

"Practice random acts of kindness and senseless beauty."

—Sunset Beach Beautification Committee motto



SIX REPRESENTATIVES of the Sunset Beautification Committee are good examples of why the work of the 40-member group is a source of civic pride. Pictured (from left) are Peggy Smyly, Carol Phipps, Betty Waldmiller, Gayle Schadle, Committee President Jane Bye, and Sunset Beach First Lady Ginny Barber.

STAFF PHOTO BY LYNN CARLSON

Group Leaves Politics At Home, Makes Town A Prettier Place

BY LYNN CARLSON

There's no talent in this group—just energy, Peggy Smyly says. In jest, of course. And her deadpan delivery of the remark gets a self-deprecatory laugh from the six friends gathered to talk about their favorite volunteer pastime, the Sunset Beach Beautification Committee.

These women have plenty of talent—not only for planting and decorating, but for inspiring their neighbors to leave politics at home, get out in the fresh air and add special touches to the town's naturally spectacular beauty.

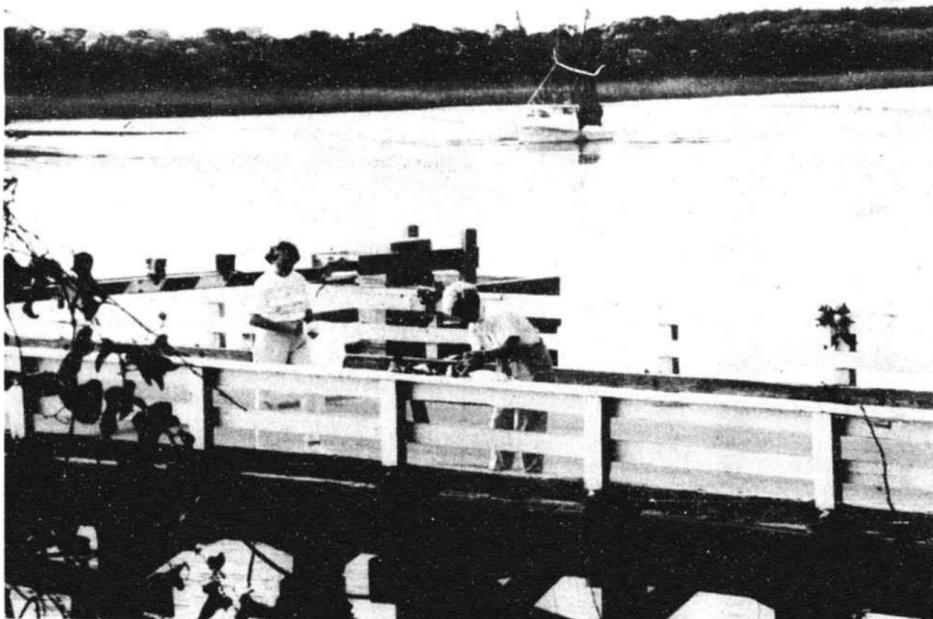
Before long, the group will embark on a veritable commando raid of spring planting, putting out the whisky barrels—30 at last count—they've sold to Sunset Beach merchants. The committee will fill the barrels with potting medium, plant flowers in them every spring and fall and lend a little extra seasonal beauty to commercial areas on the island and mainland.

"We've gotten a really good response," says Carol Phipps, projects committee member. "We'll probably get even more orders when people see how nice they're going to look." She was among members who spent the winter tracking down the owners of closed businesses to solicit their participation in the barrels project.

Also ahead is the unveiling of the committee-sponsored Sunset Beach flag, whose design received the town council's hearty endorsement last month and has been sent to the flag-maker. The three-by-five-foot flag is based on the design of the Sunset Beach Police Department patch, featuring the town logo with the sea, sun and a seagull against a deep blue background. Expected in time for Memorial Day, the flag will be flown at the town's public parking lot.

"We had a homemade flag last year, and people liked it," explained Gayle Schadle, coordinator of the flag project. "This one will be professionally produced, and we'll be getting a price on smaller flags to see if it's feasible to sell them to individuals."

