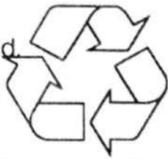


Recycling's Back

County transfer stations in the Leland Southport and South Brunswick areas are accepting glass, aluminum cans and newspapers for recycling. See Page 6-B.



Second Chance

Third graders involved in a Reading Recovery pilot project at three county primary schools get a second chance to grasp the basics of reading. The story's on Page 9-B.



Tournament Champs

South Brunswick's Tasha Sellers helped lead the Lady Cougars to the Waccamaw Conference tournament championship over Whiteville Friday. For details, see Page 1-D.



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STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Friendly Reminder

This speed indicator was set up on the U.S. 17 Shallotte bypass Monday as a friendly reminder of the 55 mph limit. The N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles is loaning the device to the Shallotte Police Department, said Chief Rodney Gause. Radar clocks the speed of cars approaching the indicator to let motorists know how fast they're driving. Gause said the device will be set up at various spots on the bypass. A computer logs the speed of each passing vehicle.

Shallotte Police Officer Suspended For Harassing Woman Motorist

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shallotte Police Det. Tom Hunter is serving a four-day suspension after allegedly making a sexually suggestive comment to a woman motorist during a routine traffic stop. Police Chief Rodney Gause suspended Hunter without pay after the officer reportedly said he wanted to strip search a young woman stopped at a roadblock on the U.S. 17 bypass last month.

The incident occurred Feb. 24 around 4 p.m. near Smith Avenue, Gause said. Officers were using radar to detect speeders and stopping cars to check for seat belt and other violations.

Gause said the woman, Natalie Oldenkamp of Wilmington, was stopped at the roadblock and a uniformed police officer asked to see her license and registration.

The officer, Shallotte Patrolman Keith Croom, informed her that her tinted windows were darker than North Carolina law allows. Ms. Oldenkamp said the tint is legal in Florida where her car is registered.

According to the woman's statement, a plainclothes officer "said he would like to take me in and strip search me. He laughed and told me to have a nice day."

Gause said he didn't find out about the incident until he talked with the woman last Thursday.

"The only thing I can do at this point is make sure it doesn't happen again," the chief said Friday. "We're going to make sure that this won't

"Officers joke among themselves to relieve tension. This whole thing took about 20 seconds and was an ill attempt at humor."

—Shallotte Det. Tom Hunter



ever happen again to her or anyone else."

In a telephone interview Sunday, Hunter admitted that he made the comment and was wrong for making it. "I shouldn't have said it."

Hunter, who also serves as police chief in Sandy Creek, said the comment was directed to the other town officer who was working at the roadblock.

"I didn't know she was offended. I didn't even know she heard it," Hunter said. "She was laughing and joking with him. I had no idea she was upset about it."

Hunter planned to send the woman a letter of apology and said he would have apologized to her immediately if he had known she was upset by the comment.

Ms. Oldenkamp was driving to work in North Myrtle Beach, S.C., where she is a waitress at Hooters. Waitresses at the restaurant wear skimpy T-shirts and shorts.

Det. Hunter said the woman's attire had nothing to do with his com-

ment because he didn't see how she was dressed when he made the statement.

Hunter said the two town officers and one highway patrolman had been working six hours at the roadblock when the incident occurred.

"You never know if the next person who comes through will pull a gun on you," Hunter said. "Officers joke among themselves to relieve tension. This whole thing took about 20 seconds and was an ill attempt at humor."

Hunter started serving his suspension Monday and expected to return to work Friday.

From now on, Gause said all town officers working at roadblocks will wear uniforms and "conduct themselves in a professional manner."

"I appreciate her bringing this to my attention because if we don't know anything about it we can't do anything to correct it," Gause said. "Not only is it an embarrassment to the officer but a discredit to the department."

Minority District Separates Neighbors In Four Precincts

BY TERRY POPE

Neighbors in some northern Brunswick County communities will be handed different ballots when they go to the polls in the May 5 primary.

Portions of four county precincts—Hoods Creek, Leland, Woodburn and Belville—are included in the newly-created minority 98th State House District.

The district was created by the N.C. General Assembly as part of the state's redistricting plan approved in January. The goal is to increase minority representation in the legislature by creating a district in southeastern North Carolina that contains a majority of minority voters. The district will have minority representation in next year's General Assembly. The announced candidates in the Democratic primary, Ms. Johnnie Fields and Thomas Wright, both of Wilmington, are both black. No Republican filed for the seat.

