

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### Kids summer craft classes

A creative crafts program for the children of Oak Island will be offered this summer by the Oak Island Art Guild.

Six sessions, two a month, will be held for children ages nine to 12 at the Long Beach Recreation Center. Class dates are June 17-18, July 15-16, and August 19-20. Instructors will be members of the art guild.

Among the arts and crafts scheduled are origami, sandcasted candles, shell crafts, shrink art, Japanese fish prints, sponge painting and beach plaques.

The first class will feature sand candles and the June 18 class will be origami.

Those wishing to attend one or more classes should call program coordinator Frances Allen at 278-3708 to register. There are no class fees, but space is limited.

### Potter classes begin in June

Registration for beginner, intermediate and advanced pottery students, 18 years of age and older, continues through June 17 at the Franklin Square Gallery pottery studio.

Students will work on pottery through August 24. Three class times will be available on Tuesdays.

The instructor is Kimberly Smittle Caroon, who holds a bachelor of arts degree in arts education from Ohio State University.

There is a \$35 registration fee, payable to Brunswick Community College, in addition to the cost of materials. There is no registration fee for senior citizens.

More information can be obtained by calling Caroon at 457-5499.

### Abstract painting class slated

An abstract water media class will be held on Tuesdays at Franklin Square Gallery.

Sponsored by Brunswick Community College, the classes will begin at 9 a.m. with instruction by Ortrud Tyler of Long Beach. Registration will be held June 8 and June 15. The cost is \$35 a person, with no cost to senior citizens.

### Craft shop sponsors classes

Decorative art and tole painting is among the classes held at the Oak Island Senior Citizens Craft Shop.

The class will be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays. Bette Turner is the instructor. More information can be obtained by calling 278-6293.

### Thalian Hall open for tours

Thalian Hall in Wilmington is open for daily guided tours.

The hour-long tours begin at 9:15 a.m. Monday through Friday, and feature historic information as well as a backstage tour of the theater's working areas. The cost is \$2.50 for adults and \$1 for students.

Self-guided tours can also be arranged between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday by calling 1-919-343-3660. A group rate of \$2 a person is offered.

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With pain-staking precision Frank Orrell of Wilmington works on a scale model of the *Santa Maria*. Several of Orrell's boat models will be on display

this month at Franklin Square Gallery as part of the "Beach, Boats and Birds" show.

Photo by Marybeth Bianchi

## Ship reproduction is piloting Orrell through his retirement

By Marybeth Bianchi  
Feature Editor

Frank Orrell didn't want to spend his retirement years sitting in his easy chair watching television, so he builds ships instead.

During the past seven years, the Wilmington resident has spent thousands of hours patiently doing the intricate work necessary for the scale reproductions of some historic sailing ships.

Orrell said he built model airplanes as a boy and enjoyed visiting historic ships he encountered during his travels later in life. A couple years after he retired he saw an ad in a Lions club magazine advertising model shipbuilding for beginners and saw this as a way to combine the two interests.

"I ordered it just to see if I could do it," he said. "It's not like the little model airplanes I built. The first experience just about ended in disaster."

Orrell had completed the hull of the *Swift*, an 1870 pilot boat. But when the gunwale refused to go on correctly, he said, "I got so frustrated I tossed it in the trash."

Fortunately his wife recovered it and encouraged him to finish the model and move on to others.

The first project was simple compared to the others that followed. It took just 70 hours to complete. The replica of the *Constitution*, which Orrell and his wife visited in Boston, took 800 hours over a two-year period.

That model has 1,700 pieces of copper plating which had to be cut out and fit onto the hull, "and I don't know how many yards of rigging," the builder said. The completed work has been appraised at more than \$8,000. It sounds like a lot, but Orrell pointed out it's just \$10 an hour for all his skilled labor.

The ship replicas come in a kit imported from Italy, with a set of plans and all the wood necessary to complete the project. However, each piece of wood must be cut to size, some soaked and bent and then every piece glued into place. Ordinary wooden dowels are cut, shaped and painted to become a

*'Beach, Boats, Birds' will be on exhibit at Franklin Square Gallery through June 24; gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday*

ship's masts. Everyday string is knotted and made into rigging.

"It's really the same as scratch building, but scratch builders do their own plans," he pointed out.

He uses a scroll saw and drill press to shape the wooden pieces, while his wife uses her sewing machine to create the sails.

He admits the work is "tedious and time-consuming" but adds that "when the weather's bad I just can't sit and watch TV."

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"The instructions say to work quietly and patiently," he said, showing his work table set up in a back bedroom of his ranch home located in a quiet suburban neighborhood.

"You never set a goal to finish a model by a certain date because then you start rushing," he said.

Orrell has completed a total of seven ships, several of which will be on display at Franklin Square Gallery as part of the Associated Artists of Southport show for June. All of the ships will be enclosed in glass, but viewers will get a chance to get a close-up look at Orrell's detailed work.

Among the models he's built are the *Blue Nose II*, a tall schooner used in Nova Scotia as a fishing boat; *Charles Morgan*, an 1841 whaling ship; and his current project, the *Santa Maria*.

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