

Airlift Rescue Of Diver Causes Stir At Calabash

BY SUSAN USHER

A military helicopter landed behind the Calabash ABC Store last Thursday afternoon to airlift a stricken diver to the hospital, setting the entire town abuzz.

"It was a most interesting thing," said Calabash Volunteer Rescue Squad Chief Cora Phipps, who said she learned a lot answering her first diving accident call.

Diver Warren Gibson of Myrtle Beach, S.C., was treated and released after 24-hour observation at the U.S. Navy Medical Center at Charleston, S.C., said Steve Speros, owner of the "Cyclone," the 45-foot mini-headboat Gibson was diving from when he momentarily blacked out.

Navy doctors diagnosed Gibson's condition as "shallow water blackout," Speros said. "They determined it was not a case of overexposure to nitrogen (the "bends") or a punctured lung.

"He's fine. He was back at work Sunday," Speros added.

Gibson was "breath-hold" diving—diving without

SCUBA gear—at the 10-fathom ledge, a rock ledge about 10 miles offshore of Myrtle Beach.

When Gibson blacked out, the ensuing events were all standard operating procedures in the event of any diving accident, Speros said.

But for the small town of Calabash, accustomed to carloads of seafood-hungry tourists, they were a bit unusual.

When the accident occurred shortly before noon, Chip Stevens, captain of the "Cyclone," made radio contact with the boat's ticket office at North Myrtle Beach. From there calls were made to the U.S. Coast Guard at Georgetown, S.C., and to DAN, the national Divers Accident Network (919-684-8111) at Duke Hospital. The call put the ship's crew in touch with a Duke physician who advises what procedures to use, such as administering of oxygen, Speros said.

Meanwhile, the Coast Guard was dispatching a military helicopter from Savannah, Ga., but the Cyclone's captain advised that was too far away. In-

stead, a helicopter, with physician and medical equipment on board, was dispatched from the nearby Myrtle Beach Air Force Base.

As the "Cyclone" headed toward the nearest port—the Calabash docks—it maintained radio communication with the helicopter through the Coast Guard, establishing that the rendezvous would take place at Calabash.

Anytime a medical emergency occurs at sea, Speros said, military airlift is available.

The helicopter touched down in R.J. (Bobby) Somerset's field behind the ABC store at approximately 1:05 p.m., about the same time the "Cyclone" reached the docks where Calabash Volunteer Rescue Squad Chief Cora Phipps and other local rescue personnel were waiting.

A military physician and other personnel made their way to the docks from the helicopter.

"They didn't waste any time getting to him and getting him transferred to the helicopter," said Mrs. Phipps.

She said the diver was having difficulty breathing and there was initial concern he might have burst a lung. But bleeding observed at the time was sinus-related only, Speros said later.

The helicopter transported Gibson to a naval ship at Charleston, which had the nearest available recompression chamber—also a standard precaution following any diving accident, Speros said. Once checked by a team of four naval doctors, Gibson was placed under 24-hour observation—another standard precaution following any dive accident, then released, said Speros.

In an agreement with the Myrtle Beach SCUBA Center, the "Cyclone" runs "open boat" dive trips several times each week. Gibson is a dive instructor who was along on the trip.

Speros said that on all dive trips the "Cyclone" carries an emergency medical technician plus two dive instructors. On deep sea trips a doctor is on board.

"This is the first incident where anyone's had to be called," he said.

THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

HORG & SONS BOOK BINDERY
127 317 99
SPRINGPORT MI 49284

Volume 21

Shallotte, North Carolina, Thursday, August 15, 1985

25c Per Copy

28 Pages

Two Teens Killed After Car Hits Tree

Two Shallotte teenagers were killed early Tuesday morning when the car they were riding in ran off the road near Shallotte Point and struck a tree, the State Highway Patrol reported.

Cammie Lanette Stanley, 16, of Route 3, Box 1098, Shallotte, and William Rhett Chrisanthais, 18, of P.O. Box 2404, Shallotte, were both killed in the one-car accident on RPR 1152, or Pigott Road, near Shallotte Point, Trooper D.B. Harvell reported.

The driver of the car, Wayne Sterling LaGant, 28, of P.O. Box 1232, Shallotte, was taken to the Brunswick Hospital in Supply with serious injuries. He was later transported by Life Flight helicopter to Duke Medical Center in Durham, Harvell reported.

Tuesday evening, LaGant was listed in "critical condition" at Duke Hospital, said Edith Roberts, public information director.

According to Harvell's report, the accident occurred around 4:25 a.m. on Pigott Road about 3.6 miles south of Shallotte. The car LaGant was driving was headed east on Pigott Road and attempted to round a curve at an excessive speed, Harvell stated.

