

Neighbors, Fellow Leaders Mourn Loss Of Popular Mayor

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died sometime Wednesday of natural causes. "He had some medical problems and I feel that was a contributing factor," White said. "He died peacefully in his chair. I feel like it was his heart, as a result of the other medical problems he had."

Ausley's death came as a shock to his friends. Despite some recent health problems, including an operation for colon cancer, he seemed to be doing well.

Ausley had played golf Wednesday afternoon with Holden Beach residents Harold Sellers, Tom Roose and John Arnold at Lockwood Golf Links. Sellers said Ausley appeared to be in good health at the time.

"It was a terrible shock to all of us," Sellers said. "He seemed perfectly well. As far as his actions on the course I thought he was just as normal as could be. He was in good spirits."

The fourth mayor in Holden Beach history, Ausley was first elected in 1991 when he received 75 percent of the vote. He was unopposed last fall in his bid for re-election to a second term.

"There's a real void in the peoples' hearts here at Holden Beach and in Raleigh," said Gil Bass, who knew Ausley for more than 25 years.

"He was a great person. The real friends that you have you can count on one hand. He was a real friend to many people," Bass said.

Flags outside Holden Beach Town Hall and at the foot of the bridge were lowered to half staff Friday. Town hall was closed Monday afternoon, and the town board canceled an all-day retreat that had been scheduled Wednesday.

Sandifer, who frequently played golf with Ausley, described him as a man who cannot be replaced. "When you talked to Wally you felt like the most important person in the world at that moment," he said.

Sandifer said Ausley's "calming effect" as a mayor is going to be missed. "When you look up small-town mayor in the dictionary there should be a picture of Wally. He was perfect for Holden Beach."

Ausley, who retired and moved to the island full-time in 1990, was well-known around the state because of his work as a ra-

"I had hoped he would be the 'Voice of Holden Beach' forever."

—Acting Mayor Gay Atkins

dio sports broadcaster.

Governors Jim Hunt and Jim Martin both proclaimed "Wally Ausley Day" in North Carolina in 1983 and 1990 respectively. Gov. Dan Moore bestowed the state's highest honor, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, on Ausley in 1966.

Ausley was known as the "Voice of the Wolfpack," a nickname he earned over a period of 30 years while broadcasting N.C. State University football and basketball games.

Born and raised in Harnett County just south of Raleigh, Ausley was a 1949 graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill.

In 1959, he went to work for WPTF radio station in Raleigh and eventually worked his

way into the position of vice president and general manager of Durham Life Broadcasting Co.

Ausley was inducted into the N.C. Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 1987, joining the likes of Edward R. Morrow, David Brinkley and Charles Kurait.

Holden Beach Commissioner Gay Atkins, who is acting mayor until a mayor is appointed, said nobody will be able to handle the office as well as Ausley.

"I had hoped he would be the 'Voice of Holden Beach' forever," she said. "With his charisma and personality, there's no one we can pick to replace him who will be able to come up with the right words at the right moment."

Ausley was the driving force behind Holden Beach's 25th anniversary celebration last month.

"He did such a fantastic job with our anniversary," Atkins said. "He put the whole program together. None of us have the background to have done what he did."

In addition to his work as mayor, Ausley was chairman of the board of trustees at Holden Beach Chapel and also was a mem-

ber of St. James The Fisherman Episcopal Church in Shallotte.

"It's certainly a great loss to North Carolina and especially Holden Beach," Bass said. "Through his broadcasts and his personality everybody loved Wally. He was just a personality in North Carolina that everybody knew and loved."

Bass said Ausley gave 100 percent in everything he did and always rose to the top. "Everything he did he worked at it and that's why he was so good at everything he did," he said. "He loved to sing, he loved to talk and he loved to fish. He was just getting into golf."

A memorial service for Ausley will be held Sunday, April 24, at Holden Beach Chapel during the 11 a.m. service.

Survivors include a son, Larry Ausley of Apex; daughter, Karen Ausley of Hyde Park, N.Y.; brother, Horace Ausley of Fuquay-Varina; two stepsons and two stepdaughters.

The family asks that memorial contributions be made to the Ausley Scholarship, c/o Humanities Fund, Campus Box 8101, NC-SU, Raleigh, N.C. 27695.



SURROUNDED by the popping and tinkling of heat-shattered plate glass, a crew of volunteer firemen turns a water cannon on the interior of the Good-Will thrift shop.

Building's Owner Credits Area Firefighters With Quick Response

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Inside the building, firefighters quickly knocked down the initial blaze, but it had extended into the rafters. It soon rekindled and broke through the tar-painted roof, sending flames shooting into the air and creating a cloud of smoke that looked like an enormous bruise against the sky.

"When I sent my second crew back in when we ran into trouble," said Carter.

