

IN CEDAR GROVE

Church Revives Tradition Of Living Christmas Tree

BY SUSAN USHER

From its substantial foliage glitter more than a thousand colored lights, its white star can be seen some distance away.

A living Christmas tree the likes of which would make any community proud, the stately cedar can be found less than seven miles from Shallotte, on Cedar Grove Road. An equally bright nativity scene nestles at its base.

The tree stands before Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Church in the heart of the predominantly black community of the same name, a proud reminder of the church's humble beginnings.

The cedar has grown, and so has the church, its two-story brick facility with faceted stained glass windows now serving a membership of 700. The cedar out front reaches 50 feet into the sky and measures nearly 100 feet around its circumference.

"We hadn't lit the tree for a while—it's been some five or six years," recalled James Holson Bryant, the church member who spearheaded this year's project. "And it was only lit a year or two and then we gave it

up. "I kept looking at the tree and the tree was so beautiful I suggested at the September business meeting that we light it."

The cedar will remain lighted each night through Dec. 31, he said. Church members hope to revive their living Christmas tree tradition, making it an annual project.

After his idea was approved at the church's September business meeting, Bryant was appointed chairman of a committee that also included Etha Mae Herring, Gladys Reed, Sandra Robinson, Hollie Johnson and Theron Johnson.

Their job was larger than first anticipated. In the years since it was last lighted, the tree had grown considerably. In addition to buying more than 400 replacement bulbs, Bryant's committee also purchased ten new 40-bulb strings of lights. They eventually hung 40 strings of lights on the tree with a total of more than 1,000 bulbs.

It took seven hours for committee members and

community volunteers to sort and test all the lights. It took another five hours or so to hang them on the tree and add the 100-light five-point star.

Delwood Johnson climbed the tree while Theron Johnson manipulated the lights from a bucket truck, using a stick with a nail on its end to push each string within his brother's reach.

"Delwood said it was the safest place to be because there were so many limbs he couldn't fall down," Bryant noted with a laugh.

Since the tree was illuminated the Thursday after Thanksgiving, said Bryant, it has drawn viewers from throughout the Cedar Grove community and elsewhere.

"We've gotten a very positive reaction," he continued. "A number of people have come out and brought their children and come back a second time. Some will drop by it on their way home."

A cedar tree stood on the property where the first Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Church was built, he said, giving the church its name. A small shed called the "stump house" now covers the remains of that first landmark.

In the church's early days, the hard-to-grow cedar was an object of superstitious beliefs, and many individuals were reluctant to plant them, according to Bryant. It was said that when a cedar tree grew large enough to shade your grave, you would die.

But such superstitions posed no threat to the church, with its overwhelming force of good, he added. And its cedar tree has grown healthy and tall, its branches bearing a Christmas spectacle to be enjoyed by all.

The shortest route from Shallotte to the Cedar Grove church is to follow N.C. 130 east toward Holden Beach, turning left onto the Civiltown crossroads onto Empire Road, right onto Pisgah Church Road, then left onto Cedar Grove Road, a total distance of about 6.5 miles.

Parked Cars, House Struck By Speeder

Two cars parked in the yard and the owners' house near Shallotte were all casualties of a Friday night crash.

Mark Paul, 17, of Shallotte, was traveling at high speed about 11 p.m. on rural paved road 1132 two miles east of Shallotte when he rounded a curve, lost control of his 1973 Chevrolet, and ran off the road.

According to the N.C. Highway Patrol, his car struck a 1975 Ford truck owned by Phillip Johnson and parked in Johnson's yard, knocking it into a nearby parked 1975 Chevrolet owned by Annie Johnson. The Chevrolet in turn was knocked into the house.

A passenger in Paul's car, Paul Mause, 15, of Shallotte, was taken to Brunswick Hospital with minor injuries.

Paul was charged by Trooper B.L. Wilks with exceeding safe speed. Damages were estimated as follows: \$1,500 to Paul's car, \$450 to the truck, \$1,000 to the Chevrolet and \$200 to the house.

Also on Friday, a two-car accident occurred five miles west of Southport on N.C. 133 about 8 p.m.

Susan Swift, 30, of Lexington, S.C., was driving a 1985 Oldsmobile station wagon on N.C. 133 when she stopped to make a turn.

According to Trooper J.V. Dove's report, a 1976 Buick operated by Cornelius Kelly, 55, of Winnabow, was following Swift too closely and at too great a speed. Kelly's vehicle struck Swift's, causing minor injuries to Kelly and his passenger, William Smith, 54, of Winnabow. Both were taken to Dasher Hospital for treatment.

