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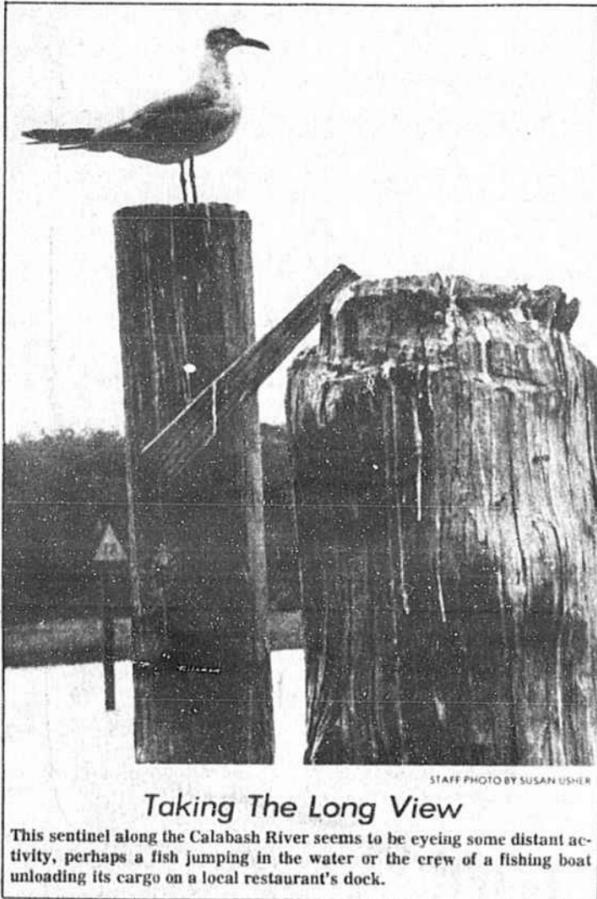
BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Taking The Long View

This sentinel along the Calabash River seems to be eyeing some distant activity, perhaps a fish jumping in the water or the crew of a fishing boat unloading its cargo on a local restaurant's dock.

Bridges Hit Again; Traffic Uninterrupted

BY BILL MCGOWAN

An errant barge Monday afternoon left the Sunset Beach bridge "skint and bent" and broke three fenders on the Ocean Isle Beach bridge, but did not cause enough damage to either structure to interrupt water or land traffic.

The accident is the third such mishap since January when the Sunset Beach bridge was hit by a barge and put out of commission for several days.

Sunset Bridgetender Howard Holden and Ocean Isle Bridgetender William Stevenson each said a barge pulled by the tugboat "Mike R" of Morgan City, La., was swinging from side to side in the Intracoastal Waterway before it hit their respective bridges at 4:58 p.m. and 6 p.m. Both men said the barge looked as if it was being blown by the wind.

Normal bridge operations resumed immediately following the incidents. Bridge maintenance Supervisor Robert Cox was scheduled to view the damage Tuesday firsthand.

According to Holden, damage at Sunset Beach was limited to a couple of broken pilings and scrapes and dents on the pontoon bridge's barge. No holes in the barge were created by the impact. "All I can see is it's skint and bent," he said.

"I seen her ("Mike R") coming down the canal yonder," Holden said Monday night as he opened the bridge for a passing motorboat. "The barge was swinging from side to side. It was good size."

Holden said he noticed the erratic movement of the barge, which was traveling north, when he first began to open the bridge for the ap-

proaching tug.

"The stern of his barge swung over and hit the corner there," Holden pointed at the side of the bridge's barge which faces water traffic when the bridge is in the open position. He pointed out a heavy steel frame which is used to transfer the bridge from one location to another. The steel was dented and paint was peeled where "Mike R's" barge allegedly scraped along the bridge after impact. The bridge's fender system went unscathed, he said.

Damages were minimal also at Ocean Isle Beach. Contacted by telephone Monday night at 10 p.m., Stevenson said he was just preparing to report the incident at his bridge. While no supervisors or engineers had checked the damage, Stevenson said, he added that a state bridge inspector was on the bridge at the time of the accident.

"What did the inspector say (about the incident)?" The Beacon questioned.

"He didn't say anything," Stevenson said. "He just started running like everyone else."

Holden said he checked the damage immediately following the accident and determined he could close the bridge and let land traffic across. He then contacted the Coast Guard because he was unable to reach the tug by radio. The Coast Guard then apprised the tug of the situation.

"Mike R", Holden said, is owned by Circle R Marina in Morgan City, La., home port for the vessel.

He added that the barge was carrying "a large showboat with an old paddle wheel."

Weather Promising For Fourth

Vacationers can expect good weather for their Fourth of July holiday. Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady said Monday.

"All in all it's shaping up to be a nice week for the Fourth of July," he said, with near normal temperatures and somewhat above normal precipitation in the offing.

Temperatures should average about 70 degrees at night, reaching into the upper 80s during the daytime, with about one inch of rain. On the average, the area should receive at least three-quarters inch

of rain every five days this time of year, Canady said.

During the period June 25-30, the area received about .86 inch of rain, slightly above normal.

