

# The Pamlico News

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## "Capt'n Bob's Work Called Inadequate"

# Fishermen To Work With Committee To Appraise Boats

Pamlico County boat owners and commercial fishermen did not swallow it hook, line, and sinker—Capt'n Bob's boat appraisals, that is. R. W. Phillips, or Capt'n Bob, was hired by the county to do the appraisal of boats over 32 feet in length. But, according to boat owners, Capt'n Bob did a less than adequate job.

A group of commercial fishermen and boat owners met with Pamlico Commissioners Monday night to point out inadequacies in the appraisal and offer alternatives.

The fishermen contended that the boat appraisal was not fair and equitable and that they should have an opportunity to do a better job by appraising their own boats through a committee made up of three people in the county's fishing industry, a local businessman, and a county commissioner. Pamlico commissioners agreed with the fishermen and reiterated that their goal was to have fair and equitable boat appraisals.

### CONTROVERSY

There has been much controversy surrounding the recent boat appraisals and Capt'n Bob's method of appraisal.

At the last county commissioner meeting, Capt'n Bob explained the method of appraisal. He told commissioners that he had worked, in part, with a committee. Phillips refused to name the committee members, saying that they wished to remain "unknown". He also explained other various data collecting techniques which he employed, such as visiting customhouses in Norfolk and Miami to collect boat information.

### DON'T AGREE

Ross Boyer, Executive Director for the N. C. Fisheries Association, read a prepared statement at Monday night's meeting, clearly stating the position of local fishermen and boat owners. Said Boyer, "As you (commissioners) are aware, boat owners are not in agreement with the methods utilized in determining the revised market values (of the boats)." Boyer contended that the county may be faced with "a situation that may result in substantial decreases in the County's economic viability". Many county boat owners have threatened to move their vessels elsewhere unless the boat values are made more in line with current market value.

Boyer said that there were "numerous blatant discrepancies" on the revised boat values. He presented examples of rotten boats needing major overhaul which were valued very high, boats currently up for sale for considerably less than the appraised value, boats which were appraised with one engine type and in fact have another type of engine, a boat which sank, and a boat which burned over a year ago and was a total loss.

"Another concern we (boat owners) wish to express," Boyer continued, "is the manner in which the tax office has handled this situation. No public notice, that we can determine, was ever given indicating that an appraiser would be traveling around the county for purposes of re-valuing commercial vessels. Additionally, it is quite evident that only a few, if any, vessels were actually boarded to assess the conditions of these vessels."

Boat owners contended that the county should have received from Capt'n Bob a worksheet on each boat with explanation as to how a value was arrived at. The county received no worksheets.

Boyer stated, "As you can clearly see from the list of discrepancies, somebody has 'pencil-whipped' these values." He noted that county boat values jumped from \$1,301,653 in 1979 to \$4,013,650 for a 308% increase. It was estimated that the county realized \$16,270 in 1979 from commercial fishing boats with a tax rate of \$1.25 per \$100. Should the tax rate be cut in half with the countywide re-evaluation, the county revenue from fishing boats (with the new appraisal) would be approximately \$25,065 or a 54% increase.

Said Boyer, "The seafood industry has been hit extremely hard as has agriculture with the present fuel prices. We can't stand a fifty percent increase in taxes too!"

"We hired this guy (Phillips) in good faith," said chairman Robert Paul. "None of us (commissioners) here know how to value boats," he said, "I don't."

Commissioner Don Lee concurred, "We hired somebody we thought knew how to value boats. We need some kind of system (for listing boats) and that's what we were trying to initiate."

"From what Capt'n Bob showed us (the commissioners)," said Commissioner Charles Alexander, "I don't think he made a thorough check on these boats." "I think he did a bad job for the money," Alexander added. The contract price for the appraisal was \$8,000. He said that the county was trying to get commercial boats within reason. Said Alexander, "Farmland is not on the books at true market value but it's within reason."

### IN THE DARK

The boat owners contended that not only were a large part of the boat values unreasonable but they knew nothing of the appraisal and that methods used for appraisals were not good.

Ed Cross, Pamlico Packing Company, told the commissioners, "The fishermen feel like it (the appraisal) was a behind the back thing." The boat owners, said Cross, were not aware that a commercial fishing vessel appraisal was being conducted. "I'm not looking to put my boats on the books for nothing," said Cross, "but I want it equitable." He estimated that the new farmland values are about 60-65% of the true market value. Cross continued, "If you're going to put that (farmland) on there (the books) for 60 to 65%, then I want to put my boats on there for 60-65%."

Forrest Williams, commercial fisherman, noting that Pamlico County's tax base is the second highest in the state, stated, "The rate causes people to lie about what they own. It's (the appraisal) going to have to be done fair," Williams continued, "The fishermen, farmers, and industries are going to have to work together. Everything should be at 100% (market value). We're going to get together at whatever's fair so the county won't lose the revenue."

Although Capt'n Bob was not present at the meeting to defend his position, boat owners questioned his ability to value commercial fishing boats.

Williams said that in his opinion, Capt'n Bob's qualifications to value fishing boats should have been checked into at more depth. Williams called the appraisal "kind of a joke".

Grady Simpson, acting tax supervisor, stated that other appraisers were contacted but they did not wish to do the appraisal. Said Simpson, "Capt'n Bob's the only one that would touch it." According to Simpson, the tax office is attempting to work with everyone concerned through in-

formal hearings with the appraiser. "I've lived in this county all my life," said Simpson, "and I've never seen anything that couldn't be worked out."

