

## An Outspoken, Civic-Minded Dynamo

### Ina Mae Mintz Serving 13th Year As Bolivia's Mayor

BY DOUG RUTTER

"Everybody in our little old town knows everybody. I think it's a wonderful place to live if you like a quiet place where you don't have to worry about too much crime."

This is Bolivia, in the words of Ina Mae Mintz. She knows the community as well as anyone. She's lived there for more than 50 years and has served as mayor of the sleepy Brunswick County town for the past 13.

It's a town where about 85 percent of the 300 residents, including Mintz, are senior citizens and where a once-thriving business district has all but evaporated in recent decades.

Still, it's home to Mintz, now in her seventh term as mayor, and she loves it. In Mintz, Bolivia has an outspoken and civic-minded leader. A dynamo. A woman who describes herself as "aggressive."

The oldest of five daughters, Mintz grew up helping her sisters and has never stopped helping others.

"I don't ever remember being a person that sat around, even as a teenager," she said in a recent interview. "I was born that way. I've always been a volunteer. I've always been active in anything community-minded."

That includes town politics, women's organizations and the Bolivia Lions Club, which recently elected Mintz as its first female president.

"I think the reason I got the job was nobody else wanted it," she said modestly. "They always say, 'Let Ina Mae do it,' so I got it."

Mintz, who joined the club a few years ago when Lions International opened its organization to women, describes Bolivia Lions as a "real active" group.

Its ongoing projects include making fruit baskets for home-bound people. "We don't win too many awards but we do a lot of things," Mintz said.

Mintz is also one of the leaders of the Brunswick County Council on the Status of Women, part of a nationwide organization that primarily provides training for underprivileged women.

The local group collects food three times per year and gives it to the Brunswick County Volunteer and Information Center for distribution to needy families.

"One group has collected as much as 20 barrels of food at Wilson's in Southport in one day," Mintz says proudly. "It's one of the things that I really enjoy doing because it feeds hungry people."

Despite her work with the women's organization, Mintz insists that she is not a feminist.

"I respect the authority of men, and I think they should be the heads of households. I don't like belligerent women," said Mintz, who raised three children and has six grandchildren.

Born in Wilmington, she moved to Brunswick County as a child and later to Bolivia "as a young bride" of Foster Mintz. She and her husband, who died 12 years



INA MAE MINTZ relaxes on the back porch of her Bolivia home. She stays busy taking care of her plants and vegetable gardens.

ago, ran a car dealership in Bolivia for over 50 years. Mintz said Bolivia's town board has been busy recently. For the last 18 months, officials have been working with the Cape Fear Council of Governments to update ordinances and zoning regulations. The town recently established zoning authority in an

extraterritorial area, which takes in property within a mile of the town limits. "We are upgrading this place. We have already upgraded this place a whole lot with zoning laws," she said. "I think we've made a lot of progress." Bolivia has one full-time employee, manager Ina

King. "Miss King is wonderful. I don't want to brag on her too much or someone will hire her away from us," Mintz said.

When Mintz isn't involved with town affairs or civic work, she likes to spend her time crocheting, doing crossword puzzles and traveling.

The mayor also stays busy taking care of the vegetable gardens behind the Danford Road residence she's called home for the last 31 years.

"I get out there and dig. That's my therapy. Instead of going to the spa I go out there and dig in the yard," she explains.

"I could go to the spa for two hours and have nothing to show for it but wet clothes. Or I can go out in the garden and dig for two hours and I'll have wet clothes and the prospect of nice vegetables."

Mintz says Bolivia wasn't always the slumberous town it is today. It once had a significant business district.

"We had seven grocery stores here at one time, two car dealerships, one time we had a doctor here," Mintz said. "It was certainly larger than it is now. We had a saw mill, just a lot of things when I came here to live."

So what happened?

"The majority of the young people that go away for an education don't come back. The old people die and there's nobody to carry on the business. That's basically what I think happened. The ones that could carry on the business just moved away. There's not many young people that live here."

Bolivia hasn't had a grocery store in years, but Mintz said she thinks the townspeople and folks around Bolivia could support one.

"We need a grocery store very bad. This territory is big when it comes to the outlying communities. I'm convinced a grocery store would pay off here," she said.

Realistically, however, Mintz says she doesn't expect things in Bolivia to change anytime soon.

"The availability of property right here in the town is very slim. That's one of the problems. There's no property for sale. That's a hindrance," she said. "I think if we had a lot of property for sale around here you'd see a big change. I really do. The few people that have extra property don't want to part with it."

Bolivia's voters must be pleased with the job their mayor has done.

Since defeating incumbent alderman Berkley B. Mercer in the 1981 mayor's race, 33 to 23, Mintz has not faced a challenger in the past six elections.

In the Oct. 29, 1981, issue of the *Beacon*, mayoral candidate Mintz was quoted as saying, "I want Bolivia to continue to be a good place to live. I am concerned about my community."

Over the years, her philosophy hasn't changed.

"The first time I went in a sat down with four men looking at me I felt pretty silly," Mintz said of her first town meeting as mayor.

Eventually, the makeup of the town board changed. Mintz now heads up a group that includes three women and one man.

