

CERTS Stands Ready to Serve

By Tom Tempel

Citizens in Pine Knoll Shores are well known for their volunteerism in our town and Carteret County. A relatively new group of volunteers in PKS is the Community Emergency Response Team or CERT. The purpose of CERT is to provide men and women volunteers to help the PKS police or emergency services director when additional filler personnel are needed following any emergency situation.

The Bogue Banks (PKS) CERT is sponsored and supported by our town police. While the team was originally organized for Bogue Banks, all members live in our town and our primary focus is PKS. Ted Lindblad was the first team leader and he is now providing much appreciated oversight. Basic training is provided by the police and special classes are provided by emergency personnel. Lt. Lee Rice and Sgt. Jim Parks are our primary police instructors. Chief Joey Culpepper and Emergency Services Director Bill Mathias are strong supporters. Each CERT member must complete 21 hours of basic emergency management training which includes CPR, fire control, anti-terrorism and first aid. Additional certification classes are available in AED (automatic external defibrillator), traffic control, radio communication, emergency shelter support, downed power lines and chainsaw safety. Each member is covered by insurance and can only perform emergency duties in areas where they are certified. Each CERT member is issued a special identification card and a pack of emergency equipment and supplies. The PKS CERT has radios for communication with each other and emergency personnel during deployments.

The CERT program was developed as part of the national homeland security process and is a component of the national and state Citizens Corps of Volunteers who volunteer time after storms or disasters. It's a help-your-neighbor and town effort. It was first started in California to aid emergency services efforts after earthquakes and fires. It is a state program in North Carolina and part of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and

the local Citizens Corps. Dora Irving of Newport is our county representative to the state program. The State and County Emergency Services Program has supported and funded our CERT program and our emergency equipment trailer as they have the other county CERT programs.

The PKS CERT has been called to duty twice in the past year. The first deployment came after a hurricane in the fall of 2005. The PKS police needed extra personnel to control traffic at the east and west ends of route 58 in PKS. One police officer and one CERT volunteer were placed at each end of town to monitor and control traffic. This allowed police officers to focus on other important police business. The second deployment was to help police with overwhelming traffic on the first two days after the renovated N.C. Aquarium at PKS opened in May of this year. In both cases CERT provided filler personnel who helped expand the police effort. Martha and Clark Edwards from PKS CERT helped at a county emergency shelter after a storm in 2005.

CERT never self-deploys. It does so only after a call from town officials. Currently we have 25 CERT members. Tom Tempel is the current citizen leader, Sue McKeand is secretary, Betsy McGibbon is director of communication, and Bill Steenland, Richard Seale and Clark Edwards are the emergency trailer committee. The trailer contains emergency equipment and supplies, traffic control cones, chainsaw, road clearing tools, hand tools, generator and lighting system. Many of the tools were donated by Blanche Yancey when she moved to Morehead City.

The following are CERT members in addition to those listed above: Bill Ashland, Irene Beattie, John and Sylvia Brodman, Doug Browne, Maureen Danehy, Barbara Fix, Kathy Foy, Tom King, John and Jean Macheca, Kenny McGibbon, Jake Rife, Dorothy Steenland, Charlie and Patti Swetz and Frank Ward. Larry and Beth LaBrie were out of town for the Basic Training and will take the next class. If you are interested in joining or learning more, talk to one of the current members or call Tom at 247-9414.

North Carolina Aquarium Brews Up Aquatic Education

By Julie Powers

No, it's not Harry Potter. Real life wonder is brewing in educational programs at the North Carolina Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores for visitors of all ages.

If your little one likes to learn about nature, the Aquarium offers "Sea Wizards" for children ages 6-8, and "Sea Squirts" for children ages 4-5.

The weekly hands-on, interactive programs introduce children to the marvels of aquatic life. Each program features lessons based on a different animal theme, a craft and a game. Many programs also include live animals.

"It encourages children to explore and get excited about marine environments in their neighborhoods," said Laurie Streble, aquarium special activities instructor. "They learn details about how these animals live, and that gives them the knowledge and power to help the environment." Animal topics include sea turtles, dolphins, sharks, snakes, frogs, stringrays and other animals native to North Carolina waters.

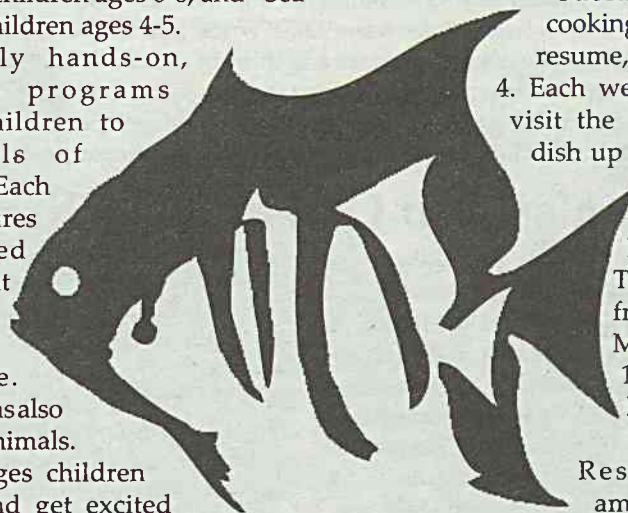
The aquarium offers "Sea Squirts" every Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., and "Sea Wizards" from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Each class is \$8 per child in addition to paid admission. Parents may observe the class at no charge other than admission. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Special arrangements can be made for Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops, school groups and other children's groups.

Additionally, the aquarium will offer a three-day "Holiday Elf Adventure Camp" Dec. 27-29, for children in grades 2-3. The camp includes behind-the-scenes tours, games, crafts, discovery labs and more. Each camp is \$100 per child and has limited space.

"We wanted to offer a fun, active learning experience to keep students thinking and exploring during their holiday break," said Wayne Justice, special activities coordinator.

After the holidays, the popular "Succulent Seafood" cooking workshop will resume, beginning Jan. 4. Each week, local chefs visit the aquarium and dish up tips on how to select and prepare fresh local seafood. This winter, chefs from the Channel Marker, Floyd's 1921 Restaurant, Island Grill and William's Restaurant are among the guest chefs sharing their expertise. Other local restaurants and chefs interested in participating should contact the aquarium.

Throughout the season, the Aquarium continues to offer "Behind-the-Scenes Tours" on Fridays and Saturdays, and "Breakfast with the Rays" on Saturdays. For more information about these and other programs, call 247-4003 or see the website, www.ncaquariums.com.



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