

## Meet the Staff

By Bill White

The workings of municipal government were not a complete mystery to Town Administrator Betty Jean Carr when she joined the Pine Knoll Shores administrative staff in 1988 as a part-time receptionist at Town Hall.

For ten years before that she had served as executive director of the Clinton, N.C. Chamber of Commerce, a position in which she was often called upon to interact with government officials and agencies.

But it didn't take Mrs. Carr long to realize there was a distinct difference between the atmosphere in which municipal affairs were conducted in Clinton as opposed to Pine Knoll Shores, and that the difference was principally a matter of size. There was a small town flavor in Clinton, but the community is substantially larger than Pine Knoll Shores. The size difference, Mrs. Carr notes, magnifies the small town flavor many times over.

In Pine Knoll Shores, she found, virtually everyone knew everyone else and visitors to Town Hall were almost universally greeted with smiles and a personal word of greeting, not with a more business-like "May I help you?" or some other standard phrase.

And that's just the way Betty Jean likes it. A people person, she bubbles with goodwill and enthusiasm. When in motion, her friendly patter keeps pace with her rapid progress toward her next goal. More often than not her "May I help you?" is followed by "Honey" rather than a more formal form of address.

Mrs. Carr has been dealing with people all her life. Before joining the Clinton Chamber of Commerce she was a customer service representative for Carolina Telephone, forerunner of Sprint. And before taking up her municipal duties, she worked for a time as a real estate agent in Pine Knoll Shores.

Friends are important to Betty Jean, and family even more so. It was family ties that brought her here. The transition from Clinton to the shore began in the mid-80's when the health of her late husband, Pete, began to decline. Since Pete was facing retirement from his



**Betty Carr**

long-time role as an educator in Clinton, Mrs. Carr decided she would retire too. Pete liked to fish, so they elected to head for the ocean, zeroing in on Bogue Banks because Pete's sister, "Captain" Fannie Christian, and her husband Bill ran a marina there.

After touring the Bogue Banks communities with the Christians, the Carrs cast their lot with Pine Knoll Shores, "the highest point on the island". They moved into a condo at McGinnis Point in 1986.

Two years later, after her brief fling in real estate and while Betty Jean was taking her daily constitutional, a car pulled up and her predecessor as town clerk, Corinne Geer, politely inquired as to whether Mrs. Carr would be interested in a part-time job at Town Hall.

Mrs. Carr allowed as how she would be interested, and her on-the-job training for her present position began. She moved up from part-time receptionist to deputy town clerk and then, in 1995 upon the retirement of Mrs. Geer, Betty Jean became the fourth town clerk in the history of Pine Knoll Shores. Three years ago Mrs. Carr assumed the new position of town administrator.

Does Mrs. Carr have hobbies? She used to sing, but hasn't much time for that anymore. Her hobbies are her work and her children. She has a special daughter, Joanna, who is at the root of one of Betty Jean's greatest attributes, compassion.

Following in the footsteps of her late husband, who championed programs for special needs children in the Clinton school system, Betty Jean now serves on the board of the Carteret County Area Transportation System (CCATS) which provides mobility for those with special needs.

Betty Jean's son, Peter Michael Carr, an advertising copywriter, is also special to her. He's a "Real Pete", she muses. Although his father was "Pete" to everyone who knew him, his real name was Joseph Bryan Carr. For Betty Jean, having a "Real Pete" reinforces the memory of the "Pete" who has gone before.

The way Betty Jean came by her given name is a story in itself. Betty is not a diminutive for Elizabeth, as is often the case. Although others in her family bear family names, Betty Jean is an exception. Seems her mother, while expecting, passed part of the time reading a novel in which the heroine was named Betty Jean. Thoroughly taken with the story, her mother decreed that if the baby was a girl she would be named Betty Jean. And that was the way it was.

The name of the novel didn't stick with Betty Jean. But the name of the heroine sure has.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a series of background sketches on town employees who keep the Town of Pine Knoll Shores humming.*

## Aquarium

Continued from page 1

woodshop facility is almost complete, and foundations are being poured for the new maintenance building, which will house mechanical, electrical, and life-support components. Meanwhile, subcontractors involved in the project are busy developing fiberglass aquariums and backgrounds, while graphic designers and interpretive writers are working with the staff to create dazzling and educational graphic displays. The project remains on schedule for completion in spring 2006. Because of construction and heavy equipment, the site and surrounding property are closed to visitors. Check back here for frequent updates.

The Aquarium's fall/winter calendar of events is shaping up. Canoe trips, beach walks, river cruises, collecting trips and island jaunts are all on the agenda. The annual Surf Fishing Workshop weekend is set for Oct. 15-17, and the popular Sea Squirts series for youngsters is scheduled through December. We'll be cooking again this fall and winter with our Guest Chef's Succulent Seafood series. This favorite winter program features area chefs who demonstrate their culinary seafood skills, and participants get to sample the finished fare.

Also don't forget that the Aquarium's annual Underwater Photography Competition for amateur and non-professional photographers is under way. Cash prizes are awarded in three categories, and all winning photos will be published in the Summer 2005 edition of "Aquarium News," the magazine of the North Carolina Aquarium Society. For complete contest rules and entry application, or for more information about the Aquarium and its programs, visit [www.ncaquariums.com](http://www.ncaquariums.com).

## Around Town

By Bob Ruggiero

Sharon Tjelmeland and Marine first Lt. Marcello Castro tied the wedding knot on the Ocean Park "sittem" recently. Sharon had always dreamed of a beach wedding. Her dream came true when new hubby received orders to go to Afghanistan on August 1. Hasty plans ruled out a church ceremony, so Sharon suggested the sittem as a suitable site for nuptials. The happy couple are family friends of residents Vicki and Bud Daniels. And we thought the sittem was only for staring at the ocean.

Local residents Bill and Lois Strube's granddaughter Katie Strube competed August 6 through 8 at the Junior Olympic competition held in Lincoln, Nebraska. Katie received a third place medal in the Figure Skating event at the United States Artistic Roller Skating trials. Way to go Katie and big congrats to grandparents Bill and Lois.

Long time residents Walt and Elsa Wentzel celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary this summer. Happy sixtieth and many more of the same.

The ROMEO'S are coming! No It's not another HBO program. The ROMEO stands for "Retired old men eating out" The group has no officers, no dues, and no bylaws.

This is a club that might even accept me as a member! They are planning an October 4 meeting at the Hancock Lodge on the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point. For details call George Cribb at 637-6932. Last months meeting at the Sanitary Restaurant was attended by 105 members.

## The Shoreline

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## Bulkhead Inspection Reveals Deterioration

The Town's Inspection Department has conducted an inspection of the Pine Knoll Waterway. The inspection revealed numerous deteriorated docks and bulkheads. Deteriorated bulkheads cause soil to erode into the canal. This erosion will fill the channel and prevent the safe passage of boat traffic. Property owners who have deteriorated docks and bulkheads will be required to make the necessary repairs.

Coastal Management permits for repairs must be obtained from the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management in Morehead City. You may contact them at (252) 808-2808. Local permits must be obtained through Pine Knoll Shores Inspections Department at Town Hall prior to commencing work.