

Trojans Begin Grid Practice

Cary Cumbee (right) helps a teammate through stretching exercises during West Brunswick's Tuesday morning practice session. The Trojans joined all other high schools across the state currently in pre-season drills. The story is on page 9-A.



More Town Board Coverage Inside

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Bob Buck Retires

With grandson Gene Bradley in his arm, Bob Buck accepts the framed resolution adopted by the Holden Beach Board of Commissioners that honors Buck for his contributions as town administrator. The story is on page 2-B.



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Ocean Isle Mayor Resigns; Leaves For Cayman Islands

BY TERRY POPE

Saying she wanted to spend more time with her family, Ocean Isle Beach Mayor LaDane Bullington resigned last Friday to take an extended vacation to the Cayman Islands.

When contacted Tuesday morning in Miami, Ms. Bullington confirmed that she will be leaving this week to stay in the Cayman Islands with her husband, Bill, and their three children, Kendra, Grant and Frasier. Kendra is participating this week in an international beauty pageant in Miami.

Ms. Bullington also confirmed Tuesday that she has arranged for her children to enroll in school at the Cayman Islands if she decides to stay there past August. She said the family has rented a condominium at the British West Indies resort island about 490 miles south of Miami.

She said there is no truth to the rumor that she plans to live there permanently.

"They just can't believe the simple truth," Ms. Bullington said.

Before giving commissioners her resignation last Friday, Ms. Bullington said she had no plans to leave Ocean Isle. "This is my home," she said. "This is where all of my interests are."

In the telephone interview Tuesday, she said her family is building a 9,300 square-foot penthouse at their Ocean Point condominium project on the west end of the island. She said her family has plans to live there in the future and that they may decide to sell their Second Street home.

"I may be back in a few weeks or maybe a month," she said. "I don't know when I'll be there."

"I'm just going to play with my

kids. When I'm there, I work. It's hard for me not to work when I'm there," she added.

Her husband will be traveling back to Ocean Isle to look after the family's business interests, she said.

Ms. Bullington said she has also resigned from the Cape Fear Council of Governments Region O executive committee and the N.C. Coastal Resources Commission Advisory Council. She said she did not want to miss the meetings and remain a member of the boards.

At the town board meeting last Friday, Betty Williamson, mayor pro-tem, was appointed mayor. Ms. Bullington's brother, DeCarol Williamson, was appointed to the board to fill Ms. Williamson's seat.

Both appointees will serve out the remainder of their terms, and both have stated they will run for their respective seats in the Nov. 3 municipal elections.

Ms. Bullington announced last Wednesday that she had called a special meeting for Friday to offer the commissioners her resignation, just four months before her term expired and four weeks after she filed for re-election as mayor.

About 30 residents and her family members attended the meeting where Ms. Bullington appeared happy, but said she also felt a little sentimental.

"I've worked a long time to be able to do this," Ms. Bullington said. "Up until this time, I've always felt that I needed to stay working for the town, but I really feel that someone else can do it now."

She sat next to the arrangement of red roses the commissioners and town employees had given her and informally answered questions from

residents before the meeting began.

Ms. Bullington had served as mayor for the past 14 years, never drawing a salary and never taking a maternity leave through the birth of her three children.

"I'm just going to be thrilled to have the time to spend with my family," she said. "I don't feel like I've deserted anything. I'm going to be a mother for a while."

Ms. Bullington filed for re-election as mayor on July 3, but said at that time the town was in the process of hiring a new police chief and other personnel. She said she did not want to leave until those personnel matters were resolved.

"I'm resigning at this point to give someone else an opportunity to run for mayor," she said. "I felt that it would give the people of Ocean Isle a chance to start seeing another person in that position and to start thinking of who would best do the job."

In May, Ms. Bullington withdrew from the state lieutenant governor's race. "I would never have initiated that if I felt the town needed me here," she said.

Reports were aired by a local television station last week that Ms. Bullington had been the victim of vandalism and that death threats had also been made against her.

Ocean Isle Police Chief Bill Ozment said there has been a recent rash of car vandalism along Second Street, of which Mayor Bullington's two cars were also damaged, but that the incidents didn't appear to be personally directed against the mayor.

Ozment also said his department has received no reports of threats made against Ms. Bullington's life. Ozment said he doesn't know how the

(See DECAROL, Page 2-A)



MAYOR LADANE Bullington answered questions from residents before Friday's special meeting, where she received a dozen red roses from the commissioners before handing the board her resignation.

NO ACTION TAKEN

Getting On List Only Part Of Smoke Solution

BY SUSAN USHER

Getting Brunswick County back on the state's high hazard list will help, but it won't clear the air of smoke from controlled burning, county commissioners learned Monday.

"I don't see a single solution," said a forestry spokesman, "but I do see a broad solution."

A group of 50 to 60 supporters of CATS, Citizens Against Toxic Shenanigans, urged commissioners to help get the county back on the list, as well as taking other steps to clean up the air.

Commissioners moved their session to the public assembly building to accommodate the crowd, but with Chairman Grace Beasley and Commissioner Jim Poole absent, took no action.

Neither is relief expected this summer from the N.C. General Assembly, which is soon to adjourn.

Rep. David Redwine had said he would be willing to introduce the legislation, but wanted commissioners to have an opportunity to make a recommendation.

Contrary to published reports, County Attorney David Clegg said

there is no record in the minutes showing the board of commissioners as a body voted to ask that the county be taken off the high-hazard list in 1982.

However, Bill Miller of the N.C. Division of Forest Resources said two weeks ago that the action was taken by the legislature at the request of "county commissioners."

