

Officer Saves Man From Drowning After Jump From Ocean Isle Pier

BY SUSAN USHER

A Kannapolis man working in the area nearby drowned Friday afternoon after he and a drinking buddy jumped into the ocean from the end of the Ocean Isle Beach Pier on low tide, possibly on a dare, police say.

Benjamin "Benny" Allen, 26, was released from New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington Monday. Allen had been working locally in the roofing business.

Allen and two friends, whose names were not released, had been drinking throughout the day, and were intoxicated at the time of the accident, according to the report filed by Ocean Isle Beach Police Officer Eric Lammonds.

"I understand they jumped on a dare, but I don't know that as fact," said Chief Curt Pritchard.

What is certain is that Allen was in trouble as soon as he hit the water. A friend first tried to rescue him using a surfboard, but Allen could not hold on.

Their call for help came in to Ocean Isle Beach Police Department at 4:40 p.m. Friday, Chief Curt Pritchard said, and Lammonds was on the scene in two minutes, with Shallotte Volunteer Rescue Squad first responders close behind.

By then Allen was floating in chest-high water and did not appear to be breathing.

Leaving his pistol and radio on the strand, Lammonds waded out to Allen and brought him ashore.

"At first he didn't get a pulse and he and several first responders were preparing to ad-

minister CPR," said Pritchard, "but then Lammonds checked again and felt a very faint pulse and turned him on his side."

Allen was transported first to The Brunswick Hospital and then transferred to New Hanover Regional Medical Center, where he had been in "serious, but stable" condition Saturday. According to Lammonds's report, the officer was advised Allen had consumed large quantities of seawater, enough to prohibit breathing, and was quite intoxicated.

"I think it is fair to say that if Officer Lammonds or someone else had not rescued him, he would have drowned," said Pritchard.

Lammonds's gun was unharmed, but a wave washed over the officer's radio, drenching it in saltwater. After a freshwater bath and drying out, and it's operating fine, said Pritchard.

Coast Guard Has Busy Weekend

The U.S. Coast Guard station at Oak Island stayed busy last weekend, responding to requests for assistance from five disabled vessels and two persons stranded on an island by rising tide, according to a case report from station chief BMCS J.D. Arndt.

At about 3:30 p.m. Saturday, the station's 41-foot boat was patrolling near Lockwood Folly Inlet when it came upon a disabled 19-foot pleasure boat anchored near the Buoy 4. Although the boat was in no immediate danger, there were squalls approaching the area that might have created a hazardous situation, Arndt said. Consequently, the boat's crew provided assistance by towing the boat to the nearest safe haven.

On Sunday morning at about 9 o'clock, the station was called by the vessel "P.D.Q.," reporting itself disabled and anchored nine miles south of Cape Fear River Buoy 2. After determining that the situation was not an emergency, the station assisted by issuing a Marine Assistance Radio Broadcast (MARB) to give commercial salvors an opportunity to respond.

A response was received and a salvor provided assistance to the disabled boat by towing it to Southport Marina, Arndt said.

At about 4:20 that afternoon, the

station was called by the vessel "Doctor Boo," stating that it was disabled and anchored in the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) near Marker 48. Determining that this was also a non-emergency case, the station issued a MARB and arranged for the boat to be towed to safety.

About an hour later, the boat "Fish Tails" called the station to report itself aground near Cape Fear River Buoy 13, Arndt said. A passing vessel attempted to assist, but was unable to get the boat underway.

The Fish Tails crew declined the Coast Guard's offer to remove them from the boat. Because they were in no danger, a MARB was issued. A commercial salvor responded and re-floated the vessel.

A short time later, Coast Guard Auxiliary vessel 6959 called the station to report an 18-foot boat disabled in the ICW near Marker 1. The vessel had no radio, so a MARB was not issued. The auxiliary boat provided assistance by towing the disabled vessel to Southport Marina.

At about 6:40 p.m. that same day, the station received a call from the New Hanover County Sheriff's Department reporting two people stranded on Smith Island. The sta-

tion's 21-foot inflatable fast-response boat was dispatched to investigate and found two women stranded on the east beach of the island.

"A boat had apparently dropped them off for some sightseeing and they were going to walk back to the Federal Point area across New Inlet," Arndt said. "Unfortunately,

the tide had come back in, making the current a little too swift for them to make it across."

The 21-footer came in as close to the beach as possible. The two women waded out to the boat while holding a safety line and were taken aboard. They were transported to meet waiting ground transportation.

Program Needs Volunteers To Learn About Medicare

Volunteers are being sought for the local chapter of Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), according to the Pearl W. Stanley, Brunswick County home economics extension agent.

Training for SHIIP volunteers has been scheduled for the following Tuesdays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the cooperative extension office in the Agriculture Building, Bolivia: June 14, 21 and 28, and July 4, 12 and 19.

SHIIP trains senior citizens to counsel other seniors in the community about Medicare, Medicare supplements and long-term care.

Stanley said. "Seniors who become a part of the SHIIP family go through 24 hours of training during which they learn the 'ins and outs' of the Medicare program and supplemental policies," she added. They also learn counseling techniques and are informed of changes in health insurance so they can pass that information on to other seniors.

SHIIP operates a network of volunteers in all 100 North Carolina counties.

For more information or to pre-register, call or write Pearl W. Stanley, Home Economics Extension Agent, P.O. Box 109, Bolivia NC 28422, (910)253-4425.

Personnel Actions Approved By Board

The Brunswick County Board of Education approved routine personnel actions at its May 10 meeting.

The board:
 ■ hired Tracy Spencer of South Brunswick, as an interim therapeutic assistant, Supply Elementary; Edith Bell of Southport, interim elementary teacher, Bolivia Elementary;

■ accepted resignations, effective various dates, from Jill A. Flaccavento, elementary teacher, Union Elementary; Blaine Sutton, Chapter 1 Reading, South Brunswick Middle; and Victoria O'Brien, eighth grade science, South Brunswick Middle; Nancy T. Vereen, teacher assistant, Supply;

■ accepted retirement of Dorothy B. Hewett, teacher assistant, South Brunswick High;

■ dismissed Marquis Williamson, custodian;

■ granted leaves of absence of various types to Anne Mitchell, JTPA/dropout prevention coordinator, central office; Sybil Simmons, computer support specialist, Supply Elementary; Karl Tutt, English teacher, South Brunswick High; and Tina Lord-Sillery, English/Extended Day teacher, South Brunswick High; and approved three substitute teachers.

Correction

The wrong street was identified in the May 12 issue of *The Brunswick Beacon* in an article about a partial withdrawal of dedication of a public accessway at Ocean Isle Beach.

The access is located across from Duneside Drive.

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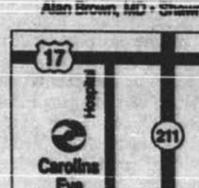
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A Letter from Tom Aldridge

To everyone who voted for me, contributed to my campaign, put up signs and posters, made phone calls, designed advertising and posters, worked the polling places and supported me in other ways, thank you. If it were possible, I would thank you personally. A very special thank you goes to my wife and children who sacrificed a lot and gave a lot during the campaign.

I would appreciate your continued support and prayers as I assume the position of District Court Judge for the 13th Judicial District in December.

Thank You!!!!

