

Tindal Gets National Honor For Rescue At Holden Beach

BY RAHN ADAMS

Although bystanders who watched the daring water rescue in Shallotte Inlet last summer knew it at the time, Bobby Tindal last week became an official hero.

The 31-year-old Shallotte Point man was one of 19 people in the United States and Canada to be recognized by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission of Pittsburgh, Pa., for acts of heroism last year. Each will receive a bronze medal and \$2,500 grant. Tindal, a local painter, was notified of the honor on April 25, about two months after he found out that he apparently had been nominated by the woman he saved, 50-year-old Sheila Gerner of Phoenixville, Pa.

"It's okay . . . I'll just be glad when it's all over,"



Tindal

Tindal said last week, in reference to the recognition he has received due to the award.

He talked briefly with the Beacon Friday as he worked near the western end of Holden Beach, not far from where he braved the swirling currents of Shallotte Inlet last August to save Ms. Gerner, after another man made an unsuccessful rescue attempt and later drowned.

"I think he (Tindal) deserves it for what he did," said Harold Estep of the award. Estep is Tindal's employer and was an eyewitness to the rescue. "If it hadn't been for Bobby, she would have died."

The incident occurred shortly after 1 p.m. on Aug. 26, 1987, off 1249 Ocean Boulevard West, according to Holden Beach Police. Eugene Swanson, 58, of Rockaway, N.J., drowned after trying to aid Ms. Gerner, whose raft had drifted about 300 feet from shore in ocean currents off the western end of the

beach. Tindal and Arnie Potter of Supply were painting a beach cottage nearby when Estep noticed the commotion on the strand and called the painters away from their work. Seeing that the woman had left the raft and was struggling in the water, Tindal "just went out, stripped down to some shorts I had on, and went in after her," he recalled.

"She wrapped her arms around me, and I held her up. I had a time trying to bring her back in. She was heavier than I was."

After Ms. Gerner was returned safely to shore, Tindal, Potter and Police Officer K.S. Darr recovered Swanson's body.

A strong swimmer, Tindal said he didn't hesitate to go after the woman. "I'm familiar with the waters around here," he explained. "Somebody had to do something, or they would have had two drownings down

there." Since then, the only contact Tindal has had with Ms. Gerner was on the day after the rescue. "We shook hands and hugged necks and left. Then I got this thing two or three months ago," he said, referring to notification from the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission that he was being investigated for the award.

"She didn't have anything to give me then, so I imagine she did this for me," he said, adding that the \$2,500 grant will go to pay some family bills. He and his wife, Teresa, have one daughter, five-year-old Crystal. And he is taking the national honor in stride—even though Estep jokingly claimed that the hero was going to get the "big head" from all of the attention he has received.

"No, I won't," Tindal assured. "I hope I don't have to go through it again, but if I hear someone out there calling for help, I'll go after them again."

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STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTER

Fire Destroys Garage

A Sunday afternoon fire destroyed this garage and van located on Old Ferry Road near Holden Beach. Property owner Ray Coleman said he had no insurance on the

1974 vehicle or the estimated \$15,000 worth of tools lost in the blaze. Tri-Beach Fire Chief Allen Inman said the cause of the fire is unknown.

State Sues Local Firm For Erosion Control Violations

BY RAHN ADAMS

The N.C. Attorney General's office has filed a civil action to recover a \$32,200 penalty from a Shallotte development company for alleged violations of the state's erosion and sedimentation control laws over the past two years.

According to documents on file at the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office, the attorney general's office—representing the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD)—filed the lawsuit April 14 in Brunswick County Civil Superior Court against D.C.B. & F. Corporation, the developer of River Hills subdivision. The development is located off Tar Landing Road (S.R. 1135) overlooking the Shallotte River.

Principals in the local company include Paul and Connie Dennis, Chris Chappell, Bill Benton and Paul Floyd. The firm is represented by Shallotte attorney Mason Anderson.

In addition to serving as a Brunswick County commissioner, Chappell is an ex officio member of the Brunswick County Planning Board, a seven-member panel which oversees the county's residential development. Chappell served as the official agent for the company when River Hills received preliminary ap-

proval from the planning board in March 1986, according to the board's minutes.

When contacted last week, Chappell said the company was "waiting to see what's going on" with the lawsuit, which stems from the company's failure to answer NRCD's 30-day notice after the civil penalty was assessed last November.

