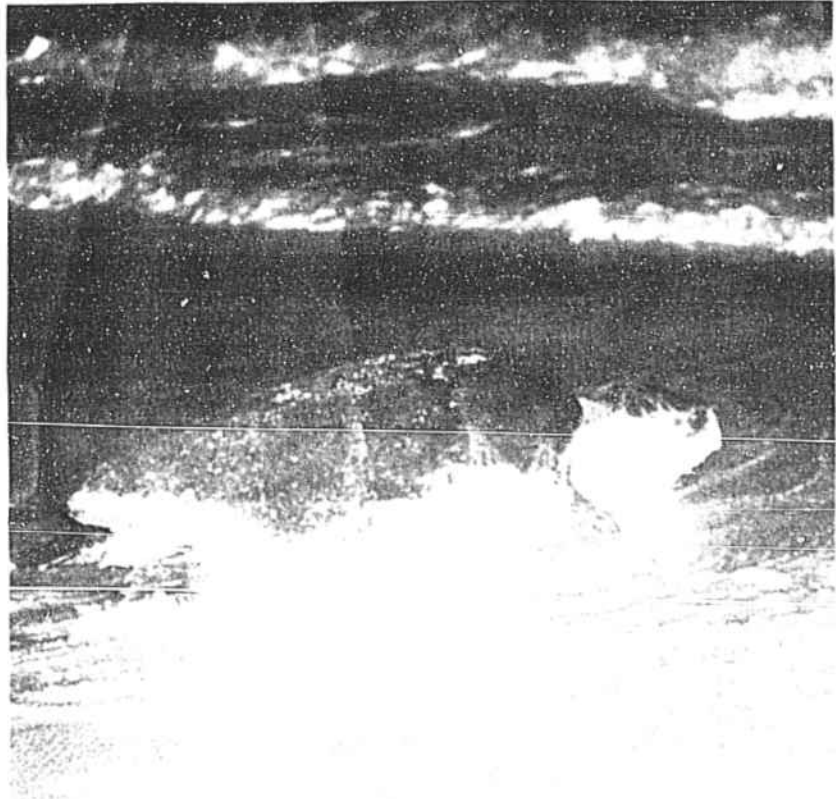


TRAPPED—This loggerhead turtle came ashore on the east end of Ocean Isle Beach, only to run afoul of debris on an abandoned lot.



FREED—Untangled by friendly beachgoers, the loggerhead heads out to sea, leaving visitors to wander if it later ashore and laid eggs.

Turtle With Mission Encounters Obstacles

BY SUSAN USHER

A loggerhead turtle came ashore on Ocean Isle Beach Sunday night, possibly to lay eggs. But before the creature could complete its mission, it got tangled in an obstacle course of wiring and debris.

When freed, it headed back into the sea, mission unfulfilled.

It was late Sunday when Pete Epps and his party of about 10 from Richmond, Va., came upon the turtle about 50 yards from the cottage at 27 E. Whiteville Street his family and the Hayes family had rented for the week.

It was high tide Sunday when the turtle came ashore where a house had previously stood next door. The loggerhead, an endangered species protected by federal law, ran afoul of a line of debris on the lot. Its flippers

became entangled in wire fencing. But Epps and his party came to her rescue.

"We don't think she got to lay any eggs, though they did find a hole farther up the beach this morning," Epps said Monday.

"We freed her from the wires, but it took everything she had, it was everything she could do to get back to the water. But once in the water she took right off."

Epps said he and his family had been vacationing at Ocean Isle Beach for nine years and were excited over their first sighting of a loggerhead. "In all that time, we've never seen anything like it," he said.

John Clarke, a veteran volunteer in Holden Beach's turtle watch program, said it isn't unusual for a turtle

to come ashore in August to lay eggs, though eggs laid earlier in the year are already hatching.

However, he added, these late-arriving turtles timing may have doomed their line of offspring.

Turtle eggs require 50 to 70 days incubation. That means eggs laid this month won't hatch until mid-October, he said, when water temperatures and other factors will make survival more difficult for the hatchlings. Turtles' instincts call for them and their offspring to return again and again to the same spot on a specific beach, even if the spot is badly eroded, as this spot at Ocean Isle.

