

Mayor Ken Hanan: 1985-1991

By Phyllis Makuck

HISTORY STORIES

Reflections of Pine Knoll Shores

*The following is an extract from a series of blog posts at pineknollhistory.blogspot.com, and represents the fourth in a series of posts on the early mayors of Pine Knoll Shores. Most of the information comes from back issues of *The Shoreline* (called *Shore Line at the time*) available on digitalnc.org/newspapers/the-shore-line-pine-knoll-shores-n-c. Pine Knoll Shores History Committee member Susan Phillips provided supplementary information from town records and an internet search.*

After agreeing to serve when Mayor Wayne Cleveland died, Ken Haller resigned in February 1985, so commissioners once again needed to select a mayor to serve the remaining months of Wayne Cleveland's term. On March 12, 1985, they selected Commissioner Ken Hanan. In December 1986, they reappointed Hanan as mayor for a full term. He would serve three full terms.

Hanan's public service in Pine Knoll Shores had begun in November 1983, when he was elected to the Board of Commissioners. He was sworn in early when Commissioner Bill Dixson resigned.

When Ken Hanan became mayor in 1985, he was 63 years old. *The Shore Line* provided the following biographical information:

Ken and his wife, Yola, moved to Pine Knoll Shores from Chatham, N.J., in March of 1982. Hanan retired after 15 years as editor of a trade publication of heavy industry and spent 25 years previous to that in the heavy construction industry. He holds a degree in civil engineering from the University of Michigan. Hanan is a valued member of the Rescue Squad.

Ken and Yola moved to 111 Beechwood Drive in 1982, but the Hanans were not new to the area. In 1972, after reading about Pine Knoll Shores in the *Wall Street Journal*, they made their first visit and bought a lot with the intention of retiring here. Between 1972 and 1982, they made over 30 trips to Bogue Banks.

A June 1982 *Shore Line* profile of new neighbors stated: "Ken plays the piano, likes sailing, canoeing, fishing and gardening. He also had an interest in antique cars." Both Ken and Yola enjoyed square dancing.

The Hanans' spirit of volunteerism became evident the first year they moved to Pine Knoll Shores. Yola, a former first-grade teacher, became a member of the Garden Club, serving a term as corresponding secretary and, later, as a hospitality committee member. She also wrote articles for *The Shore Line*, introducing new neighbors. Ken not only volunteered as an ambulance driver for the rescue squad, but also offered his civil engineering and heavy construction background to help assess the town's roads.

Before becoming mayor, Ken Hanan served as commissioner of public works and recommended and oversaw the resurfacing of streets and installation of "high-intensity" streetlights. No public safety problem was too small. When he realized

the steps leading up to town hall got slippery when wet, he experimented with grit in paint to provide traction and then decided to use skid-resistant tape.

He also took on big issues as a commissioner that he later pursued as mayor. For example, in 1984, he became involved in renewed efforts for a third bridge between Bogue Banks and Morehead City. He objected to a proposal that would have the bridge enter the island near McGinnis Point, but recognizing the safety benefits of having a third bridge, opted for a plan that would have the bridge reach the island west of Salter Path in Indian Beach—a plan the state approved in 1985. However, neither bridge proposal was destined to succeed.



Town Clerk Corrine Geer shakes hands with newly sworn-in Mayor Ken Hanan. —Photos by Susan Phillips from framed photos at town hall

Another nagging issue Hanan dealt with both as commissioner and later throughout all his years as mayor was the problem of street flooding in eastern Pine Knoll Shores. Unfortunately, a solution was as elusive as the third bridge. Mayor Hanan went to Raleigh to discuss drainage issues with the Department of Transportation, contacted CAMA, and hired Von Oesen & Associates from Wilmington to consider possible solutions. Two favored recommendations included limiting impervious surface maximums to 25% and constructing swales.

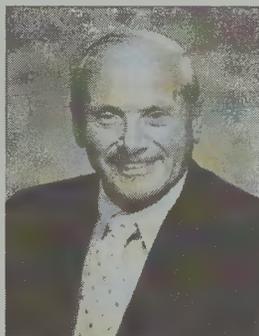
Determined to solve the flooding problem in his last term as mayor, Hanan signed off on a Von Oesen drainage plan, even though Pine Knoll Association (PKA) opposed it. Finally, in response to continued opposition to swales and to fears drainage would damage canal and sound water quality, Mayor Hanan authorized a local study group. The study group opposed swales and drainage into the canal and, instead, proposed "storm water be piped under Salter Path Road onto oceanfront dunes." He then authorized a new Von Oesen study, which proposed also using a water canon for areas the pipe could not drain. It would shoot water to the ocean. PIKSCO homeowners association opposed the oceanfront pipe and cannon proposals. In the end, Mayor Hanan could implement nothing to prevent streets from flooding.

As a leader, Hanan seemed willing to risk action and equally willing to reverse direction if it failed. He supported spraying Orthane to control the "tussock" moths infesting hardwoods throughout town. However, after spending over \$7,000 on spraying with minimal success since it rained heavily immediately after the town's first spraying effort, Mayor Hanan recommended the problem be left in the hands of homeowners.

In April 1985, he made a premature announcement of a U.S. Post Office plan for "contract postal service in Pine Knoll Shores." It entailed "a small branch of the Morehead City Post Office" to be located in Pine Knoll Shores. Neither the town's rural route number nor the 28557 ZIP Code would change, but Mayor Hanan thought space in a local "store" could be rented out for local postal boxes. The hope was that "store" would be in the new town center, which, after much opposition, had finally been approved in Ken Haller's last days as mayor. Neither the town's shopping center nor its branch post office would ever become a reality.

However, over four years later, in January 1990, Mayor Hanan announced a plan for a new post office in Atlantic Beach. Pine Knoll Shores was to switch to the new

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