Trooper Dove charged Kelly with driving while impaired. The Swift vehicle sustained \$1,500 in damages, while damages to Kelly's vehicle amounted to about \$1,200.

A deer was the cause of an accident involving Roger Malpass' 1982 Mercury that occurred at 3:30 a.m. Sunday two miles north of Boling Spring Lakes on N.C. 87.

As Malpass, 18, of Bolivia, was traveling south on N.C. 87, the deer ran onto the road and he swerved to miss it. The car overturned, sustaining damages estimated at \$800.

Malpass was not injured. He reported the accident several hours later to Trooper Tim Caulder.

Sgt. K.E. Axum of the N.C. Highway Patrol said there was a rash of minor accidents in Brunswick County Thursday, when rain caused treacherous driving conditions.

One involved two Florence, S.C. men, both driving International tractor-trailers. It occurred at 11:25 a.m. on U.S. 17 just north of Shallotte. Ronald G. Foxworth, 48, had stopped on U.S. 17 to make a left turn when Robert C. Parker, 68, driving behind him, failed to reduce speed and struck Foxworth's tractor-trailer in the rear.

There were no injuries, according to Trooper B.A. Lewis, but damages amounted to \$2,000 to the Parker vehicle, \$1,000 to that driven by Foxworth.

A one-car accident occurred 7:40 a.m. Thursday on S.R. 1115, six miles north of Holden Beach.

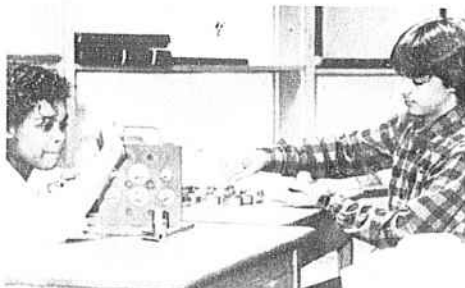
Ernie Keith Galloway, 18, of Supply, was driving a 1979 Chevrolet around a curve when he lost control and skidded sideways into a bridge rail.

Trooper B.A. Lewis filed no charges against the driver, and there were no injuries. He estimated damages to the vehicle at \$2,000.

Considerable damage, but no injuries resulted from a rear-end collision that occurred at 6:45 p.m. Thursday on U.S. 17 five miles south of Wilmington.

Jay Clemmons Mitchell, 35, of Bolivia, was driving a 1981 Chevrolet south on U.S. 17 when Ronald Eugene Mintz, 25, of Leland pulled out of a driveway in a 1984 Ford truck. Mitchell ran into the back of the truck.

Mintz was charged with unsafe operation by Trooper B.L. Wilks. Damages to the vehicles were estimated at \$2,000 to Mitchell's, and \$50 to Mintz's.



Testing Work Aptitudes

West Brunswick High School students Teresa Smith and Eddie Danford are participating in the Talent Assessment Program, a series of vocational aptitude tests available to vocational education students who qualify for support services. The assessment program helps students plan for future vocations.

Residents Due Money

A number of Brunswick County residents, businesses and organizations—including the Leland Volunteer Fire Department and the Town of Yaupon Beach—are listed as having money due them from the state's escheat fund.

Money in the fund includes abandoned bank accounts, money left to people named in wills and abandoned contents of safe deposit boxes.

Persons listed below can get information about unclaim property held by the state by writing to the Abandoned Property Office, Department of the State Treasurer, 325 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC 27611, or by calling 733-6878.

By town, the listings are as follows:

Ash: Dorris W. Ward, \$139.83; William Matthews, \$38.85; Huston E. Jacobs, \$41; Mrs. M.J. Bradley, \$47.90; J.E. Primer, \$43.08; and Ralph Smith, \$55.

Bolivia: Tensie Flowers, \$608.44; Norman Gore, \$50; Lottie Fullwood, \$53.12; Douglas H. Hawes, \$47.51.

Holden Beach: Patsy A. Phelan, \$37.33.

Leland: Julius Hill, \$598.67; Heidi Lynn Thompson and Mrs. Lyndall K. Thompson, \$229.62; Jacqueline K. Thompson and Mrs. Lyndall K. Thompson, \$251.92; Lisa Allyn Thompson and Mrs. Lyndall K. Thompson, \$229.62; James M. Oliver, \$36.83; Jose R. Monzow, \$29.55; Willie J. Bordeaux, \$32; Bonded Builders, \$52.51; Wayne Hinson, \$86; Monica L. Price, \$25; J. Prevattie, \$100; James F. Clemmons, \$25; John D. Findlay and Audrey L. Findlay,

Stock; John D. Findlay and Audrey L. Findlay, \$27.20; John N. Meyers, \$25; Leland Volunteer Fire Department, \$70.52.