While rounding the curve, the car ran off the road on the right shoulder and then slid sideways, Harvell reported. The car then ran off the left shoulder of the road and struck a tree on the right passenger door, he stated.

Harvell said the three victims were all sitting in the front seat of the car. Ms. Stanley was sitting in the middle of the seat while Chrisanthais was sitting next to the right passenger door.

No charges have been filed in the accident that is still under investigation.



Sail Away, Sail Away!

Sails filling in the breeze, Camp United Methodist teenagers Tonya Russ and Krissi Smith head out across the surf with instructor Bobby Williamson, part of a trio of catamarans bound for Battery Island. The story of their "graduation" day can be found inside, on Page 9B.

Traffic Signal Approved For Sunset Beach Bridge

BY SUSAN USHER

A signal will soon regulate traffic at the Sunset Beach Bridge, following action Friday by the State Board of Transportation.

The board approved a four-phase light to be installed on S.R. 1172 (locally called Sunset Boulevard) at the single-lane pontoon swing bridge. The project will cost approximately \$16,000, said DOT spokeswoman Yvette Ruffin.

In other local action Friday, the board approved a \$90,000 widening

project near Holden Beach and a \$25,000 paving project in Northwest Township.

The state plans to widen a 4.4-mile stretch of S.R. 1115 (Stone Chimney Road) from N.C. 211 to S.R. 1125 (Cedar Grove Road). It will also drain, base and pave a three-tenths mile section of S.R. 1487 (King Road) from S.R. 1438 (Lanvale Road) to the dead end.

Sunset Beach Council members voted in October 1984 to request traf-

fic signals for the bridge, but a formal, written request was not made to the state for more than a month—only after Councilwoman Kathy Hill advised the council that DOT had told her it had not received any request from the town.

"They told me all we have to do is ask for them and they would be installed," she said.

Town Administrator Wallace Martin said the written request was not made because a request made mon-

ths earlier had gone unanswered.

At the October 1984 meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Ed Gore had said the state had considered the traffic signals for about 10 years and thought they would "complicate" the traffic situation. He personally opposed the lights, saying they would cause traffic congestion and block intersections on N.C. 179.

S.R. 1172 is the roadway that leads to the bridge and beach from the N.C. 179 turnoff toward Calabash.

Filing Opens Soon For Municipal Elections

BY SUSAN USHER

Filing opens at noon on Friday, Aug. 16, for municipal elections in the town of Long Beach as Brunswick County gears up for another election season.

For another 12 municipal elections and two district elections, filing opens at noon on Aug. 30.

Filing fees are \$5 each. Candidates file for office at the Brunswick County Board of Elections for elections it conducts and with municipal boards of election elsewhere.

Candidates will begin declaring their intent early in Long Beach so that primary run-offs can be held if needed before the Nov. 5 election. Long Beach voters decided in favor of a non-partisan primary in a special May 14 referendum, citing a need created by the large number of candidates that traditionally file for public office there.

The Brunswick County Board of Elections will conduct elections for the towns of Shallotte, Bolivia, Sunset Beach, Calabash, Caswell Beach, Southport, Long Beach, Belville, Navassa, the Doshier Hospital Board of Trustees and the Leland Sanitary District, indicated

Lynda Britt, supervisor. The towns of Holden Beach, Ocean Isle Beach, Yaupon Beach and Boiling Spring Lakes have their own boards of election.

Long Beach

Available at Long Beach are those seats now held by Commissioners Cheryl Coleman, Lee Presnell and John Vereen III, and Mayor Ben Thomas. Commissioners are elected to staggered, four-year terms, while the mayor is elected to a two-year term of office. Candidates will file for a specific commissioner's seat, Ms. Britt said, with run-offs held only for the seats for which more than two candidates file.

The filing period closes at noon on Sept. 6.

Other Elections

The filing period for other Nov. 5 elections closes at noon on Sept. 20. A synopsis of the seats available follows:

Shallotte—Long-time Mayor Beamon Hewett has announced he will not seek re-election. Two aldermen's seats—those held by Paul Wayne Reeves and Jerry Jones—will be filled. The mayor and aldermen are elected to four-year terms.

Ocean Isle Beach—Long-time Mayor LaDane Bullington will file for re-election to another two-year term. Two commissioners will be elected to four-year terms, filling the seats held by Connor Cox and Marvin Stanley. Stanley is building a home outside the town limits and is not expected to file for re-election. Martha Benton is chairman of the elections board.

Sunset Beach—A mayor and three council members will be elected. Jim Gordon is currently serving as mayor by appointment, filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Frances Kanoy. The mayor is elected every two years.

Other available seats are those of council members Kathy Hill and George Foster, who was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Toney Edwards. Council members are elected to staggered, four-year terms.

