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RUNOFF LIKELY FOR ONE SEAT

Close Races Leave Incumbents Nervous In Tuesday's Primary

BY TERRY POPE
Both incumbents and political newcomers were breathing sighs of relief when the air cleared from Tuesday's primary.

A second primary may be needed to decide the District 3 Republican nominee for the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners.

Thorsen of Southport and Mark Sharpe of Long Beach Tuesday.

Steve Foster of Long Beach gathered 887 votes against Bob Slockett's 1,022 votes, but it's enough to call for a runoff.

The unofficial totals are with all 22 county precincts reporting and subject to verification at the canvass today (Thursday).

"I'm leaning toward the possibility of a runoff at this point," said Foster, "but I'm going to talk with some of my supporters over the next few days before I decide. There's a good chance of it. I will say that."

Slockett, who is on the school board, decided to file for the commissioner's race.

Democrats holding off strong challenges Tuesday were Brunswick County Board of Education Chairman Donna Baxter and incumbent Brunswick County Register of

Deeds Robert J. Robinson.

"I didn't think I would be a shooin," said Ms. Baxter, who battled negative publicity during her campaign stemming from a driving while impaired charge that was dismissed when tests later showed she wasn't impaired.

"All I asked is that the people give me two more years," she added. "I feel like I have done a good job and should stay in office."

She defeated challenger J. Bryant Pergerson by 324 votes and will face Republican Pete Barnette, who had no primary.

"It's hard when you don't have the name recognition or the money," said Pergerson. "Basically, all I had helping me were the parents. Donna and I both ran a clean campaign. I wish her the best."

Other school board winners were See CLOSE, Page 2-A



TOM RABON SR. of Winnabow (left) chats with Art Skipper during election returns Tuesday. By a close margin, Rabon won the Democratic nomination for the District 4 county commissioner's seat.

Brunswick County Election Results

(Contested Races Only)

Brunswick County Commissioner

District 3

Democrat

M.E. (Mark) Sharpe.....1116
William R. (Bob) Thorsen.....2304
Wayland Vereen.....2847

Republican

Steve Foster.....887
Joseph Tyler Lenins.....56
William (Bill) Sisk.....294
Bob Slockett.....1022
Tom Yeagle.....308

District 4

Democrat

Tom B. Rabon Sr.....2981
Jo Ann Bellamy Simmons.....2586
Tom Simmons.....1027

Republican

Gene Sellers.....1126
Patricia (Patty) Young.....1364

Brunswick County Board of Education

District 1

Republican

Joseph V. Brust.....1109
Janet Pope.....1488

District 3

Democrat

William D. (Billy) Carter.....2877
Carlton L. Sligh.....1120
Stephanna Tewey.....2570

District 4

Democrat

Donna M. Baxter.....3485
J. Bryant Pergerson.....3161

Brunswick County Register Of Deeds

Democrat

Grace Beasley.....2012
Edward F. Mintz.....2187
Robert J. Robinson.....2893

N.C. Senate 18th District

Democrat

R.C. Soles Jr.....3527
Claude Spivey.....757
Ron Taylor.....2817

N.C. House of Representatives 14th District

Democrat

Shirley T. Greene.....746
Dewey Hill.....2510
Michael T. Mills.....2318
E. David Redwine.....4176

98th District

Democrat

Johnnie S. Fields.....219
Thomas E. Wright.....187

Governor

Democrat

James B. (Jim) Hunt Jr.....4816
Lacy H. Thornburg.....1642
Marcus W. Williams.....314

Republican

Gary M. Dunn.....245
Jim Gardner.....2050
Ruby Thompson Hooper.....355

Lieutenant Governor

Democrat

Jim Crawford.....2563
Charles Philip (Phil) Ginn.....262
Edward Renfrow.....1082
Dennis A. Wicker.....2824

Republican

Doris Rogers Huffman.....853
Art Pope.....964
Trip Sizemore.....609

Eight People Rescued In Holden Beach Surf

BY DOUG RUTTER AND SUSAN USHER

Eight people were rescued off the east end of Holden Beach Sunday after they became caught in a rip current and couldn't get back to shore.

Authorities said two teen-age boys were playing with a flying disc near Lockwood Folly Inlet and went into the water to retrieve the toy.

They became caught in a strong current of water rushing out of the inlet on the falling tide and couldn't swim back to the beach, officials said.

After hearing the boys scream, six other people went into the water to try to help them and also became trapped about 100 yards offshore. The current didn't carry them offshore, but prevented them from swimming to the beach.

Holden Beach Police Chief Robert Cook said police were notified at 11:55 a.m. Officers Bill Jordan and Dexter Ludlum swam out to the group to try to keep the people calm and together in one spot.

Holden Beach's water rescue team used its surf boat to transport six of the eight people to a commercial fishing boat, the *Super Salty I*, which

"It was a very serious situation. Another few minutes and I think we would have lost four to five people."

