than 10 years after most other county offices relocated there from Southport, the former county seat.

The school board and the school system administration set out to become a goal-oriented "team" focused on the education of children, reorganizing the central office and its staff under Superintendent P.R. Hankins to that end, embracing a three-year school improvement effort and finding new ways to work with county commissioners on the often-tough school budget.

Helping spur the effort: a state "report card" that ranked the local school system below par when compared to comparable school systems in terms of size and socio-economic student body profiles. It was one of 12 out of 134 systems statewide to rank in the bottom group as a system and in terms of student performance.

Board Chairman Donna Baxter set the pace, calling for better communi-

cation and cooperation within the system and more public involvement in the schools.

The year was not without its problems, many of them leftovers from the previous term. A candidate not chosen for the superintendent's post, Barbara Rogers, filed a discrimination complaint with the EEOC. Board member Robert Slockett was at the center of that dispute, and also in other infighting among board members that carried over into 1991. Slockett pushed for a local or regional math/science technology center; fellow members agreed the center was a good idea, but chose to pursue the goal at a slower, more methodical pace.

### Towns Moving On

The state budget crisis also had area towns pinching pennies during budget season, but that didn't prevent some of them from accomplishing several goals set for the year—from building sidewalks to establishing extraterritorial areas.

Despite the state's completion of the bypass, Shallotte officials spent much of the year quarreling among themselves.

The infighting came to a head in the heat of summer, when two town police officers were suspended and later reinstated.

Throughout the year, Mayor Tripp supported positions of board members Wilton Harrelson and David Gause, while Paul Wayne Reeves, Jody Simmons and Joe Hewett seemingly formed their own alliance.

The board's biggest accomplishment of the year was establishment of an extraterritorial area where the



CORA GREEN retired in June after serving 12 years as a trustee for Brunswick Community College. She also served on the steering committee that worked to found BCC. Above, she's accepting farewells from a new trustee, Malcolm Grissett.

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