Plans have also been made to repaint the "Welcome to Sunset Beach" sign on N.C. 179 and to build up and re-



BEACON FILE PHOTO

SHOWN DECKING THE BRIDGE at Christmas time are Jerri Moore and Betty Dawley. Other SB-BC members made and hung bows on the bridge and town gazebo. Dawley chairs the group's projects committee.

plant the soil around it. This project will be possible through the generosity of several local businesspeople who are eager to donate their labor and knowledge to the committee's sprucing-up efforts.

The committee's current president is Jane Bye, who

jokingly calls herself "just a figurehead." Under Jane's direction, the group has planted and landscaped the median on N.C. 179 at the bridge, participated in Beach Sweep and decorated the bridge and gazebo for Christmas. A "Spring Street Sweep" is planned for April

17, in which the committee will recruit volunteers to pick up litter along town streets. The committee will be making and hanging bows for Independence Day, and there's talk of a possible parade.

"We've come a long way since our organizational meeting Sept. 15," Bye said.

The committee's roots, though, go deeper, back to when current Mayor Mason Barber and his wife Ginny started tending the shrubbery around the town hall, weeding and hauling in their own water. An earlier group had taken care of the town hall and median landscaping, but, according to Ginny, "most of them had either died or moved away."

"When Mason and I came, the shrubs were dead and overgrown with weeds. Betty Waldmiller joined us, and we did it for three or four years. I tried several times to get volunteers to help us—we were running out of money and steam."

Discouraged by the initial poor response, Ginny was inspired by Betty not to give up. The two turned to the Holden Beach Beautification Committee and the Sea Trail Garden Club for guidance and an organizational model.

The enthusiasm began to build and continues to do so. The committee now has more than 40 members who attend a monthly meeting but don't pay dues. The town council and other organizations provide moral and financial support, and all over town people speak of the group's efforts with pride.

An integral component of their success is putting politics aside. That can't be a simple thing. Betty's husband Clete is president of the Sunset Beach Taxpayers' Association, a group which is frequently critical of the town council headed by Mayor Barber.

But that doesn't mean the women on the committee don't recruit "a stray husband here and there," to help with projects—including Clete and the mayor.

"We're definitely not political," Jane Bye says, adding that the group prefers its own motto to any political slogans.



PAIGE SLOANE is the first sophomore at West Brunswick High to qualify for national DECA competition.

STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

Paige Sloane Will Advance To National DECA Contest

A sophomore marketing student at West Brunswick High School has qualified for national Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) competition in the area of hospitality and tourism, an area in which she already has on-the-job experience.

Paige Sloane, 15, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tripp Sloane of Ocean Isle Beach, will travel to Orlando, Fla., April 30-May 5 with her instructor and DECA sponsor, Harriett Bellamy. DECA is a national organization for marketing education students.

Sloane is the first sophomore from West Brunswick ever to qualify for national competition and is the first student to qualify in the hospitality and tourism marketing category, said Bellamy.

Most trip expenses will be covered by the Brunswick County Board of Education under a policy adopted several years ago to underwrite the expenses of students who qualify for national competition. "This is an incentive all year long for students to do well," said Bellamy.

"Paige decided the first of the year this was something she wanted to do. She was the one that worked on her own over the holidays and after school to prepare."

—Harriett Bellamy
Instructor and DECA sponsor

Sloane qualified by placing as a finalist in state competition. Sloane first won at the district level by her scores on a 50-question test and performance in a role play. At the state level her answers on a 100-question test and performance in two role play situations qualified her as a finalist and runner-up.

Questions covered topics such as marketing, hotel management and what happens in a business setting, while the role plays cov-

ered a product sales scenario and a marketing foundations scenario.

She was one of eight students from West Brunswick to advance to state competition, and the only sophomore.

"Paige decided the first of the year this was something she wanted to do. She was the one that worked on her own over the holidays and after school to prepare. She earned it," said Bellamy.

Sloane studied for competition for several months using a computer program, books and sample tests.

"I memorized that computer disk," she said.

Sloane has worked in the family vacation rentals and real estate business at Ocean Isle Beach for several seasons, make reservations, filing, answering the telephone, checking vacationers in and out and running errands.

Her goal following high school is to obtain her broker's and real estate licenses and work in the family business.