

All-New Festival Halloween Carnival To Focus On Costumes

BY LYNN CARESON

Organizers of the Festival by the Sea Halloween Carnival say this year's event will focus on its popular costume contest, which last year drew 120 contestants up to 13 years old, and similar wholesome activities.

Missing this year, and from now on, will be the haunted house which carnival coordinator Martin Feldt says was too scary for the little kids and attracted too many rowdy teenagers looking for Halloween mayhem.

This year, organizers are counting on the event being a true carnival fair, with the costume contest as the highlight, complemented by games,

NO HAUNTED HOUSE THIS YEAR

information booths and a larger, improved raffle.

"It'll have a whole new look," said Feldt, adding the carnival will be changed "from this point forward."

The carnival is held annually at Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department on Sabbath Home Road as the kickoff event for the Festival by the Sea. This year, registration for the costume contest begins at 5:45 p.m. and ends at 6:45. The judging begins at 7.

Contestants are divided into cate-

gories from infant through 3 years old, 4-7 years old, and 8-13.

Games and information booths will be open at 6 p.m. The games will include fishing, pumpkin toss Nerf basketball, darts and something called the "duck pluck," Feldt said. About a dozen games are planned in all.

Information booths will be staffed by representatives of such organizations as DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), the Optimist Club and Turtle Watch.

Raffle gifts this year will include fishing rods, fishing trips, dinners and kites, Feldt said. There will be 35 to 50 raffle prizes this year, as compared to last year's 20.



BEACON FILE PHOTO
THE COSTUME CONTEST will be the focus of this year's Festival by the Sea Halloween carnival. Pictured are last year's winners in the 4-7 age group. They are (from left) Cody Galloway, Tayler Champion and Jessica Loughery.

Holden Beach, Marine Fisheries Strike Compromise On Gill Nets

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach fishermen will be allowed to leave their gill net gear on the strand during peak fishing season under a compromise worked out between town and state officials.

N.C. Fisheries Director William Hogarth issued a proclamation Monday revising an earlier mandate that established gill net restrictions for all of Brunswick County.

At the request of town officials, Holden Beach has been exempted from a provision that requires fishermen to remove all equipment such as ropes, anchors and buoys when gill nets are not in use.

Holden fishermen also may leave their nets unattended between Labor Day and Jan. 31. Elsewhere in Brunswick County, fishermen must stay with all nets set from the beach.

"We made a special exemption for Holden Beach at the request of the town commission," said Rich Carpenter, southern district manager with the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries.

The exemption takes effect Thursday. However, fishermen who want to leave their gear on the strand or leave nets unattended must get a state permit first. Applications can be filled out at Holden Beach Town Hall.

Holden Beach officials have been looking for the exemption since speaking with a group of local gill net fishermen shortly after the state rules took effect Aug. 2.

The fishermen said requiring them to remove anchors, ropes and buoys every day would put a burden on them because it takes several hours to set up a gill net

operation.

Town officials agreed and decided to reject the state rules in favor of a less-restrictive town ordinance. The local ordinance turned out to be illegal, however, and the town and state agreed to work out a compromise.

Mayor Wally Ausley, who recently met with Marine Fisheries officials for two hours at his home, said the new rules should please the fishermen, state and general public.

"I'd like to thank Marine Fisheries for their sensitivity and cooperation and for helping our local fishermen," Ausley said.

The mayor said the exemption will allow fishermen to set their nets at night and return at sunrise to remove the fish. "They've traditionally done it that way."

The new rules still prohibit net fishermen at Holden Beach and other county beaches from setting gill nets from the strand from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

It's also illegal for fishermen to leave gill nets set from a boat within 300 yards of the beach unattended during the summer.

Carpenter said all gill net gear at Holden Beach will have to be removed from the strand and ocean by the end of January. The state will make sure it's taken up by having a representative present during removal.

Ausley said the fishermen will still be responsible for ensuring that all ropes are buried on the strand and all litter and dead fish are removed from the beach.

"I want to challenge our fishermen on Holden Beach to make sure they abide by the letter of the law," Ausley said. "If they don't, I think Marine Fisheries will be reluctant to work with us in the future."

Meet Holden Beach Candidates Monday

Holden Beach voters can meet the 11 candidates who are running for town commissioner at a special forum Monday (Oct. 25) that is being sponsored by a group of town residents.

Mack Foster, one of the organizers, said last week he has hand-delivered invitations to each of the candidates for the meeting scheduled Monday at 7 p.m. in town hall.

"We just got together and we were talking about it and thought it was a good idea," Foster said of the meeting. "We're going to try our best not to let it get out of hand."

On Nov. 2, voters will elect five people to two-year terms on the

board of commissioners.

The candidates include incumbents Gay Atkins, Sid Swarts, David Sandifer and Jim Fournier. Also running are Dwight Carroll, Crawford Hart, Jeff Lee, Don Pollard, James Shafor, Larry Vogt and Roger Williams.

At Monday's meeting, each candidate will have three minutes to give an opening statement about their background, experience, qualifications and vision for the upcoming term.

Afterward, audience members will have the opportunity to direct questions to specific candidates or the entire group. Follow-up ques-

tions will not be permitted unless there is time at the end of the meeting.

Foster said he doesn't expect Mayor Wally Ausley to speak at the meeting since he is unopposed in his bid for re-election.

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