

SCREECH OWLS are the smallest of our owls and are protected by law as a beneficial species. This owl was not very happy about having his portrait made!

PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

Shivering Owls Cause Superstitions

We may wonder why the Screech Owl was given that name for its usual voice is not a screech but more of a low-pitched, wail-like whistle. This long-drawn, shivering sound is what caused many people to become superstitious about the Screech Owl as a symbol of death or bad things! But this small bird is one of our most beneficial ones and its sound is welcomed by most people because of the control of rats, mice and some insects.

Screech owls are short and stocky looking because of big round heads and stubby tails. The two short hair tufts resemble horns and the large eyes communicate friendliness. Like all owls, these birds have fixed binocular vision and must move their heads to change directions of focus. An owl will follow movement in almost a 360 degree circle, giving rise to the tale that he will twist his head off if you keep walking around him in a circle.

Owls swoop down in silence with



Bill Faver

soft-feathered wings and grab prey with needle-sharp talons. Food consists of small rodents, snakes, lizards, insects and moths, and an occasional small bird. Old orchards, shade trees, and old buildings are favorite nesting places for screech owls. Four or five white eggs are laid in April or May in limb cavities in old trees or in small ledges in buildings. Flicker boxes and squirrel boxes are also used. Eggs take about three weeks to hatch and there is only one brood each year. When the young begin to fly in early summer, the adult birds become very protective

and sometimes make swooping dives at intruders or passers-by.

Screech owls are unique in that there are two color phases. Some birds are reddish-brown and others are grey. The markings are the same in both cases and there is no real explanation as to why some individuals are one color and some are the other. Some feel that because they are night feeders and spend most of the day motionless near the trunk of a tree in thick foliage the color phases are a type of camouflage. But the colors seem to vary without regard to the type of trees or forest in which birds live.

Next time you are near a wooded area, listen carefully about dusk and you might hear the softly weird, tremulous wail of the Screech Owl. You can know this little bird is playing its part in the ecosystem by helping to control the rodents and insects and, perhaps, by being an interesting critter adding to the mystery and variety of nature.

Pender County Foreclosure Sale Latest Chapter In Smuggling Tale

Weaving of an intricate tale that began with a marijuana smuggling attempt in 1980 continues with the unfolding of a new chapter next month.

On Nov. 2, at the Pender County Courthouse in Burgaw, property used to secure the \$1 million bond of a drug smuggling defendant in Brunswick County goes on the sales block, with proceeds to go to the Brunswick County Board of Education.

Up for sale are eight lots in Mallard Bay subdivision, which adjoins Belvedere Plantation. Conceivably the school system could come away from the sale as much as \$100,000 richer.

But that's unlikely, and Monday night, the Brunswick County Board of Education mapped out its bidding strategy. The lots will go to the highest bidder—and if other bids aren't high enough, possibly to the school board.

During a two-hour executive session called to discuss attorney-client and personnel matters Monday, In-

terim Superintendent John Kaufhold and Finance Officer Elaine Shappell were instructed how to bid to protect the school system's interests at the foreclosure sale.

The schools have been paid \$12,500 from a developer associated with the property, but are still owed \$109,000 with accrued interest. Since the sale is forced, said board attorney Glen Peterson, it's uncertain what price the lots will bring. It may be in the schools' interests to buy the lots back and try to resell them at a higher price later.

How did the board of education get into real estate? Through the courts—the same way it hopes to get out.

Drug defendant James Horne posted a deed to the eight lots as security for a \$1 million bond in 1981. A year later that bond was forfeited when Horne failed to appear in court for trial on felony marijuana trafficking charges stemming from the December 1980 "U-Haul" smuggling case.

He was later extradited from Florida and pleaded guilty to conspiracy in May 1983.

That same month Superior Court Judge Robert Hobgood denied a motion to remit the bond forfeiture.

And in a hearing last week a Pender County judge ordered the schools to proceed with the foreclosure sale on the current deed of trust.

Brunswick Democrats To Rally At County Complex On Oct. 31

On Saturday, Oct. 31, the Brunswick County Democratic Party will hold its fall rally from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Brunswick County Government Center Public Assembly Building in Bolivia.

State and local Democratic officeholders and candidates have been invited, said Vernon Ward, publicity chairman, and several county Democrats have indicated they will announce their candidacy for office at the rally.

An auction will be held featuring crafts, cakes and other donated items.

Also, free entertainment and food

are planned. There is no charge to attend the rally, said Ward.

"Democrats are urged to attend," he said, "to make this rally the first of many successes the Democrats expect to have during the next 13 months."

Correction

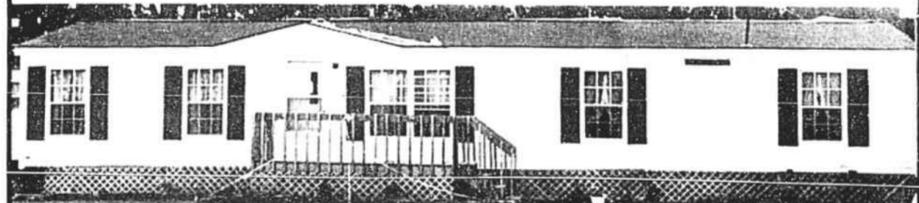
An article in the Sept. 24 issue of The Brunswick Beacon incorrectly identified the rescue squad that responded to a one-car accident on the Longwood Road.

The Calabash Volunteer Rescue Squad answered the call.

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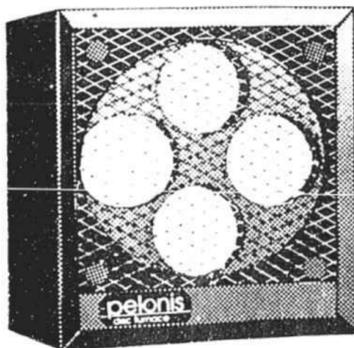


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My fondest memories of Holden Beach are riding the old ferry, meeting my friends here during the summers, and dancing with friends while all the family watched. My husband and I became property owners in 1969, and we have met so many nice people since we became permanent residents in March.

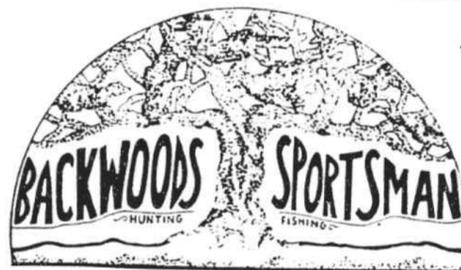
I have seen all the changes take place. My experience in government and my knowledge of Holden Beach for over 40 years are the changes that are needed.

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