Waddell Gaskill, Gaskill Seafood, suggested that it appeared that a large amount of the reappraisal was done using the previous years tax record. "He never went to my dock," said Gaskill, "and I never saw him."

The boat owners wanted a chance to value their own boats interchangeably. County Attorney Bernard Hollowell said, "why can't they (boat owners) do a credible job? Maybe they ought to have a chance to do this." "The commissioners are not obliged to accept the values from the fisheries association," he added.

"The fisheries association," said Cross, "is ready to give good figures, a fair, taxable value comparable to land."

The commissioners liked the idea of setting up a committee to re-value the boats and appointed Jimmy Spencer to serve as their representative.

The boat owners estimated that the appraisal work should take between 3 and 4 weeks.

## Hunt's Re-election Drive Visits Pamlico County



(L to R) Joe Grimsley, Leland Brinson, Governor Jim Hunt and Joe McClees. Leland Brinson and Joe McClees are co-chairmen of the Hunt Re-election Committee in

Pamlico County. Joe Grimsley is chairman of the Hunt State-wide Re-election team.

Saturday, February 16, was Jim Hunt Day in Pamlico County. Governor Hunt arrived at Fred A. Anderson School with several members of his administrative and campaign staffs about 11 a.m. After greeting early arrivals, the Governor went into the school library for a meeting with the Board of Directors of the N. C. Fisheries Association which is headquartered in Bayboro.

Sheriff Leland Brinson and Joe McClees, co-chairmen of the Pamlico County Hunt Reelection Committee, introduced the present incumbents and candidates for County, General Assembly, and judicial offices and the county's reelection committee.

Over 280 people were served a barbecue and fried chicken lunch and Governor Hunt greeted each one going through the buffet line. Young people, members of Fred Fisher's and George Peacock's history classes, were very much in evidence, helping the affair run smoothly.

Governor Hunt prefaced his remarks, noting that "we are a little closer to God in Pamlico County...that we are blessed by geography, natural resources, good community life, water, good land and forests, all the things that used to be taken for granted but that we now look at with great pride." He noted that Pamlico County was the only county in the State to receive the Governor's 1979 Community of Excellence Award.

Governor Hunt stated that he loves the Democratic Party and looks forward to a vigorous primary, with the party coming together after May 6 and "whipping the dickens out

of the Republicans and the N. C. Congressional Club."

Speaking of the accomplishments during his three years as Governor, he included the facts that 6 billion dollars in new investments had come to the State, with 90,000 new jobs, and that he is looking for new job opportunities for Pamlico County. He pointed with pride to the primary reading programs in the State's schools, the smaller classes, the placing of aids and volunteers in these classes and said that he wants this extended into the fourth through sixth grades. N. C. children in grades 1-3 were tested last spring and are at or above the national level in reading and math. He said that he will push for a double digit pay raise for teachers and state employees during this spring's session of the General Assembly.

The reorganized Utilities Commission has kept rate increases under the inflation rate. The new Department of Crime Control, speedy trials law, fair sentencing law, and restitution to victims have been put on the books during his administration.

Governor Hunt promised to go forward in the areas of crime control, education, energy, and employment, and closed with a quote: "A nation is never finished and can't be left standing like the pyramids. It must be built in every generation by believing, caring men and women." He invited the citizens of Pamlico County to join believing, caring men and women." He invited the citizens of Pamlico County to join with him in continuing to build North Carolina.



February 24-28

## Proclaim The Word

February 24-28 (Sunday thru Thursday)  
Place—Bayboro United Methodist Church  
Time: Sunday 11:00 a.m. and 8 p.m. & Monday - Thursday 8 p.m.  
Sponsored by : pamlico County United Methodist Parish



Rev. William A. Ruth

Proclaim the Word is an Evangelistic Movement of United Methodists in the Southeast. This includes 16-18 states from Virginia to Mississippi.

There is evidence that God is moving. Those who study such things are predicting that a spiritual break-through appears possible during the decade of the 1980's. It is suppose to start, they tell us, in the Sun-belt and move northward and westward. The Bishops are eager for our people to be part of what God is doing.

The ministers will be exchanging pulpits and the guest minister will be Rev. William A. Ruth from Graham, N. C.

This is a Pamlico Parish event with all the Proclamation Services being held in Bayboro.

What is "Proclaim the Word"?

—It is not just a series of services.

—It is not just a revival

—It is a simultaneous, high-visibility, coordinated evangelistic thrust in all United Methodist Churches in the Southeastern United States in the spring of 1980.

It features:

—An exchange of pastors with the Conference.

—Extensive planning by local church committees, host ministers, and visiting ministers.

—Coordinated publicity throughout the Southeastern United States, thus, high-visibility.

—Enthusiastic services as a setting for a winning Proclamation of the Word.

—A community survey.

—Visitation Evangelism

—Planning of a four-year program of evangelistic ministry by the Local Church Council

—Follow up

Remember, it takes all kinds to make the world. The apostle Paul knew that. He told members of the church at Corinth that just as a body needs the eyes and the hand, so the church needs prophets, teachers, and administrators.

by Betty Spain

## "Expo '80" Coming

Once again the Neuse Area Development Association and the N. C. Agricultural Extension Service is sponsoring "Expo '80", a craft fair to be held in Morehead City on July 12 and 13. All persons wishing to participate and enter their craft must submit three

items to be screened in Trenton on March 4. Susan Herring, Asst. Home Economics Extension Agent asks all interested craft persons to bring their crafts to be submitted for screening to her at the Agricultural

(Cont'd on Page 3)

### Plan Now To Attend

## Pamlico Junior High Science Fair

February 27, 7:30 p.m.