



Strange Faces

Odd-looking characters are a common sight in the annual Festival by the Sea parade. This weird couple greeted onlookers from the rumble seat of a shiny antique car last week as it rolled down the Holden Beach causeway.

STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC CARLSON

Two Ocean Isle Policemen Praised For Role In Defusing Confrontation

BY SUSAN USHER

Two Ocean Isle Beach police officers have been awarded departmental letters of commendation for their performance defusing a tense Oct. 20 showdown on Duneside Drive with an armed man.

Police Chief Curtis Pritchard said Tuesday that he has officially recognized Lt. James Stewart and patrol Officer Wayne Downer.

"I'm very proud of both of them," he told town commissioners. "I can't say any officer anywhere else could have handled the situation any better. They did it exactly right."

The men successfully brought the hostile confrontation to an end without harm to anyone and arrested their subject, he said.

On the night of Oct. 20, William Earl Holden, 45, armed with a MAC-90 assault rifle, was taken into custody outside his Duneside Drive residence after firing several shots into his residential neighborhood and threatening to kill Downer or anyone else who approached him.

Stewart approached Holden from the rear and forced him to the ground as Downer encouraged the subject to set his rifle aside and smoke a cigarette.

Additional officers responded from Ocean Isle Beach, Sunset Beach, Shallotte and the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

To Protect Sewer Line

Commissioners gave Mayor Betty Williamson authority to seek informal or sealed bids as needed to repair erosion threatening the 14-inch diameter sewer line that transports wastewater from the island across the Intracoastal Waterway to the town's treatment plant off Georgetown Road.

The ductile iron pipe was installed in 1987 under a 2½-foot cover that has gradually disappeared, exposing a section where the pipe bends and drops below the waterway on the island side. Building Inspector Drueid Roberson said high wake from boats has contributed to the problem, since vessels no longer have to slow down to pass under the waterway bridge.

To prevent the line breaking, the

"I can't say any officer anywhere else could have handled the situation any better. They did it exactly right."

—Curtis Pritchard, OIB Police Chief

town proposes protecting the pipe above and below by encasement at a cost of about \$50,000. Roberson estimates the work will provide "a 15- to 20-year fix."

Other Action

In other action commissioners: ■ commended Town Clerk Daisy Ivey for completing the International Institute of Municipal Clerks' three-year certification program through the Institute of Government at UNC-Chapel Hill, and for her and staff's financial management that resulted in an excellent 1993-94 audit report.

■ awarded a \$24,650 contract to G & G Dredging, the only informal bidder, to dredge the entrance of Commercial Canal a distance of about 100 feet. The company has a contract to dredge the concrete canals, but will need to bring in a larger dredge for this job because spoil material has to be pumped 7,700 feet to a Corps of Engineers spoil area, the mayor said.

■ declined to take a position on a proposed saltwater recreational fishing license. The Town of Surf City had written asking Ocean Isle to go on record opposing the license.

■ adopted a resolution agreeing to the transfer of its cable television service franchise from Vision Cable to a Time-Warner Entertainment partnership, with the understanding the change in ownership would not cause any interruption in service.

■ learned that during October, 21 permits were issued in town for construction valued at \$1.26 million, and five permits were issued in the extra-territorial area for construction worth \$141,000. Through October, 1994 construction is \$1.5 million ahead of 1993, which was a "banner" year for the town, said Building Inspector Drueid Roberson.

■ appointed Ocean Isle Beach

Property Owners Association Bob Jewel and Commissioner Ken Proctor to two-year terms as the town's representatives on the Ocean Isle Beach Volunteer Fire Department's new Firemen's Relief Fund Board.

■ noted that concerns raised by property owners on Denton and Culpepper streets about noise, increased

traffic and road blockage by trucks making deliveries to Ocean Aire Market are out of the town's jurisdiction since Denton Road is a private street. Market owners said they planned to improve the street at their expense, but that they couldn't control how early the trucks made deliveries.

■ delayed reconsideration of a draft agreement regulating menhaden fishing along the Brunswick County coastline until after meeting Tuesday afternoon with other beach town officials. Ocean Isle commissioners rejected the proposal last month, saying they preferred an outright ban on menhaden fishing off the town's beach.

Dune Project Discussed

BY LYNN CARLSON

Ocean Isle Beach's proposed 50-year berm and dune renourishment project was on the minds of several speakers at a public forum hosted by the board of commissioners Monday night.

Commissioners are holding quarterly evening sessions to hear concerns and answer questions from residents and property owners who cannot attend the board's regular meetings, held at 9 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. About 20 townspeople came to Monday's session.

Commissioner Debbie Sloane Smith, serving as moderator, outlined five alternatives being studied by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ranging from \$6 million to \$11 million in construction costs with maintenance costs between \$1.6 to \$2.3 million every three years.

The project the Corps says it considers most effective would extend 12,580 feet from Winnabow Street to Duneside Drive and would cost an estimated \$10.2 million. It would have a dune top elevation of 9.5 feet and a berm width of 50 feet at a 7-foot elevation. The Corps would pay 65 percent; the town and other non-federal sources would pay the remaining 35 percent, roughly \$3.58 million.

Smith said commissioners have asked the Corps to restudy the beach and try to find an economically feasible way to "stretch" the project to rebuild as much of the eroding east end oceanfront as possible. She warned that if the town departs from the Corps' recommendation it will not be eligible for federal funding for the project.

"I feel they're being cooperative with us," Smith said. "We've made them aware that the east end is our immediate area of need. We can opt for some other plan, but the town would have to pay for it with no federal funds, and I don't foresee the town being able to do an \$11 million project on its own."

Property owner John Brockman said commissioners should try to reach "some happy medium" with the Corps to dredge Shallotte Inlet and renourish the dune line giving priority to the east end.

Jim Kelly, also a property owner, asked if commissioners think the

Corps can be convinced to extend the proposed project east of Winnabow Street.

"They know that's what we want," Smith said.

Smith said the Corps believes that opening Shallotte Inlet all the way to the sea buy will improve the flow of seawater and lessen the rate of erosion on Ocean Isle Beach's east end.

Tentative plans are for project construction to begin in December 1997, Smith said. Plans and specifications would be drawn during 1995 and '96, with real estate acquisition taking place during much of 1997.

Brockman urged commissioners to "take a stronger position on protection of the east end. A major part of the problem is that their plan would put sand in front of places that are actually accreting. The sand's not going to move east. I've been down here 25 years and I can tell you that."

Fire Chief Dave Harrell asked for the commissioners and firefighters to schedule a joint workshop to talk about water supply and concerns raised by a recent oceanfront blaze which destroyed two Holden Beach homes and damaged two others.

"If there had been any wind except one heading offshore, they'd have lost a dozen houses," Harrell said. "One of their problems was water supply, and they have a larger water line to their island than we have. I'd like to see us work out whatever available water supply and firefighting capacity we can and get ahead of it."

Harrell said support for the fire department has increased 70 to 75 percent this year over the past few years. "We have more members on our roster than before and more citizens offering to help us. It's almost a complete turnaround over the past few months."

Commissioner Ken Proctor said he still favors a special fee, for improved properties only, to benefit the fire department. At 5 percent of the town tax on improved properties, "in most cases you'd still pay less than the \$25 the fire department now asks," but condominium owners and holders of multiple parcels would pay a fairer share, he said.

The next evening workshop is scheduled for Feb. 6 at 7 p.m. in the town hall.



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MRS.
(Leo, 1987) Mrs. can sit close to Mr., but she's also satisfied sitting by herself. She too has a coin with a monarch on it, Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain. She knows that the best way to rule the household is to make the husband think he's the king.

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