Long Beach: Alice T. and Joy Ann Hickman, \$34.04; Lynn Y. Harrington, \$36.25; Joyce E. Herman, \$25.95; Leo D. Reynolds, \$341.60; Mr. and Mrs. Kent Crocker, \$27.67; Robert Stapp, \$44.28; William Davis Munn III, \$50; Sybil E. Allen.

Shalotte: Dolphus A. Little, \$324.40; Pete Taylor, \$107.46; Nancy H. Alexander and Edwin H. Alexander Jr., \$35.70; Geraldine H. Martin, \$46.57; William and Irdie Hewett, \$33.50; O.C. Howard, \$52.05; Kenneth D. Bule, \$29.26; and Edward R. Thomas III, \$47.25.

Southport: Laura Nicole Richards, \$45.77; Natalie Joyce Richards, \$46.91; Barbara B. Powers, \$989.08; Nada Yoder, \$423.26; Linda McWell Graft, \$37.56; Alice B. Moore, \$26.90; William R. Welch, \$26; Mark David Bridges, \$44; Don Mazie, \$29.56; John J. Bryant, \$28.46; John D. High, \$28.47; Nancy L. Keen, \$23.47; Raymond A. Rogers, \$28.47; Allen L. Walters, \$56.93; Andrew J. Filyaw, \$31.62; Charles D. Smith.

Supply: Walter and Gracie Green, \$33.08; Myrtle H. Hunting and John S. Hunting, \$32.09; Michael D. Powell, \$33.05; Jack and Glenda Hewett, \$30.86; Robert Gore, \$49.88; Dean T. Bellamy, \$46.76.

Winnabow: Marland F. Beck, \$64.38.

Yaupon Beach: Town of Yaupon Beach, \$57.82; Town of Yaupon Beach, \$57.82; William R. Capps, \$80.

State Fishing Tourney Changes Name, Sponsor

Beginning in 1987, the N.Y. Saltwater Fishing Tournament will have a new name and a new sponsor.

The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries will assume sponsorship of the event, which has been sponsored by the Department of Commerce, Travel and Tourism for the past 22 years. The tournament will be renamed the N.C. Saltwater Fishing Citation Program.

The division will also take over the all-tackle record freshwater fishes program, placing it under the direction of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

Up to 2,500 citations suitable for framing have been awarded each year to recognize anglers who catch eligible species at or over listed minimum weights.

With the change-over come several minor program changes. Effective in 1987, the tournament will be a year-round event, not closing for the winter months.

Several new species will be added to the citation list: pompano, two-pound minimum; tautog, eight-pound minimum; and triggerfish, seven-pound minimum.

The minimum weight for flounder will be reduced to five pounds; and, for conservation purposes, the channel bass release citation will be reduced to 40 inches and the minimum weight will be increased to 45 pounds.

Application forms for 1987 will not be available until February. Anyone

catching a citation fish before then can use the 1986 forms.

Questions on the topic can be directed to Jim Tyler with the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries.

In addition to those mentioned above, eligible species and their minimum weights for citation are as follows: amberjack, 50 lbs.; barracuda, 20 lbs.; black sea bass, 3 lbs.; bluefish, 17 lbs.; colia, 40 lbs.; croaker, 3 lbs.; dolphin, 33 lbs.; black drum, 70 lbs.; grouper, 20 lbs.; king mackerel, 30 lbs.; Spanish mackerel, 5 lbs.; blue marlin, 300 lbs.; white marlin, 50 lbs.; sea mullet, 15 lbs.; sailfish, 30 lbs.; shark, 100 lbs.; sheepshead, 10 lbs.; red snapper, 10 lbs.; silver snapper (porgy), 4 lbs.; spot, 1 lb.; tarpon, 30 lbs.; gray trout, 6 lbs.; speckled trout, 4 lbs.; tuna, 60 lbs.; and wahoo, 40 lbs.

VFW Seeks Donations

Calabash VFW Post No. 7288 is seeking donations and pledges to its building fund from members and other community residents.

Commander Roy Wren suggested contributions of \$25 to \$100, noting that the gifts are tax-deductible.

Checks may be mailed to the post at P.O. Box 4226, Calabash, NC 28439.

Rescue Squad Holds Dinner

Town Creek Volunteer Rescue Squad will hold a fund-raising dinner Saturday, Dec. 20 beginning at 11 a.m. at the station on U.S. 17 and its intersection with N.C. 87 at Winnabow.

The cost is \$3 per plate. The menu includes barbecue pork or fried chicken, potato salad, cole slaw, hushpuppies and rolls.

Proceeds will help support the rescue squad, said Secretary Laura Coulter.

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