District 98 includes portions of Robeson, Columbus, Brunswick and New Hanover counties. Brunswick County residents in the 98th District will vote for the same slate of county candidates but not for those in the 14th State House race.

County officials believe there will be confusion at first over who lives where and who gets which ballot in the first primary under the new plan.

"We'll do the best we can with the tax records," said Brunswick County Board of Elections Supervisor Lynda Britt.

Maps showing the district lines will be posted at the four precincts involved on election day. Elections officials will also try to match registered voting records with parcel numbers on the tax maps before the primary.

"We could go door-to-door in the Belville precinct since it's so small," said Mrs. Britt, "but you can't do that in other precincts."

The district divides the Hoods Creek precinct, reaching from the Columbus County line and including all of the Northwest community. The line follows Mt. Misery Road and the Lincoln School Road through the Leland precinct to include voters in the Phoenix community and the towns of Navassa and Belville.

From Belville, the lines form a gourd-shaped area to encompass voters in the Chappel Loop Road community, which is made up of mostly black families. Residents there have been the focus of annexation battles between the towns of Leland and Belville for two years.

In some instances, poll workers may have to rely on the residents to find their homes on the map.

"When you come in, you've got to determine where you live so you'll get the right ballot," said Mrs.

Britt.

Voters in the 98th District have two Democratic candidates running for the State House—Ms. Johnnie S. Fields, of South 5th Street, Wilmington; and Thomas E. Wright, of South 17th Street, Wilmington. Ms. Fields is a political newcomer while Wright has served on the Wilmington City Council.

No candidates from the other three counties in the district filed for the seat. Mrs. Britt said a Brunswick County resident appeared at the Board of Elections office in Bolivia around 12:30 p.m. on March 2 to file. However, by state law, filing had officially closed at noon.

Residents who remain in the 14th District will see some familiar names on their ballot for the State House.

Running as Democrats are incum-

bent E. David Redwine of Ocean Isle Beach; Dewey Hill of Lake Waccamaw; Michael T. Mills of Bolton and Shirley T. Green of Robeson County.

Running as a Republican, with no May 5 primary, is Kelly Holden of Shallotte, current chairman of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners.

Mrs. Britt said her office has received few questions from residents concerning the new district.

Residents will not likely notice the effects of the new district until election day, predicted Holden.

"When they go to vote is when it'll hit them," said Holden. "The names they thought were going to be on their ballot will not be on there."

Voters have until April 6 to register to vote for the May primary.

Uniformed Patrol Begins At North Brunswick High

BY SUSAN USHER

A new authority figure can be seen on the campus of North Brunswick High School this week—a uniformed law officer.

For the first time Tuesday, the campus was patrolled part of the school day by an off-duty sheriff's deputy, part of an effort to deter violence and increase campus safety.

"The only reason I didn't have anyone there Monday was that I couldn't find anybody," said Chief Deputy John Marlow of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

Under a verbal agreement between the Brunswick County Board of Education and the department, an off-duty officer will be stationed at the school for about three to four hours a day until the end of the school term, whenever such an officer is available.

Monday, at a continuation of their regular meeting a week ago, the school board voted unanimously, with all members present, to pay \$15 an hour for a part-time deputy.

"I'm not pleased with the hours, but I'm pleased that we've started," commented District 5 board member Yvonne Bright.

While the vote was for a three-hour-a-day schedule, that figure is likely to be adjusted upward, said Superintendent P.R. Hankins, if officers cannot be hired for the shorter period or if longer hours are needed.

He also expects Harris to try to vary the hours an officer is on the campus, so no definite pattern develops.

Marlow said off-duty officers are eager to work overtime for the additional pay, but usually want to work a longer block of time to make it worth their while. "Most aren't go-

ing to do it for two or three hours," he said.

School board member Polly Russ broached the possibility Monday night of using auxiliary officers for campus patrol.

However, Marlow said Tuesday that typically auxiliary officers already work full-time jobs during the week and are only available on weekends.

The uniformed officer, who will patrol North's campus on foot, will be equipped with all standard county-issued equipment, including weapons, said Marlow. "If we issued grenades, he would have a grenade."

(See UNIFORMED, Page 2-A)

Ericksen Is A Republican

A candidate in the District 1 Brunswick County Board of Commissioners' race was incorrectly labeled in an article printed last week.