Calabash—Voters will elect a mayor and five council members to two-year terms of office. Current office holders are Sonia Stevens, mayor; and Robert Simmons, Suzy Moore, Virgil "Tink" Coleman, Cheryl Thomas and Marie Brown. Ms. Moore was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Michael Frink, who moved out of town.

Holden Beach—Voters will elect a mayor and two commissioners to fill the seats now held by Mayor Kenner Arnos and Commissioners Gloria Barrett and Jim D. Griffin Jr. Terms of office are two years for mayor and four for commissioners. Mabel Dutton is chairman of the town board of elections.

Bolivia—The mayor and all four aldermen will be elected. Currently in office are Mayor Ina Mae Mintz and Aldermen Debbie Stanley, M.F. Tatum, Steve Robbins and Ella Jane (See FILING, Page 2-A)

Private Road Was Promised To Holden West End Residents

BY TERRY POPE

The steady stream of traffic that once flowed past Sid Swarts' Holden Beach home no longer leaves his car and house covered with dust.

In fact, very few cars now travel past the Swarts' home since the west end of the beach was placed under a private barricade two weeks ago. For west end residents, restricting access to the west end by way of private road was something that was promised property owners years ago.

"I feel privacy is one of the things we paid for down here," said Swarts, a west end permanent resident, "and we're finally getting it."

Owners of the west end tract, Holden Beach Realty Corp., also own the non-paved private road that provides access to the west end beach strand. When the road was placed under barricade two weeks ago, many residents and motorists complained, but town officials quickly acknowledged that the road was private and was not maintained by the town.

Questions still remain over the legality of closing the road while providing residents with town services such as police protection and water service. Town councilman Graham King, who also serves as Holden Beach streets and beach access commissioner, challenged enforcement of the town's ordinances beyond the bar-

ricade last Thursday morning.

"I really don't think either side wants to enforce it at this time," King said. The councilman passed beyond the barricade in the rain last Thursday morning during a planned demonstration, but he was not arrested by Holden Beach police officers.

"I just wanted to see if they were ready to enforce it," King added. "Many citizens have expressed their opinions to me. It's something that's going to take time to work out."

West end residents, such as the Swartses, have been waiting for three years for the area to be closed to the public.

"We were promised that it would be a private area down here," Swarts said. He added that the price of lots along the west end also includes the cost of privacy.

In the past, Swarts said, as many as 126 cars on a typical Sunday afternoon have been counted traveling past his home enroute to the west end. The west end is an area where motorists have parked in the past to obtain access to the beach.

"We have lived in a constant cloud of dust," Swarts added. Of those using the west end for access, "there were a lot of good families down there," he added, but also a group that turned the west end into the town's dumping site with litter.

Swarts said he has been told by Holden Beach police officers that enforcing speed limits along the private road in front of his home, even though it is within the town limits, may be difficult to do. It is a question Commissioner King would like to see answered.

"They're within their rights to close the street, I have no problem with that," King said. "Possibly everyone is within their rights in what they're supposed to be doing."

Although it will not be on the agenda, the closing of the west end to the public is sure to be a topic at the Labor Day weekend meeting of the Holden Beach Property Owners Association, said President Bill Lovelace.

"So far, there has been no action taken by the association one way or the other," Lovelace said. The group will not take a stance on the issue until it is determined "how the property owners actually feel at that meeting," he added. The meeting is scheduled for August 31, at 10 a.m. at the town hall.

"I really don't know what they'll decide," he added. "Some property owners will be for it, and some will be against it. You have some people who live on that end."

Swarts said he hopes that closing the west end to beach access will "result in an overall plan throughout the town to reach a solution for parking" on the island.

"The island has a parking problem," he added. "They're being shuttled from one neighborhood to the other. The east end takes a terrible beating on illegal parking down there."

Where motorists and visitors once parked on the west end, two new streets will be added with plans to construct up to 34 homes on the tract. Last week, the Holden Beach Realty Corp. filed nine applications for Coastal Area Management (CAMA) permits to construct homes along the west end on lots located between 1302-1324 Ocean Boulevard West.

Tuesday afternoon, the company filed 15 additional CAMA applications through the town of Holden Beach to construct nine three-bedroom homes and five four-bedroom homes on the tract. Skimmer Drive, Straw Flower Drive and Salicornia Drive have all been chosen as names for new streets along the west end.

Jim Griffin Jr., town councilman and principal partner in the realty company, also filed three CAMA applications to construct three-bedroom homes on the west end tract, while two each were filed by partners Virgil Roberts and Gilbert Lepsis, for two four-bedroom and two three-bedroom homes.

The entire west end tract is zoned residential, or R-1, allowing single and duplex construction.