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The health board says okay to a proposed countywide leash law. Page 3-A



Talkin' Trash...

Big Sweep '92 is set for Saturday throughout Brunswick County. Page 13-A



Not Just For Kicks

Local high schools prepare for soccer's second season here. Page 10-B



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STUDENT COUNCIL members join Principal Carolyn Williams (center) Tuesday morning in cutting the first of two ribbons at the dedication of Supply Elementary School on Benton Road. From the left are Brittany Rae Sellers, Whitney Lee Sellers, B.A. Price, Blake Stone, Williams, Kristen Price, Shawn Lennon and Joshua Sellers.

SAYS 'POLITICS' TO BLAME

RDC Head Says Commissioner Asked Him To Quit

BY ERIC CARLSON

The chairman of the Brunswick County Resources Development Commission, a registered Democrat, said Tuesday he was asked to resign because of "politics" by Gene Pinkerton, a member of the all-Republican Brunswick County Board of Commissioners.

A. Baxter Stirling, chairman of the RDC since 1987, said in a Sept. 9 letter to fellow commission members that "at the request of Commissioner Pinkerton I have agreed to 'step aside' as a member of the Resources Development Commission."

Stirling said in his letter, "Politics" was the reason given for his request as Mr. Pinkerton added that Commissioner Holden had wanted to remove me at the last meeting but he (Mr. Pinkerton) wanted to tell me in person first. I did not ask where the other three commissioners stood on this matter but the implication was that it was unanimous."

Pinkerton is out of town this week on business and could not be reached for comment.

Brunswick Commissioners Chairman Kelly Holden said in an interview Tuesday he had read Stirling's letter and felt that his charges were unfounded.

"It's not true," said Holden. "Gene didn't say that and I didn't say that. I have never requested that he be removed from the board. No one forced Baxter from the board. He took himself off."

But Stirling Tuesday stood by his allegations, saying Pinkerton had asked to meet with him and specifically asked Stirling to "step aside." He said Pinkerton told him the reason was "politics." He declined to elaborate on the conversation except to say, "Those were the words he used."

Stirling said he was "a little bit surprised" by Pinkerton's request, but admitted that he had "heard rumblings in the jungle." He said he had not planned to step down before meeting with Pinkerton.

"It's a little irregular to ask someone to step aside before their term ends," Stirling said.

Stirling's term would have expired early next year. However, Pinkerton has decided not to run for re-election. So, under normal circumstances he would not have been able to choose Stirling's successor. Commissioners Frankie Rabon and Holden also have decided not to run.

At the most recent Brunswick County Board of Commissioners meeting Sept. 8, Pinkerton announced that Stirling had resigned

"I have never requested that he be removed from the board. No one forced Baxter from the board. He took himself off."

—Kelly Holden

and nominated Republican John Ramsey to complete his term. The appointment was approved by a vote of four to one, with Commissioner Donald Shaw dissenting.

A minute earlier, Pinkerton had joined Commissioners Jerry Jones, Rabon and Holden in voting down Shaw's re-appointment of Democrat V.A. Creech Jr. to the RDC. Shaw's second nomination of Republican James Marlow was unanimously approved.

Also re-appointed without dissent were Republicans Don Hughes, who was nominated by Pinkerton, and W. Scott Irby, nominated by Holden.

The Resources Development Commission is a non-profit economic development agency of the county headed by a director and supervised by an 11-member board. Members of the RDC serve at the pleasure of the board of commissioners.

Stirling is senior vice-president of the United Carolina Bank in Southport. He was appointed to the commission in March, 1987, by Democratic Commissioner Jim Pool. He was named chairman in September, 1987, and re-appointed to a second term by Pinkerton.

Speakers Challenge Public To Share Vision Of Better Education

BY SUSAN USHER

Brunswick County dedicated a new school Tuesday morning, a school intended to challenge educators, lure youngsters into learning and spark a vision among their elders of a better education for all county children.

Nearly 700 Supply Elementary students, plus their teachers, school system and other public officials and parents turned out to celebrate the opening of Brunswick County's 12th school with speeches, two ribbon cuttings and a close-up look at the school.

