



### Help For Hope Harbor

Staff and volunteers (in photo above) of Hope Harbor Home domestic violence shelter complete a ski demonstrating for those attending Saturday's third annual Holiday Fling the burden of domestic violence. Pictured (from left) are Cathy Swaim, Hope Harbor Home executive director, Judith Toole, Amy Bland and Winnie Haire. Several hundred people attended the luncheon and auction sponsored by the Seaside United Methodist Church Outreach Committee to raise funds for Hope Harbor. In photo at right, Seaside Pastor the Rev. Jerry Lowry auctions off one of dozens of items donated by businesses and individuals. Last year's Holiday Fling raised \$8,000 for the shelter. This year's goal was \$10,000. The amount raised was not available at press time.



STAFF PHOTOS BY LYNN CARLSON

## Beaches Seek One-Mile Buffer From Menhaden Fishing Boats

BY DOUG RUTTER

Brunswick County beach towns seeking protection for island residents and the vital tourist industry are now asking menhaden fishing boats to stay at least one mile offshore year-round.

The one-mile "no fishing zone" is included in the latest draft of an agreement between six area beach towns, three menhaden fishing companies and the N.C. Fisheries Association.

Officials at Holden Beach, Sunset Beach, Long Beach and Caswell Beach are ready to sign the agreement, but two other municipalities have yet to endorse the proposal.

Ocean Isle Beach Commissioners aren't expected to discuss the agreement until their Dec. 13 meeting. Yaupon Beach officials have tabled the proposal, favoring a half-mile no fishing zone instead of a one-mile zone.

Jerry Schill, executive director of the N.C. Fisheries Association, did not have an immediate reaction to the latest proposal, which was developed two weeks ago at a meeting of town officials.

Schill said the menhaden companies did not receive a copy of the two-page agreement until Monday morning and had not had time to review it in detail.

However, it seems unlikely the menhaden companies will sign the document since more than two-thirds of the pogies caught off Brunswick County are within a mile of the beach.

The agreement, scheduled to take effect Jan. 1, 1995, is designed to reduce conflicts between local beach municipalities and the menhaden fishing companies.

Town officials want to reduce the chances of fish spilled from menhaden boats washing up on area beaches. They're concerned about the short-term effect on residents and visitors as well as the long-term impact on tourism.

Three months ago, the six towns got together and asked the N.C.

*The proposed agreement would require menhaden companies to use an anti-foaming agent in the fish pumpwater discharge and to "respect the rights of recreational fishing interests."*

Marine Fisheries Commission to keep menhaden boats at least 1 1/2 miles offshore May 1 through Sept. 30 and one-half mile offshore Oct. 1 through Dec. 31.

The state commission never considered the request. Instead, a committee of town officials and menhaden company representatives was formed to work out an agreement.

After an initial agreement was drafted, town representatives met two weeks at Holden Beach to talk it over. Among other things, they decided to add the ban on pogies within a mile of the coast.

"I think this would be a good compromise between the menhaden industry and the towns along the coast," Holden Beach Mayor Gay Atkins said Monday.

Menhaden company officials said at an Aug. 17 meeting in Supply that most of the fish they harvest in Brunswick County are caught during the summer and within one mile of the beach.

From 1986 to 1993, 69 percent of the menhaden caught off Brunswick County were within a mile of the beach, according to the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries.

The only three menhaden companies that work in Brunswick County are Beaufort Fisheries, based in Carteret County, and the Virginia-based AMPRO Fisheries Company and Zapata Protein.

The current proposal calls for the N.C. Fisheries Association (NCFA)

to serve as a liaison between the towns and menhaden companies.

As proposed, the NCFA would have to pay a \$1,000 fine to the towns if it fails to notify local officials when a menhaden vessel will be working off the Brunswick County coast.

In the event of a fish spill the responsible company would notify the NCFA and the towns, telling them where the spill occurred and the estimated quantity and movement of the fish.

Towns would clean up spills using town employees or contractors. Within two weeks of the cleanup, the towns would bill the NCFA and the association would have two weeks to pay.

The towns have proposed that they be reimbursed for twice the cost of the actual cleanup.

Mayor Atkins said that provision was added because cleanup costs would be only part of the economic impact of a fish spill. She said a spill could have a long-term negative effect on tourism—the county's largest industry.

The proposed agreement would require menhaden companies to use an anti-foaming agent in the fish pumpwater discharge and to "respect the rights of recreational fishing interests."

The Marine Fisheries Commission is expected to review the agreement at its meeting Dec. 2 in Smithfield.

## School Financing Proposals To Be Presented 'Soon'

BY SUSAN USHER

Details of "four or five" proposals for financing a new elementary school to serve the Leland area weren't available Monday night for Brunswick County Commissioners' consideration, but soon will be.

Commissioners had anticipated adopting a financing resolution at their meeting Monday, but the county finance office is preparing the proposals in a format that will allow ready comparison of the terms of the various offers.

"It will be done right away for this board to adopt a resolution," County Manager Wyman Yelton said.

The resolution has to designate the institution where the installment financing contract will be placed.

No one spoke at a public hearing earlier Monday evening on county plans to finance the 27-classroom project at a cost of no more than \$8 million using an installment financ-

ing contract.

Unlike a bond issue, installment financing allows structuring of the repayment plan so that payments are about even over the life of the contract, rather than larger in the earlier years. Interest rates run slightly higher for an installment contract placed privately with a lender, but the cost of the transaction is typically lower than for a bond issue.

The Brunswick County Board of Education this week began advertising for sealed bids for construction of the 79,000 square foot school. Bids will be accepted through 3 p.m. Dec. 15. Bids will be opened and inspected and a contract awarded as soon after that date as possible.

By the time the school is built, equipped and furnished the project cost is expected to approach \$8 million. The county expects to pay off the debt using state half-cent sales tax revenues designated for school purposes.

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