

Aquarium 70% Complete, Moving Toward May Opening

Progress on the new Aquarium is now moving quickly, with construction more than 70 percent complete! Concrete tanks, floors and roof panels are in place, and metal stud walls crisscross the building. Much of the primary piping, ductwork, and electrical circuits have been installed, and individual gallery spaces have taken final shape. In some areas, sheetrock wallboards are going up to close the open feel of the structure. A walk through the facility is beginning to feel much like an aquarium visit.

Reynolds Polymers, manufacturers of the large acrylic viewing windows, have installed windows in a number of tanks, including the Otter

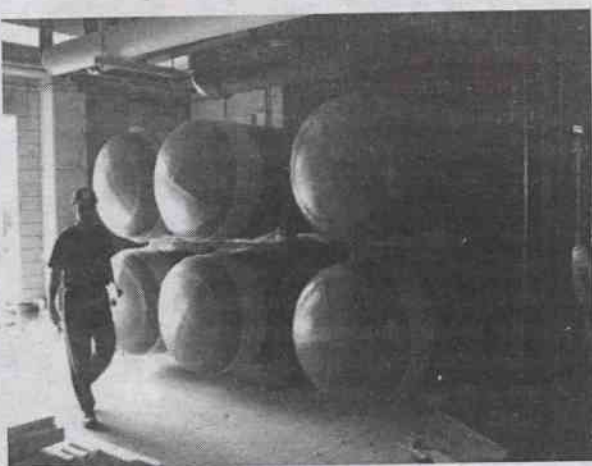
Exhibit, Smoky Mountain Trout Pool, Beaver Dam Creek and Falls Lake Reservoir. Water testing of these tanks has begun, and the largest exhibits, the Living Shipwreck and Queen Anne's Revenge, have already been water tested.

Photos have been selected and text has been reviewed for the many new graphic panels and photo murals that will accompany new exhibits. A. Brothers Associates of Raleigh is in charge of producing the image-rich graphics, which will be installed closer to the May reopening date. More than 50 of these large and colorful panels will tell the Aquarium's story of aquatic life "From the Mountains to the Sea."

The Aquarium staff is hard at work collecting specimens for the new facility. With the help of summer interns, fishing trips and dive trips were scheduled each week. Occasionally, a unique specimen is donated from a local fisherman, such as the 17-inch horse conch

found at Harkers Island, or the 6-inch Cuban hogfish donated by a mate onboard the Captain Stacy. Specimen collecting continues through fall, by which time several large sharks should be swimming inside the Aquarium's off-site warehouse facility.

The expansion of the Aquarium will require a significant increase in staff. Thirty-one new full-time positions will be filled over the next few months, including positions in animal care, exhibits, education, volunteer services, dive operations, retail sales, security, maintenance and ticketing. For more information, and to see what



positions are currently available, log on to our web page at www.ncaquariums.com and click Pine Knoll Shores, then on Volunteer and Job Opportunities.

During construction, the Aquarium continues to offer field trips and programs from its off-site location in Atlantic Station Shopping Center, Atlantic Beach. Although the off-site location doesn't feature exhibits, program information and registration and Aquarium Society memberships are available.

Fall is a wonderful time to join the Aquarium for exploratory trips to Shackleford, Cape Lookout and Rachel Carson Reserve. Newport River cruises remain on the calendar, along with birding trips and beachcombing walks. The Aquarium's popular annual Surf Fishing Weekend, now in its 15th year, is set for Oct. 7-9. For a complete calendar of events, check our Programs and Events page on our web page, or call the Aquarium at 247-4003.

Back to School in Carteret County

Submitted by Barbara Milhaven

So it was back-to-school on Thursday, Aug. 25, for the Carteret County public school children and time to think of packing nutritious lunches or having your child buy the school lunch.

According to Tabbie Merrill, Communications Director for Carteret County Schools, our school district is working towards offering a more nutritious lunch; one that is less caloric, has less sodium and fat content and with a trend toward more fresh fruit and de-emphasizing snacks and sweets. Parents may access the Carteret County Public School web site at www.carteretcountyschools.org where they will find school lunch menus and prices as well as other vital information pertaining to their child's school life.

You may, however, prefer to pack your own nutritious lunch for perhaps more control and less cost or other personal reasons. Listed below are some novel ideas to make these lunches healthy as well as fun to eat:

*Please note that it is probably safer to have your child buy the milk in cartons offered through the school lunch program than to use a thermos. Skim milk will be offered this year and fruit juice boxes can be brought to or bought at school.

Make small meatloaf portions in muffin or cupcake tins-freeze and take out portions as needed, thaw and reheat (children usually like foods eaten at room temperature). Pre packaged condiments along with a buttered roll, fresh vegetable sticks, fruit and an oatmeal cookie make a fun, healthy lunch.

Make or buy breaded chicken or fish fingers/nuggets, freeze, thaw and reheat before packing the lunch bag or box. Balance the meal as suggested above, interchanging with dried fruits and grains as dessert or snack.

Apple butter, thinly sliced apples and a thinly sliced piece of mild cheese on whole wheat bread makes a tasty well-balanced sandwich. Pepperidge Farm makes thin sliced whole

wheat bread that is better for your child. An occasional brownie or other treat is usually quite acceptable and appreciated.

Baked chicken legs, sweet potato chips, fruit and cookie are easy to eat and good as well as healthy.

Softened cream cheese with nuts, olives, jam or fruit slices on whole wheat bread makes another tasty sandwich and along with your child, you can be creative. Children like to be included in the planning and if time allows, the preparation.

Soy spread with sliced bananas and thinly sliced apples makes another good sandwich. Crumbled bacon bits can be added to make it even better. Low fat/sodium boiled ham or regular ham with cheese and mustard is certainly not novel, but you can add a bit of pickle, relish or chutney to make it special.

Sliced/quartered hard-boiled eggs, finger vegetables, toast rounds or rolls can be packed and eaten separately or made into a sandwich. Some sort of packaged condiment might be included to dip or spread.

Peanut butter and jelly has been a favorite it seems like forever, but some schools are suggesting caution because children like to trade lunches and this could cause a problem if the child accepting the trade has a peanut allergy.

School children in Pine Knoll Shores please let us at *The Shoreline* know how you feel about taking lunch to school. Maybe it's "cool" to buy the school lunch and maybe you have some good suggestions I haven't thought of. We would like to hear from you and have you provide some articles for us or just share your thoughts with us. You can send us an e-mail at [The Shoreline office \(attention Miss Barbara\) at shoreline@townofpks.com](mailto:shoreline@townofpks.com)

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