

West Wins Showdown

West's Catherine Bell covers South's Jennifer Fullwood when a 47-45 win secured a share of the Waccamaw conference title for the Lady Trojans. The story's on Page 9-B.



What's In A Name?

A proposed road name change has neighbors asking questions as the county continues efforts to bring a 911 emergency contact system on line. Find out more on Page 11-A.



Gardening Time!

A Lawn & Garden Guide inside this issue offers friendly tips and practical advice to get your landscape and vegetable garden off to a great start in 1992. It's Section D.



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REBUILDING THIS ACCESS BRIDGE, burned during the 1970s, is part of Janie Price's plans for residential development of Bird Island near Sunset Beach.

STAFF PHOTO BY DORI C. GURGANUS

ZONING, PERMIT APPLICATIONS AMONG FIRST STEPS

Bird Island Development Proposed

BY DORI COSGROVE GURGANUS

Sunset Beach Town Council took the first step Monday toward zoning Bird Island following news that the privately-owned barrier island between Sunset Beach and Little River Inlet may be developed.

The owner of picturesque Bird Island has applied for permits to re-establish vehicle access to the island and to develop it for residential use, but before construction is allowed the area must be zoned by the town.

A public hearing will be held Monday, April 6, at the start of the council's next meeting, on the planning board's recommendation that the island be zoned agricultural/forestry. That category limits residential development to single-family residences on lots of at least one acre.

Janie Pace Price of Greensboro, who owns Bird Island, was not available for comment on her plans for the property, which is considered one of the last undeveloped barrier islands along the North Carolina coast. She has considered development of the island on a smaller scale several times in the past.

She has applied for a CAMA ma-

ior development permit from the N.C. Division of Coastal Management in Wilmington for "replacement of a bridge, causeway and water access pier to support future residential development of Bird Island" and to provide access to the island.

A map outlining 15 four-acre residential lots is included in the application, which is incomplete.

Jim Herstine, district manager of the DCM in Wilmington, said Ms. Price left some information off, and has been notified that the agency can't consider the forms until it has all the information requested.

Herstine said it is "way too early" in the application process to determine whether the application will be approved as submitted.

The island, part of the extra-territorial area (ETA) of Sunset Beach, has never been classified on the town's zoning map nor was it ever addressed in the town's land use plan, said Linda Fluegel, town administrator.

Not Addressed By Plan

It was brought into the town's ETA in 1990, she said, but the last land use plan update for Sunset

Beach was completed in 1987; the town is in the process of updating the plan. Any areas not addressed in that plan were classified as conservation, she added, which provides for limited residential development.

Town Planning Board Chairman Dick Good the board was asked to recommend possible zoning for the island after Mrs. Price's attorney contacted the town "quite some time ago" about the possibility of applying for permits.

Mrs. Price did not request any particular zoning, Good said, but she has been notified of the recommendation.

Ms. Fluegel told the council Monday that Mrs. Price, like any landowner, could request a change in zoning in the future if she desires.

Herstine said that once his office in Wilmington receives a completed application, it must be reviewed for comment by 16 state and federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries. The process "will take plenty of time," he said, "and there'll be plenty of opportunity for public input during

this process."

The agency will also be making required field studies on the island, he said.

Another part of the application process includes obtaining comments from adjacent landowners, one of which is the Town of Sunset Beach.

Mrs. Fluegel has been collecting information from agencies to form a statement for the town, but said Monday afternoon she thinks there is little that could stop Mrs. Price from legally building on the island.

Mrs. Price has contracted with the engineering firm of Henry von Oesen and Associates of Wilmington for design of a new bridge and pier. Drawings and plans for the bridge call for it to be about the width of the bridge that connects Sunset Beach's island to the mainland.

As a result, Ms. Fluegel said she can't object on the grounds that emergency vehicles couldn't make it over the proposed bridge.

A clause in the town's land use plan states the town would not like to see any development that would (See BIRD ISLAND, Page 2-A)

Redwine, Holden Top Local Candidate List As Filing Closes

Filing for local political offices closed at noon Monday with a flurry of activity at the Brunswick County Board of Elections.

Brunswick County District 1 Commissioner Kelly Holden of Shallotte ended speculation over his political future when he filed for the 14th District State House seat.

As the only Republican to file for one of two available seats, Holden will not face a primary. Four Democrats, including incumbent E. David Redwine of Ocean Isle Beach, are also in the race.

The surprise of the day was the withdrawal of Rep. Leo Mercer of Columbus County from that race. The Democrat had previously been elected to represent the 15th State House District, which merged with the 14th in January under the state's redistricting plan.