Temperatures reached their maximum at 97 degrees, recorded on both the 25th and 28th. The minimum low of 54 degrees occurred the morning of the 28th.

A daily average high of 92 degrees combined with a daily average low of 66 degrees for an average daily temperature of 79 degrees for the period, which Canady said is about normal.

Witness Recalls How Fights Turned Into Fatal Shooting

BY TERRY POPE

A Brunswick County District Court judge Monday ruled probable cause existed against a Supply man charged with the first-degree murder of his brother-in-law.

Gary A. Reaves, 28, of Route 2, Supply, was charged June 18 with first-degree murder following the shooting death of Mark A. Tolliver, 33, also of Route 2, Supply. The Brunswick County Grand Jury must now decide if enough evidence exists to indict Reaves on first-degree murder charges before handing the case over to Superior Court.

At a probable cause hearing Monday, Glen Jenkins, 44, of Route 2, Supply, testified for nearly an hour, telling the court and Judge D. Jack Hooks Jr. what happened on the evening of the fatal shooting. Jenkins, who was a witness to the shooting, said that Reaves and Tolliver had been fighting that afternoon on at least three occasions. Jenkins said he has known the two men for about six months.

Following the last fight at the Tolliver residence, Jenkins said, Reaves walked home and returned with a pistol, where he shot through the door of the Tolliver residence five times.

Tolliver was struck in the chest, Jenkins said. After finding Tolliver lying on the hallway floor, attempts to revive him were unsuccessful, Jenkins said, and he called the

Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad.

Jenkins answered questions from both Assistant District Attorney Wanda Bryant and defense attorney Roy Trest of Shallotte for nearly an hour in court Monday. No other witnesses were called to testify.

According to Jenkins' testimony, Reaves stopped by the Tolliver residence at approximately 4:30 p.m. the evening of the incident, to get Jenkins and Tolliver to look at his new van he had just purchased. After driving to Reaves' home, a quarter-mile from the Tolliver residence, the three men got into Reaves' new van and drove to Shallotte, Jenkins said.

Jenkins said he had been with Tolliver since about 10 a.m. that morning. Tolliver had drunk anywhere from six to eight beers and also stopped in Shallotte to get a fifth of liquor before heading back to Supply, he said. Along the way, Tolliver mixed himself a drink in the van and also mixed a second drink, "but I didn't ever see Gary drink anything," he added.

While driving to Supply, Reaves and Tolliver got into an argument, Jenkins said. On two occasions, Reaves stopped the van and the two got out and began fighting in the road, he said.

Jenkins said he was able to break up the first fight by "hollering that someone was going to call the police. I finally got it to break up and they both got back into the truck." Fifty yards later, Reaves stopped the van

again and another fight broke out in the road.

"Gary said, 'You hurt me when you hit me,'" Jenkins recalled, "and Mark said, 'Well, I didn't hit you as hard as I could have or hurt you as bad as I could have.' Mark being so much bigger than Gary, he didn't have a chance," Jenkins said.

After the second fight broke up, the three traveled back to the Tolliver residence where Jenkins took Mark's purchases inside. Upon returning outside, Jenkins said, he saw that "Mark had Gary laid out on the seat of the van and he was punching Gary."

At the same time, Reaves had a wooden mallet he was using to try to hit Tolliver in the head. When that fight finally broke up, Jenkins said, Reaves told Tolliver, "I'm going to get you for this. You hurt me."

Tolliver then picked up a board and struck Reaves' van, cracking the windshield, Jenkins said. Reaves was then at the end of the driveway, had dropped the wooden mallet and was heading toward his house across a field. "I don't even know if he even saw it (windshield) get broken," Jenkins added.

Inside the house, Jenkins helped Tolliver stop the bleeding from a gash on his forehead and also called Charlie Johnson, a nearby resident and friend of the two men, to come over and try to get the men to calm down.

Several minutes later, a car horn

was heard outside and Jenkins said Tolliver stated, "Well, that's Ms. Linda (Reaves wife). She must be coming by to give me hell for fighting with Gary."

As Jenkins walked toward the door, he "looked back and noticed that Mark had a rifle in his hand." After convincing Tolliver to put the rifle down on a counter Jenkins stepped outside on the porch.

"Gary got out of the car," Jenkins said. "He had a pistol in his right hand."

As Reaves walked up to the porch, Jenkins said he was still yelling at him, "trying to get his attention to get this thing stopped."

Jenkins said he could see Tolliver's shirt in the glass door and "Gary pulled the pistol up in a two-handed position, pointed it toward the door and pulled the trigger," the first shot breaking the glass, he testified.

Four more shots were fired before Reaves left the porch and began "wandering around, kind of aimlessly, but still holding onto the pistol," Jenkins said.

After the rescue squad arrived, Reaves approached Jenkins and asked, "How bad is he hurt?" Attempts to revive Tolliver were also unsuccessful by the rescue squad personnel.

Following a lunch break in court Monday, Judge Hooks ruled probable cause existed for first-degree murder. Reaves is out on bond of \$200,000.

