

BEACHCOMBERS' CALENDAR: Some of us get so swept away with checking out what shells have been eased into shore every day that we find our eyes riveted to the ground as we walk the beach, sometimes forgetting to soak up the glittering sunsets, the glistening breakers, and even the galumphing porpoises. The selection of shells changes daily, just as do the texture and mood of the sea.

In January, for example, the sea pens begin to float in, often be-barnacled and cracked, but always iridescent. In February and March one can go wild picking up those worn down pieces of purple lined clam shells (one of us gathered enough of those to fill up an apothecary jar and finally gained control of herself and began on something else.)

Throughout the spring the yellow and orange tree-like growths wash in. They are very sturdy and work well with dried flowers or glued onto driftwood. In May the scallop shells were in abundance and that same compulsive person mentioned above filled an enormous glass bowl with them before coming to her senses.

There are seemingly fewer shells in summer, but some days you can bring back large hauls of razor clams and jingles (good for making wind chimes, because it's easy to make holes in them with the poke of an ice-pick), and there are always those worn out feet-like oyster shells.

All year the olive shells are scarce around here, but we found more in June than any other time. Did you know that the coquinas, gorgeous tiny things that are frequently seen scrunching their way down into the wet sand, make heavenly broth? Certain days they can be scooped up by the handfuls, rinsed off at home, and boiled up quickly with some seasoning. Don't bother to pick out the meat; it would mean hours with tweezers. Just drain off the juice. Nummy. (Dissenting note: It isn't all that hard to get the meat out, and it tastes good. Signed 2d Editor) On the island of Margarita, off the coast of Venezuela, they call these creatures chipi-chipis, and they serve chipi-chipi soup in the restaurants.

As autumn arrives, so arrive the large horseshoe crabs, the lovely brown and grey striped clam shells, the huge cockles that you can use for baking ladies' luncheon seafood surprises, and, a bit later, you'll find lots of ark shells, occasional ladies' ears (though they turn up off and on all year,) plenty of clam varieties, augers, and moon snails.

And so the year begins again, but hold your head up high as you walk along the more bare stretches of sand in order not to miss your view of sea and sky - helps to avoid a stiff neck, too!

MEET THE OVERMANS: PKS's police chief grew up wanting to be a policeman. One has the feeling that those are the best kind. He really wants to help people, believes deeply in law and order. Howard was born in Raleigh, came to Morehead as a small child, was exposed to police life through his father, who was captain of the Atlantic Beach department. Howard worked there summers during high school, then went off to law enforcement schools, attended every class in police work he could find anywhere, went to work for the Morehead City Police department for eight years before coming to us this fall. Howard's wife, Mitzie (her real name is Georgia), A Morehead City girl, met Howard while she was working in the tax office there, following business training at Hardbarger Business School. They were married in 1970, live in Morehead City. Last February Bryan Kelly Overman was born to them (they're not that Irish, says Mitzie, but they love the name!) Howard is a voracious reader and collects guns; Mitzie belongs to a handicraft club. Howard looks after Pine Knoll Shores residents and their homes with a loyalty and dedication for which we can be most grateful.

Holiday Highlights: The guests collaborated on hor d'ouvres for the Christmas season cocktail party at the Atlantis Lodge this year, and we hear that the selection was terrific. John Collier roasted a pig for a New Year's Day dinner at the Atlantis. There were parties all over the neighborhood, and we can all say truthfully that this is a very gay and wonderful place to be over the holidays. For editor Betty Hammon, one of the highlights of the season was hearing Mary Doll sing "Silent Night" at the carol sing at Cres and Milt Yaecks'. Mary has a beautiful solo voice.

A sad note - Bob Rogers, a fine person, well liked by all his neighbors, died suddenly just after Christmas. Our sympathy to Mabel.

Your editors,

Mary Doll and Betty Hammon

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