The two-member 14th District incorporates most of Columbus and Brunswick counties and parts of Robeson and New Hanover counties.

Redwine will face three challengers in the May 5 primary: businessman Dewey Hill of Lake Waccamaw; attorney Michael T. Mills of Bolton; and Shirley T. Green, a semi-retired farmer and businessman from Robeson County.

At a press conference Monday morning, Mercer indicated the larger district would make it difficult for him to run his campaign.

"We're going to miss him," said Redwine. "He has done a good job. He's one of the finest men I know."

Holden said Monday he waited until the last day to file because he wanted to discuss it with his family and to "get their blessings" before running.

"I think the chances are very good," said Holden. "Columbus County is heavily dominated by Democrats, but they, too, have split the tickets in Columbus County."

Others who withdrew from races Monday were Democrat William F. Faught of Long Beach, who had filed for the District 3 school board seat, and Republican Bill Kirby of Southport, who had filed for Register of Deeds.

Democratic incumbent R.C. Soles Jr. of Tabor City will face two challengers in the 18th District Senate race. Filing Monday were Democrats Claude Spivey of Tabor City and Ron Taylor of Elizabethtown, and Republican Jim Whitworth of Wilmington.

The 18th Senate District includes Brunswick, Columbus, two precincts in New Hanover County and all but two precincts in Bladen County.

Two candidates have filed for the 98th State House District, both from Wilmington. The minority-majority district includes parts of Columbus, Brunswick, Robeson and New Hanover counties.

Filing were Democrats Ms. Johnnie S. Fields, 60, of S. Fifth Street, and Thomas E. Wright, 36, of S. 17th Street. No candidates filed from other counties.

More candidates also filed for

both the Brunswick County Board of Education and Board of Commissioners races.

Democrat J. Bryant Pergerson, 35, of Boiling Spring Lakes, filed for the District 4 school board race. No additional candidates filed for

(See REDWINE, Page 2-A)

Who's Filed

COMMISSIONER

District 1

- Raymond Erickson, Dem.
- Don Warren, Dem.

District 3

- Steve Foster, Rep.
- Joseph Tyler Lenins, Rep.
- William (Bill) Sisk, Rep.
- Bob Slockett, Rep.
- Tom Yeagle, Rep.
- Nathaniel (Nat) Parker, Dem.
- William R. (Bob) Thorsen, Dem.
- M.E. (Mark) Sharpe, Dem.
- Wayland Vereen, Dem.

District 4

- C. Lephus Pigott, Dem.
- Tom B. Rabon Sr., Dem.
- Jo Ann Bellamy Simmons, Dem.
- Tom Simmons, Dem.
- Gene Sellers, Rep.
- Patricia (Patty) Young, Rep.

SCHOOL BOARD

District 1

- Joseph V. Brust, Rep.
- Janet Pope, Rep.
- Sam Fletcher Frink, Dem.

District 3

- William D. (Billy) Carter, Dem.
- Carlton L. Sligh, Dem.
- Stephanna Tewey, Dem.
- Bill Fairley, Rep.

District 4

- Donna Baxter, Dem. (I)
- J. Bryant Pergerson, Dem.
- Pete Barnette, Rep.

REGISTER OF DEEDS

- Grace Beasley, Dem.
- Edward F. Mintz, Dem.
- Robert J. Robinson, Dem. (I)
- Arthur Knox, Rep.

CORONER

- Greg White, Dem. (I)

STATE HOUSE

14th District (2 seats)

- Shirley T. Green, Dem.
- Dewey Hill, Dem.
- Michael T. Mills, Dem.
- E. David Redwine, Dem. (I)
- Kelly Holden, Rep.

98th District (1 seat)

- Johnnie S. Fields, Dem.
- Thomas E. Wright, Dem.

STATE SENATE

18th District

- R.C. Soles Jr., Dem. (I)
- Claude Spivey, Dem.
- Ron Taylor, Dem.
- Jim Whitworth, Rep.

13th DISTRICT JUDGES

- Contested
- Napoleon B. Barefoot Jr., Dem.
- Wayne Long, Dem.
- Uncontested
- D. Jack Hooks Jr., Dem.
- Jerry Arnold Jolly, Dem.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- Charles L. (Chip) Carroll

Oyster Season Ending With 'Average' Harvest

BY DORI COSGROVE GURGANUS

The counts aren't all in yet, but judging from the 1991-92 oyster harvest so far, local harvesters and market owners have had little to complain about.

When contacted Tuesday, area oyster vendors had little bad to say about the season, which opened in October and closes March 15, but neither were they jumping for joy.