"I don't know whether I'll file next time or not. There's right much involved," she sighs. "I thought about not running last time, but our town manager was new and she was used to me. I'm playing it by ear."



PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

BLACK SKIMMERS are familiar birds along the shorelines of our beaches, inlets and marshes.

## Skimmers Are Specialists

BY BILL FAVER

Many birds are unique specialists when it comes to finding their food. One of the most remarkable and highly specialized birds is the Black Skimmer, a tern-like bird 16 to 20 inches long with a wingspan of 40 to 50 inches. Skimmers use their strong wings and peculiar bill to skim just above the water in search of their food.

When Samuel de Champlain explored the North American coast, he recorded in "Voyages" these words about the skimmers:

*We saw also a seabird with a black beak, the upper part slightly aquiline, four inches long and in the form of a lancet; namely the lower part representing the handle and the upper part the blade which is thin, sharp on both sides, and shorter by a third than the other, which circumstance is a matter of astonishment to many persons, who cannot comprehend how it is possible for the bird to eat with such a beak.*

It is extremely difficult for the bird to pick up something on land, and the head and bill must be

turned sideways to accomplish that feat. But the bill is well designed for use in skimming the water, and when the lower mandible is under the surface, small fish and shrimp are quickly seized when the bill strikes them.

Sometimes the bird may make a "cut" or "line" in the water and then return to pick up the curious minnows who have come to investigate. Young birds, which must be able to feed on land, have bills about the same size and only develop longer lower mandibles when they begin to feed in flight.

Black Skimmers nest on dredge spoil areas where the birds form shallow scrapes in the sand. Four or five pale bluish to buff eggs with heavy markings of brown are laid, and the female does most of the incubating. Skimmers range from Massachusetts and Long Island southward, and the birds winter in North Carolina and the Gulf Coast to the south. They prefer to feed in coastal bays, inlets, mouths of rivers and marsh channels, and may be seen in early morning and late evening skimming along the beach.

Champlain was astonished at this fascinating bird and its unique feeding habits. Those of us who take the time to watch Black Skimmers can become just as fascinated at their behavior and their methods of skimming for food.

## Holden Beach Turtle Watch Ready To Adopt Out Nests

Holden Beach Turtle Watch is looking for a few good foster parents—enough to assist turtle hatchlings from at least 30 nests make their way safely to the ocean.

A meeting for all groups or individuals interested in adopting a nest will be held Thursday, July 28, at 7 p.m. at Holden Beach Town Hall.

"Anyone who wants to adopt a nest really needs to come to this meeting," said Judy Bryan, program coordinator at Holden Beach. "There are new forms to fill out for the state and they need to be told how to do it."

Last year sea turtles laid 4,863 eggs in 42 nests along the strand at Holden Beach, with a 90 percent hatch rate, Bryan said. Volunteers escorted 4,382 babies to the water.

Two nests were inundated by the ocean and most of their eggs lost. During a storm last Oct. 30, she said, waves destroyed a dune that housed one of the nests.

"The baby turtles had begun hatching after having

been overdue for 23 days," said Bryan. "They saved 10 babies but there had been nearly 150 eggs."

Volunteers who "adopt" a nest agree to have someone stand guard at the assigned nest several hours each night, starting with the 55th night after the eggs were laid, to watch for signs of hatching.

They are also expected to shape a foot-high mound around the nest to prevent the hatchlings—each no larger than a silver dollar—from turning toward house or road lights instead of toward the ocean. The mound connects to the trench dug by other Turtle Watch volunteers. The trench leads from the nest directly to the ocean and must be swept clean daily by the "foster parents" for that nest.

"We usually try to team vacationers with residents to ensure continuity in case the nest doesn't hatch while the vacationers are here," said Bryan.

For more information about the Holden Beach program, call her at 842-7242.

## ONE HOUR EYE GLASSES

Complete Pair  
Single Vision  
Lenses  
\$12.95  
Any Power  
CR-39 Plastic

Complete Pair  
Bifocal Lenses  
Any Type  
Any Power  
\$29.95  
CR-39 Plastic

Present this coupon for these special prices  
Single Vision  
any power \$69.95



Complete Pair  
Progressive  
Any Type Lenses  
Any Power In Stock  
\$79.95  
CR-39 Plastic

Complete Pair  
Trifocals  
Any Type  
Any Power  
\$39.95  
CR-39 Plastic

Line Bifocals  
any power \$89.95  
Progressive no-line  
any power \$109.95

NEW-Transition Lenses

This offer includes...  
•Single lenses •Bifocal lenses  
•Progressive lenses

Frame Size 54 Eye and Above Add Just \$10.00  
Coupons Expire July 31, 1994. No other discounts apply.

Transition lenses are the new plastic lenses that change into sunglasses.

## CLEAR-VUE OPTICIANS

We can make arrangements to get your eyes examined today.  
(910)395-6563 3901-A Oleander Dr., Wilmington  
1-800-634-1085 Mon.-Fri. 9:30-7p.m., Sat. 9:30-5 p.m., Sun. 1-5 p.m.

Other locations—Kinston, Greenville, Jackson, Wilson, Raleigh & Goldsboro.