Clegg noted commissioners could have made the request as individuals rather than as a board.

Redwine said Monday he might introduce a bill in the 1989 session.

CATS organized last month after heavy smoke had blanketed the area for weeks. The smoke was the result of controlled burning by land developers, paper companies, the Forest Service itself (by reforestation contracts,) wildfires and weather conditions.

Saying he thought tourism, not timber, is now the county's "No. 1 industry," Odell Johnson warned commissioners, "We're going to have a Nader type go down Highway 17 one day and get in a wreck." When that happens, he continued, the county and paper companies will be sued.

Answers Vary
Forestry officials noted that get-

Though paper companies comply with state requests not to start new fires, those set even weeks earlier in organic soils may continue to smolder in dry weather.

If the county were on the high hazard list, the N.C. Division of Forest Resources ranger's office would have greater regulation over some controlled burning, but not all. It could restrict the timing and amount of material burned in piles or windrows, but couldn't stop fires that have already started.

Not affected would be "flat" burning. This is the kind of burning used early in the year by paper companies to clear litter from the forest floor to reduce the possibility of wildfire, and in the summer to prepare cleared acreage for fall replanting in seedlings.

Paper companies keep burning records and have a history of excellent voluntary compliance with state requests to stop burning or to not burn, officials with the N.C. Division of Forest Resources said.

Answers Vary
Forestry officials noted that get-

(See SMOKE, Page 2-A)

OTHER CANDIDATES FILE

Buck Seeks Election At Holden Beach

Former Holden Beach Administrator Bob Buck filed as a candidate for town commissioner Tuesday, just four days after he retired from town employment.

Filing for municipal offices in Brunswick County ends at noon Friday. Elections will be held Nov. 3.

Four other candidates have filed for Holden Beach seats. Mayor John Tandy is seeking re-election and Gil Bass, Donald Carey Jr. and Martin Feldt have filed for commissioner.

At Ocean Isle Beach, Debbie Fox and Virginia Gibson have filed for re-

election as commissioners. Also filing for commissioner are John Brockington and DeCarol Williamson, recently appointed to fill the seat of Betty Williamson, who was named mayor.

At Sunset Beach, council member Mary Katherine Griffith is seeking re-election.

A three-way race for mayor is starting to shape up at Long Beach, where Doris Werner has tossed her hat into the ring with Mayor John W. Vereen III and Commissioner H. Michael Oxford.

Three new candidates have filed at Long Beach for commissioner: Kevin M. Bell, Margaret Kaneer and incumbent David P. Ford.

In Southport, Judy Y. White has filed for re-election from Ward I and Norman Holden has filed for re-election as mayor.

In Belville, a race is developing for the mayor's office between Mayor Kenneth D. Messer Sr., who has filed for re-election, and former mayor Mildred Boney.

Her son, Sidney Boney, and Vickie L. Gooch join Tim Schedler as candidates for town commissioner.

Mayor Williamson Takes Office At Ocean Isle

BY TERRY POPE

When Ocean Isle Beach commissioners voted last Friday to appoint Betty Williamson as mayor, Ms. Williamson raised her hand, too.

"You can do that," Ms. Williamson quickly pointed out when residents who had gathered at the town hall laughed. The vote was unanimous.

The residents had come to watch a change in command at Ocean Isle following the resignation of Mayor LaDane Bullington.

After serving 14 years as mayor, Ms. Bullington resigned Friday to spend more time with her family. Mayor pro-tem Williamson became the board's choice to succeed the mayor.

Ms. Williamson, whose husband is a cousin of island developer Odell Williamson, will also serve as the town's finance officer. She has served on the board of commissioners for the past eight years.

Ms. Williamson had filed for re-election to the board in July, but will now withdraw from that race to enter the mayor's race instead.

She is a real estate broker at Ocean Isle and owner of Betty Williamson Realty. She moved to the beach in 1970 from Columbus County, where she was clerk to the board of commissioners (1967-70) and also worked as a county auditor, a job she says has prepared her for serving the town of Ocean Isle.

At Ocean Isle, she has served as chairperson of the board of adjustments, tax collector and registrar for the town.

"We hope it will be a very smooth transition," Ms. Williamson said Monday. "Our board has always worked very closely with the mayor in the past. I don't think

there will be any change at all in the way Ocean Isle Beach operates."

After taking the oath of office last week, she turned the spotlight on the outgoing mayor and asked those at the town hall to give LaDane Bullington a standing ovation.

In a prepared statement, Ms. Williamson praised Mayor Bullington for her dedication to the job and to the town.

"She always gives 110 percent of her time and energy to get things done," Ms. Williamson said. "The experience and knowledge LaDane has in local government is going to be greatly missed because she has represented us on the local, district, state and national levels."

She recalled how Ms. Bullington had appeared on NBC's "Today" program to represent Ocean Isle Beach in a debate on coastal issues.

"On behalf of the town board and the residents and property owners of Ocean Isle Beach," Ms. Williamson said, "we appreciate your dedication to the town, we love you, we will miss you and our best wishes go to you. We also wish to thank your family for sharing their time with the town."

Ms. Bullington said when she took office 14 years ago, she had to wear many hats. The town had one police officer, who also served as garbage collector.

"If everybody hadn't worked together, there's no way we could have gotten to this point today," Ms. Bullington said.

When she took office, Ms. Bullington succeeded a list of previous mayors that included her father, Odell Williamson, and her mother, Virginia.

After Ms. Williamson took the oath of office Friday, Commissioner Bill Benton added, "You continue our tradition of having a beautiful woman as mayor of Ocean Isle Beach."

