

Boats Destroyed In Arson Off Seashore Road

Two boats valued at more than \$30,000 were destroyed by an arsonist who set fire to the vessels beside a home in the Seashore Road area of Supply last Wednesday night, according to a crime report on file at the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department Monday.

The boats, owned by a pair of Rockingham men, had been left parked beside a mobile home that one of them owns on Erwin Street, Deputy Cathy Hamilton reported. Neighbors called the homeowners to notify them that the fire had occurred at about 12:30 a.m. and had damaged the two vessels beyond repair.

Destroyed in the fire were a 21-foot 1977 Wellcraft valued at \$20,000 and a 1971 Dixie cuddy cabin with an estimated value of \$10,000, the reports said. A \$2,000 boat trailer and more than \$3,000 worth of marine equipment and fishing tackle also were destroyed.

The mobile home owner also reported to Deputy Rebekah McDonald that his trailer had been broken into sometime between April 14 and May 24. More than \$300 worth of camping equipment and other items were reported stolen.

In other crime reports on file at the sheriff's office Monday:

■A 1984 Suzuki 450 motorcycle was reported stolen from a home on Hale Swamp Road Saturday night. The owner told Deputy Matthew Jesson that someone took the bike between 10 p.m. Saturday and 7:30 the next morning. A further investigation revealed that a motorcycle fitting that description had been confiscated by Sunset Beach Police after a chase shortly before 11 p.m. Saturday. The rider had apparently attempted to elude police, then abandoned the bike and ran into the woods. The motorcycle owner later refused to give his fingerprints to the police. The vehicle is being held while an investigation continues.

■A .38-caliber revolver was stolen during a break-in at storage shed next to a home on Plymouth Road, Route 3, Shallotte, early Saturday morning. The homeowner told Deputy Michael Weldrick that family members were awakened by a noise shortly before 1 a.m. and saw a light on in their shed. They called 911 and reported finding the gun missing. It was later recovered after a shooting incident in Supply that afternoon. (See related story.)

■The owner of a mobile home on Jolly Roger Road, Buccaneer Hills, reported Friday that someone had broken into his residence and stolen a black-and-white television set and a pair of binoculars. Weldrick reported that the thief or thieves apparently entered by forcing open the front door, causing an undetermined amount of damage to the framing.

■A woman who lives at a house on Zion Church road told Deputy Robert Long that someone came into her home last week while she was asleep and stole her purse, which contained about \$150 in cash. The woman said she had left the purse on the kitchen table and discovered it missing the next morning. She later found the purse in her car; however all the cash was missing, the report said.

■About \$925 worth of tools were stolen from a pickup truck parked at the N.C. Wildlife landing off N.C. 904 Thursday afternoon. The owner told Deputy R.W. Long that he had left his tool boxes locked while fishing and returned after about four hours to find the tools missing. Among the items taken were an electric saw, a box of plumbing parts, a rechargeable drill and a shop vacuum cleaner. The man said his tackle box had been stolen from the same spot the previous day.

■Someone broke into the Idle Hour Game Room on Holden Beach Road and stole a grass trimmer and a carpenter's level recently, according to a report filed by Hamilton. Total value was estimated at about

CRIME REPORT

\$150.

■A riding lawnmower was stolen off a trailer parked at a business on Howe Street, Southport, Wednesday night. Hamilton estimated its value at about \$900.

■An estimated \$800 worth of jewelry was stolen from a woman who lives on Buckeye Road, Leland, sometime in the past month. She told Deputy Brian Sanders that she discovered a gold wedding band, a gold cluster ring and an engagement ring missing Friday night. A neighbor also told Sanders that a gold heart-shaped ring had been stolen from her home during the same period. It was valued at about \$80.

■Deputy William Hewett investigated a report that a dog had been stolen from a home on Cedar Hill Road, Leland, Friday morning. The owner said he had left the dog in the front yard, where it was trained to stay, and found it missing at about 9:45. The animal was described as a small mix-breed German shepherd. No estimated value was given.