—Ronnie Rabon
Holden Beach Water Rescue

responded and waited just beyond the breakers.

The surf boat crew brought life jackets, which the police officers helped those trapped in the water don. Then water rescue team coordinator Keith Sawyer and a fellow team, Tri-Beach VFD Chief Doug Todd, transported the victims one and two at a time to the sportfishing boat, said Sawyer.

Two others swam back to shore, and the two police officers swam out to the fishing boat, according to accounts of the incident.

Police identified the two boys as Scott Downer Jr., 13, of Supply, and Willie Euper, 14,

of Shallotte.

Others rescued were Tina Thompson of Shallotte, Ray Norris of Shallotte, Roger Morton of Oakboro, Danny Lingerfelt of Albemarle and Gary Thompkins of Supply. Police didn't have a name for the other person involved.

Norris and Thompson—the only two people who swam ashore—and Downer were taken to The Brunswick Hospital in Supply. They were treated in the emergency room and released.

"All these people were suffering from hypothermia," Cook said. "The water was 63 degrees and they were out there too long." Each person was given oxygen and blankets when they got to shore, he said.

Hypothermia is loss of body heat caused by exposure.

Ronnie Rabon, a member of the water rescue team and captain of the *Super Salty I*, took the eight people on his boat to Holden Beach Marina, where Coastline and Shallotte volunteer rescue squads were waiting at the docks.

Two members of Southport Rescue Squad who had boarded the fishing boat treated the vic-

See EIGHT, Page 2-A

Longwood Man Killed In Wreck

BY DOUG RUTTER

A local man died last Wednesday when the car he was riding in pulled out in front of a tractor-trailer on N.C. 904 at Longwood.

James Willie Robinson, 84, of Longwood, was killed instantly in the 11:54 a.m. accident near the intersection of N.C. 904 and Etheridge Road in front of Reed's Country Store.

The wreck occurred when a 1972 Ford driven by 81-year-old Addie Mae Robinson of Longwood pulled from the store parking lot onto N.C. 904 into the path of a 1978 Mack tractor trailer.

N.C. Highway Patrol spokesperson Ruby Oakley said the driver of the truck, 24-year-old Walter Shad Coupee of Dunn, applied the brakes and ran off the right side of the road in an attempt to avoid the car.

The tractor-trailer struck the Ford in its right side. Trooper C.E. Ward of the Highway Patrol charged Mrs. Robinson with driving without an operator's license, unsafe movement and failure to wear a seat belt.

Ms. Oakley said it was the 12th highway fatality this year in Brunswick County, up considerably from three through the end of April last year.

"We have had so many fatalities this year from people over 60 pulling out and failing to yield," she



TROOPER C.E. WARD (right) investigates the accident last Wednesday on N.C. 904 that took the life of James Willie Robinson of Longwood.

said. Mrs. Robinson was taken to The Brunswick Hospital in Supply, where she was kept overnight for

observation and released Thursday. After complaining of minor injuries, Coupee was treated at the local facility and released.

Witnesses at the scene said the truck driver couldn't have done any

See LONGWOOD, Page 2-A

LONG WAIT FINALLY OVER

County's New 911 Program Begins Friday

BY TERRY POPE

County officials were busy showing off their new 911 center to visitors last week while counting down the hours to start-up of the long-awaited emergency communications program.

That long wait will be over at 7 a.m. tomorrow (Friday) when the telephone systems are switched to begin dispatching emergency calls from the enhanced 911 command center.

Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan said it will be a historic moment for the county. Just by dialing the three digits 9-1-1, residents from anywhere in the county can call for emergency help.

The dispatcher will then route the correct fire, rescue or police unit to the home or location of the call.

"The Pilot Club actually did a survey that

opened up the commissioners' eyes to the need for 911 some years ago," recalled Logan.

But it was the persistence of county employees like Logan and Emergency Medical Services Supervisor Doug Ledgett that made the often-delayed program a reality. Originally set to begin Jan. 1, the program was delayed by setbacks in building designs and again in March due to late delivery of equipment.

The \$1.6 million building is filled with modern equipment and will also serve as headquarters for the county's Emergency Medical Services program, housing two ambulances next month manned by county-paid Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) trained to back up volunteer units. Entry to rooms is gained with optically-scanned cards, and dispatchers work inside a self-contained center with restrooms and

kitchen facilities at hand.

The building will also house an Emergency Command Center in the event of a disaster or emergency, such as a hurricane evacuation or nuclear threat from Carolina Power and Light Company's Brunswick Nuclear Plant in Southport. The command center has 30 overhead telephone outlets ready for immediate use and a large television monitor.

"It's not just a 911 center," said Logan. "It's a countywide building. We want it to be used for other things, too. It'll be used for any disaster situation and for any training exercise."

As evidence to that, the large ambulance bays were used Tuesday night to house people watching the county's primary election returns. Board

See COUNTY'S, Page 3-A