

This year there have been more complaints to the Harbormaster than ever before. Something should be done to reverse this trend. You can help. If you are running a boat, look back sometimes to see what is happening in your wake. You may be causing more than you think. Those of you who wish to report an offending boat need only to take the boat number and call the Harbormaster at 247-4074. He will follow up on it.

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BEACH TREATS

One of the things that make the summer nice is the presence of extended family members on the beach. Some of the grandchildren who come back year after year have become very familiar to us and it's fun to see how they have grown over the winter. Just watching them enjoy the waves and the sand reinforces our contentment with life here in Pine Knoll Shores.

The thing about the beach is that it is never the same two days in a row! Some days have seen high tides which smooth the beach almost to the dune. Other days there is a ridge to negotiate before you reach the water. The ghost crabs are out in greater number than ever. There are big holes where they live and small holes where they have foraged for food just about everywhere.

Some mornings there are a dozen turrets that Polly Collins has made for us, still standing bravely before the waves. Sometimes there is an elaborate castle, replete with out buildings. When we saw the sun bather in her bikini, and the next day a lobster, a porpoise and a fish sculptured in the sand we were determined to find the artist. Turns out he is the 8 year-old grandson of Millie and Frank Herbst. His name is Johnny McDermott and he was visiting here from Kennesaw, Georgia! Thank you, Johnny! [Johnny had another distinction. He was the first victim of man-of-war sting this year. So there is that, too].

One morning, as we walked the beach, we came upon a huge sculpture rising out of the sand in front of the Wright cottage. It was at least five feet at its widest point and rose a foot and a half out of the sand. The protruding eyes made it immediately recognizable as a ghost crab. We set about identifying the sculptor. [It didn't take long once Dick Perkins got on the job]!

Turns out we have a visiting artist staying in the Wright cottage for a couple of weeks. His name is Trip Park and he's a journalism student at UNC in Chapel Hill. He is on vacation now with his family from Ithaca, New York. Trip's main interest is editorial cartoons and he showed us a couple of them he has prepared for the Daily Tarheel, the university paper. This summer he interned at the Chapel Hill Newspaper and worked with their editorial cartoonist.

Trip told us he has been doing sand sculptures since he was a little kid. He started by making sketches in the sand. For this one, he said, he didn't need a model. He set about the task just above the high water mark and, although it was threatened once by high water he was able to keep it off with a makeshift bulkhead. Two hours later it was done!

He finds his damp sand about six inches below the surface and molds his figure about twice as high as the finished product because it settles so much. He would like to have raised up the claws as the ghost crab does so often but, of course, the sand is not solid enough to stand unsupported. Each joint of the legs was outlined with black spray paint and this is one of the features that made it look so real. The open mouth helped, too. Hope you saw it before the kids and the waves did it in!

We look forward to seeing more of Trip's work, both on the beach and in the newspapers. Many thanks to him and his charming family who made us welcome.

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