"We filed papers toward saying we did not owe it (the penalty), and we thought it was taken care of," Chappell said last Thursday. "I haven't read the complaint . . . so I can't answer what they are complaining about."

On Nov. 21, 1987, Chappell was notified by the Division of Land Resources that the company had been penalized \$32,200 for violating the Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973 at River Hills during two periods: from June 10, 1986, to Dec. 23, 1986, and from May 16, 1987, to Sept. 17, 1987, according to the complaint.

According to the lawsuit, the company was given 30 days to either pay the penalty or submit a written petition to the state for an administrative hearing in the case. The company took neither action during the 30-day period.

"Since the defendant did not re-

quest an administrative hearing to contest the civil penalty assessment and since the defendant did not pay the \$32,200 assessment, the Secretary of NRCD . . . referred this matter to the Attorney General for collection," the complaint states.

Anderson said last Thursday that he had not yet answered the lawsuit, but that the company intended to deal with it "in good faith."

"At this point, it (the lawsuit) appears to be contested," Anderson said. He added that he would be in contact with the attorney general's office concerning the alleged violations which his clients "thought had been taken care of," he noted, reiterating Chappell's comments.

D.C.B. & F. initially was notified that it was violating erosion and sedimentation control laws in June 1986, after an inspection uncovered violations which included:

- More than one contiguous acre was uncovered on a multi-acre tract without an approved erosion and sedimentation control plan;

- Exposed graded slopes existed at an angle too steep to retain vegetative cover and restrain erosion;

- A sufficient ground cover to restrain erosion was not provided (See STATE SUES, Page 2-A)

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS FARE POORLY

Redwine Sweeps All But Two Of Precincts

BY SUSAN USHER

State Rep. David Redwine let out a series of one "Whoopie!" after another Tuesday night as results of the 14th District House race trickled in to the Brunswick County Public Assembly Building in Bolivia.

When the final count was done in a race that observers had predicted would be much closer, Redwine had won 20 of 22 precincts by a margin of more than 2,000 votes. He claimed all but challenger Glen Peterson's home precinct of Hoods Creek, where the vote was 53 Redwine to 102 Peterson, and Leland, where Redwine lagged six votes behind Peterson's 143.

For other incumbents, it was also a good night. While several races were close, in all but the three Democratic primaries for board of education, incumbents gained slots on the November ballot. At least one run-off will be called and possibly a second in the school board races.

Redwine Sweeps Polls

In Pender County's Topsail Township, Redwine received 523 votes to Peterson's 176, while results from New Hanover County's Castle Hayne Township were not available at press time.

Tuesday night Redwine said he thought he would do well. "But I didn't know we'd have a 2,000-plus vote margin," he added. "I am humble and appreciative that people think I'm doing a good job and are sending me back to Raleigh."

Redwine, whose Republican opponent in November is Rozell Hewett, a former county commissioner and a former Democrat, saw Tuesday's vote as one of affirmation.

Peterson, interviewed with most precinct results in, attributed his surprisingly low showing to several factors, but mainly Redwine's incumbency.

"What we've seen tonight is the power of the incumbency, not only in my race but in others," he said. Peterson added that while he had made inroads in earlier months, he felt that "people decided in the last week they were satisfied with the incumbent and went with him."

His opponent's name recognition and the "things you can do as an incumbent"—such as holding a legislative study commission meeting in the county, also hurt, he said.

A key issue in Peterson's campaign was that Redwine had catered to special interests during his tenure with introduction of a bill that allowed golf and other sports clubs in unincorporated areas of the county to sell alcoholic beverages, although a countywide ABC referendum had earlier failed. "That was the cutting issue, but people didn't respond to that," he added.

If Peterson were to run for public office again—something he refused to speculate on so soon after Tuesday's defeat—he said any future campaign "would be radically different."

"We'll be doing a complete post-mortem of this campaign," he said, to learn more about what went wrong. "I was looking for large blocks of votes, but right down the line they did not show up," he said.

School Board

Public discontent with the county's current school board seemed apparent Tuesday, with none of three incumbents gaining a sure seat on the November ballot.

A run-off will be held May 31 for the District 3 nomination and possibly District 1 also. District 4 member Marvin McKeithan of Bolivia was the

only candidate defeated outright Tuesday; he will not return to the school board in December.