Raymond Ericksen, 60, of Ocean Isle Beach, is a Republican in that race and will not face a challenger in the May 5 primary. The Brunswick Beacon erred when it indicated Ericksen had filed as a Democrat.

The only other candidate who filed in District 1 was Don Warren, 43, of Shallotte, a Democrat.

The two will compete in the November general election.

The Beacon regrets the error and any inconvenience it may have caused.

County Questions Democratic Party On Building Occupancy

BY TERRY POPE

An apparent error led county officials to believe Friday that Brunswick County Democrats were in violation of state building codes for the party headquarters under construction near Supply.

A letter sent to Democratic Party Chairman Crawford M. Hart also accuses the group of violating state law by occupying the building before obtaining a certificate of occupancy from the Brunswick County Inspections Department.

But the confusion resulted from an administrative error over a date and has since been corrected, said Hart on Tuesday.

Building Inspections Director Robert Tucker sent the letter by certified mail Friday, March 6. County officials had discovered the administrative error Monday before Hart and Shallotte attorney Mark Lewis, who represents the party, arrived to check on the status of the permits.

"They absolutely are not expired," said Hart. "It was just misread."

The permits do expire April 24, according to the file at the Building Inspections Department.

A final inspection must be performed by then. The last inspection, on April 24, 1991, indicated the building lacked bathroom plumbing and handicapped parking signs.

"As far as we're concerned, they're fine until April 24," said Katherine Graves of the Inspections Department.

Tucker's letter had indicated the party needed to ob-

tain updated permits for the building by March 13 and to have all work required to obtain a certificate of occupancy permit completed within 30 days. Failure to do so would result in "future action by this department," he wrote.

The department also indicated that Democrats owed the county \$137 for previous inspections.

"We didn't," said Hart. "It was just an oversight. We went down, and they had already found the mistake."

Rumors asserted that the Democratic Party has received special treatment from the county by being allowed to occupy a building for various functions before obtaining an occupancy permit and a permanent electrical hookup.

The building is being served with electricity temporarily from a 100-amp service pole that is routinely in place during construction.

"That's been clarified," said Hart. "As far as taking occupancy of it, we don't have a full staff of people. We're not having shindigs in there every day. They know what we're doing."

Hart said Democrats hope to complete the building within two weeks and to obtain the certificate of occupancy then. The original building permits were obtained on March 14, 1990, indicating a building valued at \$123,900 would be built on the lot.

A framing steel inspection passed on Oct. 25, 1990, and the flashing inspection passed on April 23, 1990. Plumbing and electrical permits, good for 12 months,

(See DEMOCRATS, Page 2-A)

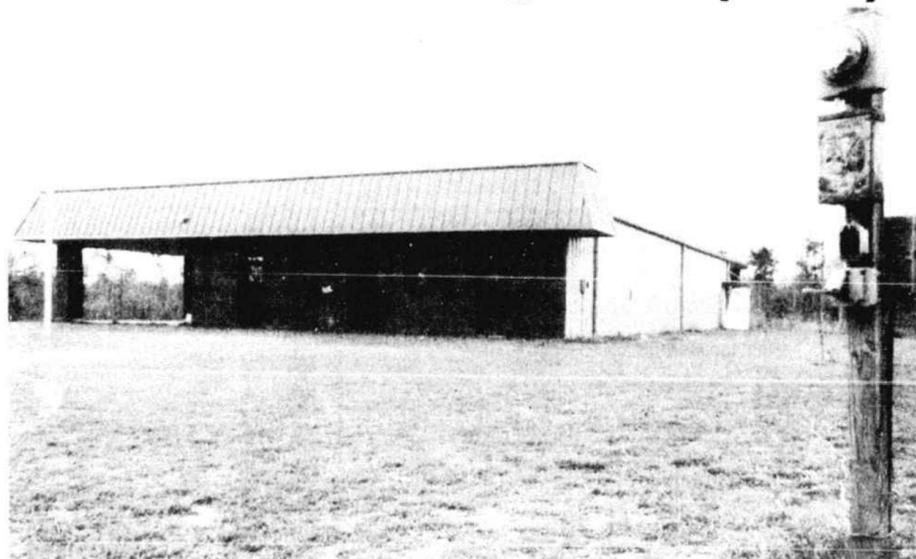


PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

BRUNSWICK COUNTY'S Democratic headquarters near Supply remain hooked to a temporary power source with an April 24 construction deadline approaching.