Rules Set On Fire And Rescue Funding

BY SUSAN USHER

Brunswick County commissioners laid out the ground rules Monday night that will govern distribution of county funds to fire and rescue departments during the year starting July 1.

Each fire or rescue department "recognized" by the county will receive a lump sum appropriation of \$10,000, to be distributed quarterly to the unit's treasurer.

Additionally, each of the five electoral districts will receive \$50,000 in discretionary funds to be used to meet emergency needs or to save toward long-range capital purchases.

Departments can gain recognition in one of two ways: Existing departments qualify if they are incorporated and are certified by the state.

Departments not state-certified by July 1 but are incorporated during the budget year can receive the lump sum. To receive the \$10,000 the following year, however, they must attain state certification within their first budget year.

However, commissioners stressed they weren't guaranteeing county appropriations beyond the current year, adding that how the monies are used and how well the district committees work will influence future decisions.

"If these people can't work together for the same benefits and end result," warned Chairman Chris Chappell, "then we don't need this program."

Before checks are written all departments must submit: 1) a proposed budget before the first quarterly payment is rendered; and 2) before each subsequent quarter, a budget statement showing how all departmental funds, not just the county contribution, have been spent.

"When you ask for a budget, at least you know they'll have one," noted Finance Director Wallace Harding.

Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan said he has trouble getting the quarterly reports now required, holding some checks as much as two months. But he said most officers do "the best they can" in handling departmental budgets and paperwork.

The county can also conduct audits

if deemed necessary, a move Poole favored.

Finance Director Wallace Harding explained the controls are needed to document that public monies have been spent for public purposes. Including the entire departmental budget gives the county an overall view of the departments' operating condition and their needs, he said. The board said it had no intentions of penalizing departments that had money in savings, but that that could be considered in determining the "emergency" nature of a funding request to the district committee.

Control of the \$50,000 in district funds will remain with the county, but each district will accrue interest on its allocation. Any portion not spent at the end of the year, and the interest, can be carried over to the following year. Commissioner Jim Poole suggested interest accrual might encourage the departments to

save toward major purchases and use the funds wisely.

Commissioners specifically stated that the money is not to be divided up among the departments for operating expenses.

In fact, the money can be spent only upon the recommendation of district fire and rescue committees. Each committee will be composed of the commissioner from the district and the county emergency management coordinator as ex-officio (non-voting) members plus the chiefs of the fire and rescue units in the district. The commissioner shall be the chairman of the committee. It will meet at least quarterly and more often if needed.

For recommendations to be made, a majority of the members must be present. A majority must also concur with the commissioner that an emergency exists or that a long-range capital expenditure should be

made. Then and only then will the funds become available.

The departments must also be willing to sign a document releasing the county from all liability.

While the county would find it difficult to require matching funds from municipal departments, commissioners stressed they did not want the county's funding decisions to prompt towns to reduce their fire and rescue contributions.

No solution was reached on how to handle mutual aid agreements. No county departments have signed written agreements to respond to calls outside their district on specific request, though it is a current—and unenforced—requirement to receive quarterly checks from the county.

But in fact the departments do operate successfully under oral agreements, Logan said.

The annual county appropriations (See FUNDING, Page 2-A)

Gordon Elected—Again— Mayor Of Sunset Beach

BY BILL MCGOWAN

Town officials are inspecting the record books, but what may have been the shortest term for a mayor in Sunset Beach history was concluded Monday night.

That's half of the story. But who's to say? Col. James Gordon, elected mayor by council at its June meeting, or seemingly so, relinquished his office Monday night. And for what?

Just so fellow town officials could renominate and re-elect him mayor.

Well the fun began in June when council members first nominated Col. Gordon to replace Ed Gore, who served as mayor pro tem in the absence of former Mayor Francis Kanoy, who resigned her position several months ago. Remember?

At Monday night's meeting, however, Council member Kathy Hill noted that the motion nominating Gordon never received a second. He was elected illegally by acclamation, she said, and as a result was never legally elected to the position of mayor.

And as a second result, Hill said, Gordon had illegally been sitting as mayor while Monday night's public hearings on the budget and the annexation of the golf course owned by Sea Trail Corp.

"At least we ought to do it right if we're going to do it at all," Hill explained herself. "I'd hate for it to come up five months from now have for someone to call our hand on it."

Once again Gore took the helm as mayor pro tem. "I apologize for the inadequacy of these proceedings," he said.

But Councilman Don Safrit quickly announced, "Well, if he's not mayor, let's back up and call the meeting to order."

"Shall we go through the public hearings again?" Gore asked.

No one said anything until Gore called for a motion to validate the proceedings chaired by Col. Gordon.

Safrit finally made the motion and added, "I'd like to thank Col. Gordon for his short tenure as mayor and to offer his name for nomination for mayor. He saw the motion pass unanimously."

In the spirit of the moment, Clerk Linda Fluegel administered the oath of office, and once again the mayor was the mayor.

And what did Gordon have to say after a full half-hour of confusion and disbelief?

"Okay are you ready to go ahead now?"