Shallotte pointed a stream of water from its aerial truck on the blazing roof, supported by hoses directed from the roof of Bryan's and from the ground behind Thomas Drugs, where Civietown firefighters set up a dump tank for water hauled from a hydrant farther up Main Street.

Firefighters' efforts received a big boost when Ocean Isle Beach VFD arrived with its high-pressure aerial truck, nearly doubling the volume of water reaching the fire from overhead.

Carter said there was no apparent damage to Bryan's and only minor water damage inside Thomas Drugs from water seeping through closed-off vents near the roof.

"The firemen really did a wonder-

"They deserve all kinds of praise. I knew everything that could be done was being done. Thank everybody and praise the Lord they were there."

—Ed Thomas

ful job of saving my drugstore. I was real impressed, especially when Ocean Isle Beach brought their aerial truck. That saved the day," said Thomas. "We were very lucky."

Thomas praised the firefighters on the scene, especially Chief Carter and Fire Marshal Cecil Logan.

"They deserve all kinds of praise," he said. "I knew everything that could be done was being done. Thank everybody and praise the Lord they were there."

The church had leased the building from Thomas to house its ex-

panding ministries. Its Good-Will thrift shop opened Feb. 18 in the front of the building, while the rear provided overflow classroom space for the 35 students in grades seven through 12 of Eastside's private Christian academy. The space also housed an evening GED class for adults taught by Robert Moise for Brunswick Community College.

Built in 1954 by Herman Stanaland Sr., the structure pre-dated building code requirements that call for an air space between light fixtures and ceilings. It stood at 4753 Main Street, between Thomas Drugs and Bryan's, and across from Eastside Fellowship, and had been in the Thomas family since the early 1960s.

Known as the old Coastal Insurance Building, it had housed a variety of professional and business offices over four decades—offices for at least three physicians, two drugstores, a lawyer and a finance company as well as a former site of the insurance company.

"There was a lot of history in that little building," said owner Ed Thomas.

Thomas had been at church and was on his way to the family's cottage at Holden Beach when he received a cellular phone call that a Main Street structure was on fire.

"I called 911. That's how I found out where it was," he said.

Volunteer fire departments from Shallotte, Shallotte Point, Civietown, Tri-Beach, Supply, Sunset Beach, Ocean Isle Beach and Calabash responded, along with Shallotte Volunteer Rescue Squad, Brunswick County Sheriff's Department and Shallotte Police Department.

Classes Resume At Eastside, But In Makeshift Quarters

Both high school and GED classes resumed this week at Eastside Fellowship in makeshift space at the church, short on both equipment and supplies.

George West II, principal of Carolina Christian Academy, said Monday that room dividers were being installed in the church auditorium to create classrooms and that classes would resume Wednesday morning.

"However, we lost all our lockers, computers, typewriters, filing cabinets, teachers' desks and other material that we do need to replace," he said.

Some extra textbooks were in storage at the church and teachers will improvise using copies until replacement texts arrive.

"Our concern is to continue what we're doing for these kids," said West.

A Parent-Teacher Organization meeting will be held Friday at 7 p.m. at the church to allow parents and other interested persons to see what has been done, organize efforts and "reassure them as to what is going on," said West.

West praised efforts by firefighters and the community: "They really rallied strongly around us. We've re-

ceived numerous calls offering assistance and we thank God for it."

Robert Moise's high school equivalency class resumed Monday night, also in space provided in Eastside Fellowship's auditorium building.

Catherine Godley, assessment and retention specialist with Brunswick Community College's literacy program, said that with the new location she expected the class schedule to change to accommodate the church's use of the facility. Instead of Monday and Wednesday evenings, the class will meet Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

"They're going to meet tonight," she said Monday, "and are expected to change to the new schedule starting Thursday (today)."

The class had been meeting in the academy space since March, having relocated from St. Brendan's Catholic Church to a more central location for students.

Monday BCC literacy program employees were pulling together new instructional materials for the class.

"We lost everything that was in there," said Godley.

Pretty Spring Weather Ahead

"A nice transition into spring" is what Shallotte Point weather-watcher Jackson Canady says to expect for the next few days.

For the period April 5-11, temperatures hit a maximum high of 80 on April 6, 10 and 11, with the minimum low 42 on the 8th.

Average daily high was 77 degrees, and average nightly low, 53. The daily average temperature was 65 degrees, about 2 degrees above average.

Canady measured no rainfall at his home.

He forecasts temperatures above average and near-normal rainfall for the next few days, with nightly averages in the mid-50s, daily highs in the upper 70s and about a half-inch of rainfall.



SHALLOTTE FIREFIGHTERS launch a barrage of water on the blaze as smoke and flames pour through the flat, tar-covered roof.

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