One speaker after another—Board Chairman Donna Baxter, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bob Etheridge and superintendent-elect Ralph Johnston—challenged listeners to

grasp the vision of a new future in education for Brunswick County represented by the new structure and praised the commitment to education from taxpayers and public officials alike they said it represents.

Etheridge described the school as having been built "for youngsters who will live in the 21st century" and who will be required to have much more education than is now needed in the workplace.

"It is said that home is where the heart is. I believe also that school is where the future is...in the face of every child." For a good future, he said, youngsters need not only safety and a good home, but a good education.

Baxter likened the school to the ninth, most

powerful wave in the ocean cycle. "We need to prepare now to catch that wave and ride it to shore," she said. "I challenge you not to stop now."

Some of the same students who got to help break ground for the project a year ago returned Tuesday as student council members to cut the first ribbon, each keeping a bit of the ribbon plus a gift from Principal Carolyn Williams as mementos of the occasion.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bob Etheridge and Rep. E. David Redwine joined school system officials in cutting a second ribbon.

Also participating in the program were the Rev. Gregory Hewett, the West Brunswick High

(See SUPPLY, Page 2-A)

Judge Dismisses Suit Against CP&L

BY ERIC CARLSON

A Superior Court Judge in Bolivia last week dismissed a discrimination suit filed by a former Carolina Power and Light Company employee who claimed he was unfairly dismissed because of a handicapping condition brought on by depression and stress.

The lawyer for Thomas S. Corbitt Jr. of Yaupon Beach, who filed the suit against CP&L last March, said Tuesday he was not surprised by the ruling and will take the case to the N.C. Court of Appeals.

"Frankly, I feel the judge was flat wrong.

There's no question that we will appeal," said Wilmington attorney William R. Shell.

Corbitt was a CP&L employee for 11 years. He was the senior energy information specialist and director of the visitors center at the Brunswick Nuclear Steam Generating Plant when he was fired Oct. 31, 1991 after two successive unsatisfactory job performance reviews.

The suit claims that in the two years before his termination, Corbitt had grown increasingly depressed and withdrawn, a condition blamed in part on medication prescribed to reduce his blood pressure and because of a severe illness afflicting

his son.

At the same time, the suit says CP&L carried out a major reorganization that decreased Corbitt's salary while increasing his responsibilities. Both factors increased his level of stress and aggravated his depression, the suit says.

Corbitt's suit claims that he had been a legally handicapped person since he was put on the blood pressure medication in August, 1989. As such, the suit claims the company's firing of Corbitt was a violation of the N.C. Handicapped Person's Protection Act.

(See APPEAL, Page 2-A)

Local Hatching Of Rarest Sea Turtle Said First In State

BY DOUG RUTTER

Brunswick County sea turtle watchers witnessed history recently when nearly 50 Kemp's Ridley sea turtles hatched from a nest on Long Beach.

It was the first documented hatching of the rarest of sea turtles on the North Carolina coast, according to state wildlife officials.

"We were very excited when it hatched," said Tina Pritchard, coordinator of the county Turtle Watch program.

"It's wonderful to see loggerheads," she continued. "But after all these years, it was great to see something different."

Local turtle watchers saw 48 Kemp's Ridelys emerge from a nest on the east end Long Beach in late August.

The adult female had been spotted and photographed as she began nesting on June 17, according to the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

The first 36 hatchlings emerged from the nest Aug. 26, and an additional 12 stragglers emerged one or two at a time during the next four days.

Pritchard said the Kemp's Ridley nested at the east end of Long Beach after coming ashore June 17 around 1:30 p.m.

Unlike the larger loggerheads that commonly nest on local beaches, Pritchard said Kemp's Ridelys are green and flatter and nest during the day.

Also, the female turtles usually nest in groups, instead of individually like the loggerheads.

Pritchard said adult Kemp's Ridelys weigh between 80 and 100 pounds, and the babies are flat and round and have beaks.