While both the quality and quantity of local oysters were up compared to recent seasons, a mild winter and other factors cut into demand.

"It was reasonable to fair," said Carson Varnam, seafood merchant in Varnamtown. "The oysters had as good a flavor as we've had in a long time, and everybody enjoyed them."

He estimated that fishermen who make their

living off of oysters would have had no problem catching their limit every day.

"The supply was a good or better than in past years," said Varnam.

Joe Peed, owner of Bill's Seafood in Sunset Beach, reported that the harvest was "normal," but that the unusually mild winter was not good for sales.

"We've had more oysters than we had people to eat them," he said.

People eat more oysters during cold seasons, he explained, so not as many clients were ordering oysters at his restaurant, Crabby Oddwaters.

"But still, Brunswick County's got the best oysters," said Peed.

Another seafood retailer, Ernie Galloway of Varnamtown, replied that the season "has been

average," as far as he's concerned, and that nothing unusual happened to make it a really bad or great harvest.

Official statistics for Brunswick County's harvest are not available yet from the Division of Marine Fisheries in Morehead City.

Jerry Parker, shellfish biologist with the division office in Wilmington, said that he usually uses the response of local harvesters and merchants as part of his overall report on the annual harvest, and that he's heard no complaints.

"If we don't get any calls from fishermen, then we don't see that there are any problems," Parker said. "And I haven't heard any complaints this year."

The oyster harvesting season closes officially at sunset Sunday, March 15, by directive from William Hogarth, Marine Fisheries director.

School Board To Approach County About Putting Officers On Campus

BY SUSAN USHER

Responding to parents' concerns about campus security, the Brunswick County Board of Education decided Monday to talk with other county officials about possibly assigning a law officer to each high school and middle school campus.

The vote is the latest response by the board to concerns expressed by principals and parents about increasing incidents of violence, drugs and weapons in county schools, as well as in schools across southeastern North Carolina.

After hearing from several parents during a four-hour board meeting at South Brunswick Middle School, board member Polly Russ made the motion to "undertake a feasibility study" with the county commissioners and sheriff.

"What we need on that campus is not a teacher with a whistle, but a deputy," Gordon Hobbs of Leland, the parent of a North Brunswick High School student, told board members Monday. "There is nothing the school board can do that would more improve academic

achievement than creating an atmosphere for learning and a safe campus."

Hobbs was one in a series of speakers to address the board during a two-hour public address period in which the board made no attempt to enforce its five-minute limit on individuals' remarks.

After meeting four hours, the board recessed shortly before 11 p.m., with plans to continue the meeting next Monday, March 9, at 6:30 p.m. at the central office.

When a sheriff's deputy brings "Buddy" the drug dog on campus, Hobbs told the board, the campus is "as different as night and day."

"The kids respect authority," he said. Hobbs said taxpayers aren't getting the administration and education they're paying for because the school's leaders are too busy policing student behavior.

His specific concerns include the need for fencing to discourage students from leaving campus and frequenting nearby business establishments during lunch; non-students and recently expelled students returning to campus without authorization; drug sales and drug use

on campus; increased numbers of weapons being brought on campus; and physical assaults on students by fellow students and non-students alike.

Hobbs said he was told the board has not taken steps to hire officers in the past because of concerns about public image and a lack of money, neither of which is important, he said, "when it comes to a child's safety."

"If we don't do something, someone will be killed," he said. "We need some help now."

At the request of principals, the board recently adopted a policy that now requires local law enforcement authorities to be brought in when students fight on campus and charges filed if appropriate. Officers are also called in if a weapon is found or used on campus, which is a violation of state law.

Hobbs said he likes the change because the associated fines get parents' attention.

Superintendent P.R. Hankins said that until the meeting Monday he had had no reason to believe measures already taken to deter the problems "hadn't made a difference".

When he and other central office personnel have visited the campus, it has been "orderly and quiet," he said.

In addition to the stricter policies, the school system has purchased metal detectors for the schools.

At North Brunswick, he said the sheriff's department has stepped up patrols of the campus and will increase random, unannounced visits by the drug dog; the N.C. Highway Patrol has agreed to station its drug dog more visibly in the vicinity of the school and volunteers are helping patrol the school grounds.

Headed Same Direction
School board members, Superintendent P.R. Hankins and Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Mose Lewis hastened to assure members of Parents In Action Monday night of their support.

Speakers Dorothy Essey and Gilbert Powell said the group would like to see South Brunswick High and South Brunswick Middle schools implement a new operating approach called comprehensive management system before the start of the fall term.

(See CAMPUS, Page 2-A)