

Once Again, The Season Is Upon Us

BY TERRY POPE

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water, the 1985 hurricane season is upon us once again.

This week, June 9-15, has been declared Hurricane Awareness Week in North Carolina by Gov. Jim Martin. The six-month hurricane season actually began June 1, but what will the 1985 hurricane season bring?

"Scientists still have no way of telling how active the coming hurricane season will be," said Robert Muller, meteorologist-in-charge with the National Weather Service Forecast Office at the Raleigh-Durham Airport. "But each year the potential for loss of life and property destruction increases because of the rapid development of the coastal areas of North Carolina."

For Brunswick County residents, the 1985 hurricane season may have added importance. It was less than a year ago, September 13, 1984, when Hurricane Diana slammed into the Brunswick coast. The storm caused an estimated \$66 million in damage, but the effects could have been much worse, Muller said.

"For many, Diana was their first and only hurricane experience," Muller said. "Prior to Diana, it had been 24 years since the last hurricane crossed the North Carolina shores. Those who experienced Hurricane

Diana, a relatively weak hurricane, may believe they can survive the worst conditions any future hurricane may bring. That could be a tragic mistake."

Experiencing a mild hurricane like Diana actually helped Brunswick County emergency officials prepare for future disasters, said Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan. Although emergency officials had undergone extensive planning for a hurricane, it took a real experience to point out areas for improvement, Logan said.

One of the largest problems during the Hurricane Diana crisis last year was the decision by several beach towns to allow residents back on the island before a county evacuation notice had been lifted, Logan said.

"I think we've learned that we're going to have to abide by one decision," Logan said, "whether it be on the local, county or state level. The secret to success is in working together, somewhere down the line."

When residents were allowed back on the beaches, the roads quickly fill with sightseers and property owners, Logan said. Some residents even refused to leave their homes following the second evacuation.

"People get tired of hearing evacuation, evacuation," Logan said. "Once it's issued, it ought to

stay in effect until the whole thing is over."

During the eye of Hurricane Diana, the Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad crossed over to Holden Beach to pick up a couple that had refused to leave their home during a second evacuation notice. The couple became frightened and asked to be taken off the island to a shelter.

"It was a risk that was unnecessary to the rescue squad," Logan said. "We didn't know how long the eye would last. If the people had listened to and obeyed the evacuation procedure, it wouldn't have been necessary."

Logan's budget request from county commissioners for the 1985-86 fiscal year is seeking funds that would help purchase needed equipment in the event of another hurricane. During Diana, it was discovered the schools, which are used as evacuation shelters, have no electrical hook-ups to accommodate generators, there are no antennas at the schools for the HAM radio operators and the emergency operation center established at the sheriff's department was too small.

Logan is requesting \$11,000 to provide electrical hook-ups for generators at each of the 11 schools and \$5,000 for radio antennas for each of the schools. During Diana, the

HAM radio operators had to remain in their vehicles outside the shelters to man their radios. The Brunswick County Health Department is also requesting \$1,100 in emergency medical supply kits, one to be placed at each school, or emergency shelter.

"The shelters are not Holiday Inns or Hiltons," Logan said. "They're just exactly what they say. They're a place to go to get out of the weather if you don't have anywhere else to go."

The need for faster assistance from the American Red Cross at the shelters prompted Brunswick County officials to begin searching for their own Red Cross chapter after the hurricane. Although work has begun in that direction, a Brunswick County chapter is still at least six months away, Logan said.

"I understand New Hanover County wants us to be a branch, but the people here want their own chapter," he added. "We've tried that twice and it just didn't work. We're always the last to receive any aid."

"I can't blame New Hanover County for looking out for their people first," he said. "There's just not enough volunteers to go around."

Red Cross volunteers will be needed if the county's old charter is revived. Logan said the county already has an inactive Red Cross charter. Anyone wishing to volunteer should

contact Logan's office.

The Brunswick County schools also adopted a post-Diana policy for operating the schools as shelters in the event of another hurricane. Both principals and custodians will be stationed at the schools if another hurricane strikes.