Donna Baxter of Boiling Spring Lakes ended McKeithan's re-election effort in her first campaign for county office with 3,528 votes to McKeithan's 2,013. Baxter will go up against Republican John Watkins of Town Creek in November. She attributed her victory to good help, a knowledge of the issues and readiness of people to listen.

Watkins, a former member of both the county elections board and planning board, won out in a primary with retired school teacher Theodora (Teddi) Neal of Bolivia, 823 to 655.

While incumbent Doug Baxley led the field in the District 1 primary, he failed to win a majority in the three-way split. Cary Godwin, who finished second, said Tuesday night he hasn't decided whether to seek a run-off.

"I want to sleep on it tonight," Godwin said in a telephone interview from his home in Ash. "I will probably decide tomorrow or Thursday."

When the returns first came in, Godwin glanced at Baxley's lead and assumed the incumbent had won, he

(See REDWINE, Page 2-A)

Next Step Scheduled For Varnamtown Incorporation

Residents of the Varnamtown community meet next week to consider a proposed charter and to nominate a slate of town officers.

The meeting will be held Tuesday, May 10, at 7:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall of Gospel Center Baptist Church.

Marilyn Swain said the two items are the next step in the community's efforts toward incorporation.

"All this has to be done so it can be brought to a vote before the people," she said.

No date has been set for a referendum on the proposed incorporation, as requested by State Rep. E. David Redwine earlier this year. Such a referendum would be informational, indicating to the county's legislative delegation the community's desires regarding incorporation.

In a canvass earlier this year of residents of the proposed municipality, 126 registered voters favored incorporation, while 26 opposed it.

If a local bill for incorporation were introduced, it must include a charter. During a public meeting in March, Redwine advised he would need the charter before the General Assembly reconvenes in mid-June if the area is to be incorporated this year.

Among other things, the town charter itself must include the name of the municipality, corporate boundaries, details on election and structure of the governing body and system of town administration.

AT HOLDEN BEACH

Engineers Say Changes Could Make Island-Wide Sewer System Feasible

BY SUSAN USHER

First considered impractical and too costly, an island-wide sewer system could now be feasible for Holden Beach, according to a proposal from the engineering firm hired by the town to explore the community's wastewater-handling options.

According to a written proposal presented by Engineer Jay Houston of Lewis & Associates of Shallotte Monday night to Holden Beach Commissioners, "During the preparation of this proposal, several events have

occurred that should make an island-wide sewage collection, treatment and disposal system economically feasible."

These unspecified events, the proposal adds, are associated with the involvement of private enterprise in the project "and will greatly impact the final recommendations."

Holden Beach Commissioners had first talked in terms of a smaller system to immediately serve canal communities, with the possibility of future island-wide expansion in phases.

Commissioners did not look at or discuss the proposal Monday, but are to call a special meeting to review the document with the engineering firm. If the study is authorized by June 1, the projected completion date is mid-December, with 201 working days required.

As proposed, Lewis & Associates would serve as lead firm for the study, coordinating activities of several other consultants, including soil and water table specialists; negotiating with the state to improve the town's funding priority status

with the N.C. Division of Human Services; and exploring alternatives for public agency funding for a project.

The firm proposes to hire William G. Daniel & Associates of Cary to help analyze fieldwork data and work up financial plans. Also, it proposes to hire Dennis J. Osborne & Associates of Raleigh and Dr. Bobby Carlisle of College Station, Texas, to do soil studies and explore alternatives for land treatment sanitary sewer systems. They would also provide technical expertise in data gathering, preparation of soil maps

and water table profiles, and would assist in developing a standard checklist for operating a successful septic tank on Holden Beach.

Setting that standard would be part of extensive fieldwork proposed. The firm also plans to monitor some existing sewer systems to determine effectiveness of septic tanks on the island as well as to highlight major areas of their failure.

At the same time, the firm plans to evaluate various alternatives for collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater, work up rough cost

estimates, and the extent to which each alternative may be utilized.

Recent stricter interpretation of state septic tank regulations regarding "naturally occurring soil" and installation of septic tank elements under paved areas or driveways has slowed new construction in the town's three canal-front subdivisions considerably, according to town officials. Under the new interpretations, some of the small lots are not suitable for conventional or alternative septic tank systems.