■About \$150 in cash was reported stolen from a day care center on Lanvale Road Thursday night. The owner told Hewett that someone entered the front door of the business sometime between 5:45 p.m. Thursday and 9 o'clock the next morning.

■Someone stole a boat trailer from the back of a van parked at the Davis Creek boat landing on Navassa Road Sunday. The owner told Sanders that he and his wife had gone out fishing in their boat at about 8:30 a.m. and returned at about 5:45 p.m. to find that the trailer had been removed from his van. No value estimate was given.

Police Gain From Military Cutbacks

BY DOUG RUTTER

Local police are finding out there's a lot more to military surplus than guns, planes, tanks and bombs.

Three area departments have tapped in to a program that allows police to receive free military supplies such as life jackets, computers, medical kits, scuba gear—even Navy Jeeps.

"It's part of the down-sizing of the military," said Holden Beach Police Chief Robert Cook, whose department recently received more than \$20,000 in supplies. "What they don't give away they will auction to the public."

Military supplies in usable condition are becoming available to civilian police as bases across the country are scaled down or closed, said Renee Hoffman of the N.C. Division of Crime Control and Public Safety.

The division notified North Carolina police departments last summer about the opportunity to receive surplus items at no cost. Departments send requests to the state, which passes them on to the federal government.

Hoffman said the program has caught on locally. Holden Beach, Ocean Isle Beach and Southport have received nearly \$200,000 in military supplies. Sunset Beach, Long Beach and Bald Head Island are on the waiting list.

Southport has received approximately \$131,800 in military surplus since February, while \$45,700 worth of goods has been sent to Ocean Isle and Holden has received \$21,305.

Holden's police chief applied for surplus equipment last summer, and recently received items including a \$10,000 Jeep Cherokee that will be used by the town's beach patrol.

"They said it's in pretty good condition," Cook said of the white 1986 model. "It needs a few minor repairs. I believe we'll get a couple years out of it."

Best of all, Cook said it won't cost the town taxpayers anything except for maintenance and repairs.

Holden Beach also received four



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER
HOLDEN BEACH Police Chief Robert Cook shows a medical kit and leg split the town received through the N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.

Navy life jackets, five backpack medical kits, 240 rolls of medical tape, 200 pounds of Army blankets and two overhead projectors.

Cook's department also received

clothes including 20 camouflage winter coats, 300 fatigue shirts and 150 pairs of fatigue pants from the Fort Bragg Marine Base and Charleston (S.C.) Naval Base.

Holden Beach also got a free Hare Traction Split for immobilizing broken legs and two KEDs, an instrument used to immobilize a person with an injured neck or back.

Cook said the life jackets, medical supplies and blankets can be used during water rescue operations. The "Desert Storm" fatigues will come in handy during training.

"We can use them for night surveillance on the beach," Holden Beach Officer Bill Jordan added. "In a hurricane they'll be nice. Instead of getting our uniforms dirty we can use them."

Earlier this year, Hoffman said the Ocean Isle Beach Police Department received about \$45,700 in military surplus, including several computers and computer accessories.

Ocean Isle also got three copy machines, a generator, paper shredder, clothes and boots.

"It's a great program, especially for the smaller departments," Ocean Isle Police Chief Curt Pritchard said. Small towns like Ocean Isle need to save money wherever they can.

The only requirement placed on the police departments is that they keep all supplies they receive for at least one year. After that, they can sell the stuff or give it away.

Southport made out the best of the three local municipalities that have participated in the program.

The \$131,800 in supplies included four inflatable boats, five computers, back packs, binoculars, an underwater camera and expensive scuba equipment, including 11 divers masks valued at \$2,000 each.

Holden Beach and Ocean Isle Beach police say they didn't get all of the supplies they requested, but they were pleased with what they received. Cook is still hoping for a generator and night vision binoculars.

"I applied for a lot of things that they didn't have in stock so I didn't get it," Pritchard noted. "It's hit or miss. We put in for a Jeep also, but needless to say Holden Beach got there first."

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