"Basically, the evacuation plan is the same," Logan said. "What we are seeking are such things as generator hook-ups to the schools—things you just overlook and don't realize until the time comes."

"The roads we thought would flood first did flood first," he added. "Of course we didn't get the storm surge we had anticipated. If we had gotten the storm surge, I'm sure it would have been a different kind of hurricane."

In the future, a larger emergency operations center will be needed, Logan said, but if another hurricane strikes this season the officials will gather once again in the sheriff's department, where the county communications system and telephone outlets are located.

Unexpected guests could include hurricanes Ana, Bob, Claudette, Danny, Elena, Fabian, Gloria, Henri, Isabel, Juan, Kate, Larry, Mindy, Nicholas, Odette, Peter, Rose, Sam, Teresa, Victor or Wanda.

Notary Course To Be Offered

A course for persons seeking appointments as notaries will be offered by Brunswick Technical College June 24-25 in the courthouse at the government complex in Bolivia.

The course meets from 7-10 each night. Registration fee is \$10 and purchase of a textbook is required.

Before being appointed a notary, applicants must complete a course of instruction approved by the secretary of state as well as provide evidence of good character and fitness from one elected state official.

Correction

In last week's Under the Sun feature, a statement attributed to a Shallotte Middle School librarian was in error.

The article titled, "Special Class Achieved Goals In '84-85 School Year," commented on student David Rhodes' physical appearance before he learned to read. David's stepmother said the statement describing her son's appearance before he learned to read was not true.

David, a seventh-grader in the school's exceptional children's class, has always dressed neat and has always received haircuts when needed, she said.



STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

Volunteers Recognized

Brunswick County community schools coordinator Linden Matthews-Boone receives a free blood pressure check from Virginia Parnell of Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad. The blood pressure check was a part of the Brunswick County Volunteer Reception program at the Brunswick County Government Complex in Bolivia Sunday. Steve Beverly, news director of WWAY-TV 3 in Wilmington, was guest speaker at the reception coordinated by Ouida Hewett, Brunswick County Voluntary Action Coordinator.

Wreck Kills Leland Woman

A 28-year-old Leland woman was killed early Saturday morning after her car skidded out of control and struck a truck on U.S. 17 about 4.4 miles south of Bolivia, the State Highway Patrol reported.

Andrea Doria Robinson, of Leland, was killed when her 1974 Volkswagen ran off the right shoulder while rounding a curve, traveled out of control and struck a truck driven by Owen William DuBoise, 39, of Wilmington, State Trooper B.D. Barnhardt reported.

According to Barnhardt's report, Ms. Robinson was traveling at a speed too fast to negotiate a curve safely when her car ran off the highway. The Volkswagen traveled back onto the highway sideways, crossed the center line and into the

path of DuBoise's 1974 Chevrolet truck.

No charges were filed in the accident, but Trooper Barnhardt indicated alcohol was involved. Ms. Robinson was taken to the Brunswick Hospital in Supply.

Both DuBoise and a passenger in his truck, Kathy DuBoise, 35, of Leland, received minor injuries and were taken to the Brunswick Hospital for treatment.

The accident occurred around 2:10 a.m.

The fatality raises the highway death toll for Brunswick County to four for the year, reported Highway Patrol spokesperson Ruby Oakley. Four highway deaths were reported at the end of June last year, she said.

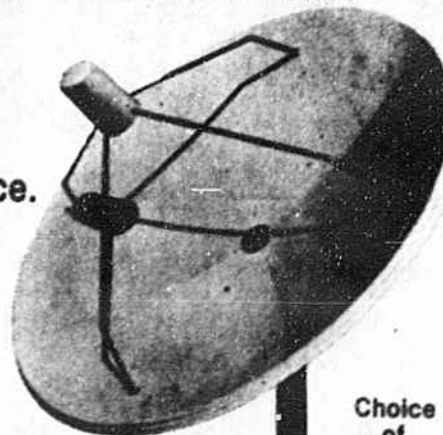
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