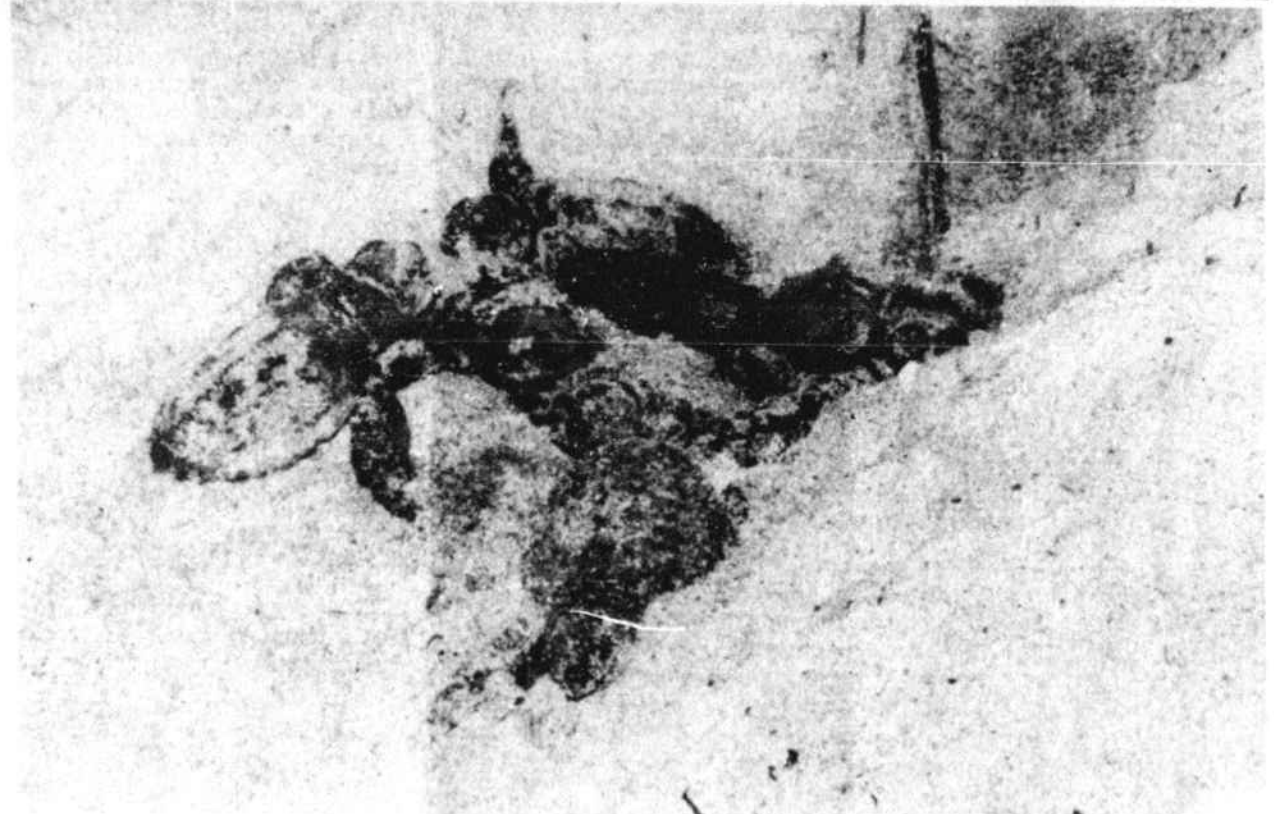
One of the hatchlings at Long Beach died and has been preserved for the N.C. Museum of Natural History, said Therese Ann Conant, sea turtle project coordinator for the state's Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program.

Earlier this summer, she said, 61 Kemp's Ridley sea turtles were hatched at Litchfield Beach in northern South Carolina.

The Litchfield and Long Beach Kemp's Ridley hatchings are the first ever to be documented along the Atlantic coast.

However, immature Kemp's Ridley sea turtles have been sighted along the North Carolina and South Carolina coastline.

(See RARE, Page 2-A)



THESE BABY SEA TURTLES recently hatched from a nest at Long Beach, the first documented Kemp's Ridley hatching in North Carolina.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

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