"Their children won't make it back," he said.

The last "crawl" was noted at Holden Beach on Aug. 5, a week after

Morganian Jenny Byrd spotted two hatchlings awash in the surf.

With 32 crawls and 15 confirmed nestings logged at Holden Beach, Clarke said he expects at least 1,500 baby turtles to hatch during August and September.

The awkward hatchlings scramble from nest to ocean at night, under cover of darkness. Lights from houses and/or highway can disorient the young and distract them from their course, said Clarke. He asked residents of area beaches to keep this in mind by switching off any unessential night lights around their cottages.

He also asked that those who see baby turtles at Holden Beach contact the town hall during office hours or the police department after hours.

College Launches Campaign Against Adult Illiteracy

Brunswick Technical College is launching a major adult basic education enrollment campaign this month in conjunction with Adult Literacy Awareness Month.

According to the 1980 census, of the state's 3.4 million adults age 25 and older, more than 1.5 million never completed high school.

Over 635,000 of these adults do not have an eighth-grade education. Each year, about 20,000 students drop out of school without earning diplomas.

Statewide efforts to combat illiteracy are being spearheaded by the Governor's Commission on Literacy. Chaired by Bill Friday, the

commission will study the major problems that contribute to illiteracy and provide solutions for the elimination of illiteracy in the state. It was created in February by Gov. Jim Martin.

The college is seeking students for its ABE (Adult Basic Education) and GED (General Education Development) classes for the fall quarter.

There is no charge to enroll and classes are located throughout the

county for easy access.

The ABE program provides academic skills training for adults whose skill levels are less than the eighth grade. The GED program covers five major academic areas and is designed to provide a high school equivalency certificate from the N.S. State Board of Education.

For information on how to volunteer as a literacy worker or to enroll in the programs, call the col-

lege, 754-6900 or 457-6324.

The Brunswick County Literacy Council, which works closely with the college, trains volunteer reading tutors to work one-on-one with adult non-readers or those who read at or below a third-grade level. It will offer tutor training in the Laubach method Nov. 7 and Nov. 14 in the Longwood-Ash area. A \$15 fee is charged. More information is available by calling the council, 754-7323 (READ).

Commissioners Check Out Candidates For Manager

Learning from past experience, Brunswick County Commissioners are taking extra care this time around in their selection of a county manager.

At the board's request, the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department is conducting background checks on two finalists for the post.

The names of the candidates have not been revealed.

Acting by consensus, commissioners authorized Acting County

Manager David Clegg Friday to request the investigations. A day earlier, they interviewed four candidates for the position that has been vacant since April 1.

The investigations are to be done quickly and "as thorough as it is possible to do," said Chairman Grace Beasley.

Commissioners don't expect the background checks to expose any wrong-doing, only additional information about the candidates.

However, the more thorough checks are a response to past experience. In June, the board hired former Halifax County Manager M. Thomas Barnes. He was to start work July 1.

But a week before he was to report, they were surprised to learn he had been the subject of an SBI probe. Commissioners asked for and received Barnes' resignation.

The investigation hadn't been discussed in interviews with the board and didn't emerge in a routine background check.

In other business Friday, the board authorized advertising for a chief building inspector at a salary of \$24,614, and authorized Clegg to send out qualification proposals to firms that might be interested in bidding later on a large county mapping contract.

Aug. 19 Hearing Set On Stormwater Runoff Rules

Proposed changes in stormwater runoff regulations, including one that would directly affect coastal counties, will be discussed at a public hearing to be held by the Environmental Management Commission on Aug. 19 at 7 p.m. at the N. C. Aquarium at Fort Fisher.

The commission is considering at least three options, to: 1) not regulate stormwater runoff, with repeal of existing legislation; 2) extend existing regulations for one year; and 3) adopt new regulations that include repeal of the old rules and addition of a new section that would require stormwater controls on all projects that need a major CAMA permit or sedimentation/erosion control plan. This provision would apply to Brunswick and 19

other coastal counties.

Written comments will be accepted until Sept. 18 by the N.C. Division of Environmental Management, P.O. Box 27687, Raleigh, NC 27611-7687.

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