

Volunteers Are Backbone Of Oyster Festival

Baskets of steamed oysters and other seafood delights may be what draws thousands of people to the N. C. Oyster Festival at Seaside each fall.

But volunteers who work hours in the trenches are the backbone of the annual event.

Just ask Elizabeth Dameron. The Holden Beach resident has coordinated oyster festival volunteers for the past four years and says there would be no festival without their

behind-the-scenes efforts.

"All of the work that is done for the festival is done by volunteers," she said in a recent interview. "We couldn't have the festival without them."

Because of their hard work, Mrs. Dameron said the oyster festival grows by leaps and bounds each fall. For the first time this year, a co-chairman of the volunteers has been added.

Fred Yarbrough of Seaside will

assist Mrs. Dameron in coordinating the 300 volunteers she said will be needed for the two-day festival. "We've got to share the work this year," she said. "The festival has grown so much."

Mrs. Dameron pointed out that the festival gets a boost each year by area Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops that volunteer. Harriet Bellamy's DECA class from West Brunswick High School also pitches in annually as well as many local

residents.

"The volunteers do everything from selling tickets to cooking and serving the food," said Mrs. Dameron.

Annette Odom, chairperson of this year's festival, pointed out that some of the most dedicated volunteers are part-time residents who own vacation homes in the South Brunswick Islands.

Fitz and Fugi Dove of Charlotte, who own a home at Sunset Beach, have volunteered at the festival for the past few years and plan to be back again this year.

"We feel like Sunset Beach is a second home and we feel like the oyster festival not only helps Sunset Beach but all of Brunswick County," said Dove in a telephone interview. "We're active in the community here, and we like to be active in the community there."

Over the years, Dove said he has mostly helped with food and drink service. He said he enjoys meeting all of the people who come to the festival.

"It's just a good way to meet other people, not only from Brunswick County, but from other places who have homes down there," he said.

"It would be nice to just walk around eating hot dogs, but helping out is something I enjoy."

Dove, who is in the insurance business in Charlotte, said he enjoys the relaxed atmosphere at the oyster festival. "I don't consider it working because it's so much fun. After sitting behind a desk all year in a coat and tie, it's nice just to put on a pair of jeans and relax."

The festival's relaxed style has also caused Harry Williamson to volunteer each of the past two years. Like Dove, he lives in Charlotte and owns a vacation home at Sunset Beach.

Williamson said he plans to bring about a dozen of his friends to the festival this year to pitch in as volunteers. "It's really a lot of fun helping out," he said. "There's a lot of camaraderie."

Over the past two years, Williamson said he has unloaded steamed oysters from boiling water, poured drinks and helped out with the massive cleanup effort following the festival. "I know it's something that benefits the whole area down there. That's why I volunteer."

Oyster Festival Run Expected To Be 'Best Ever'

BY JOHNNY CRAIG

With earlier planning sessions and a larger group of working volunteers, chamber of commerce officials and race sponsor WPGO radio station are looking forward to the biggest and best Oyster Festival Run ever.

The race is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 21, and will again be held at Holden Beach starting under the bridge at the regional beach access parking area.

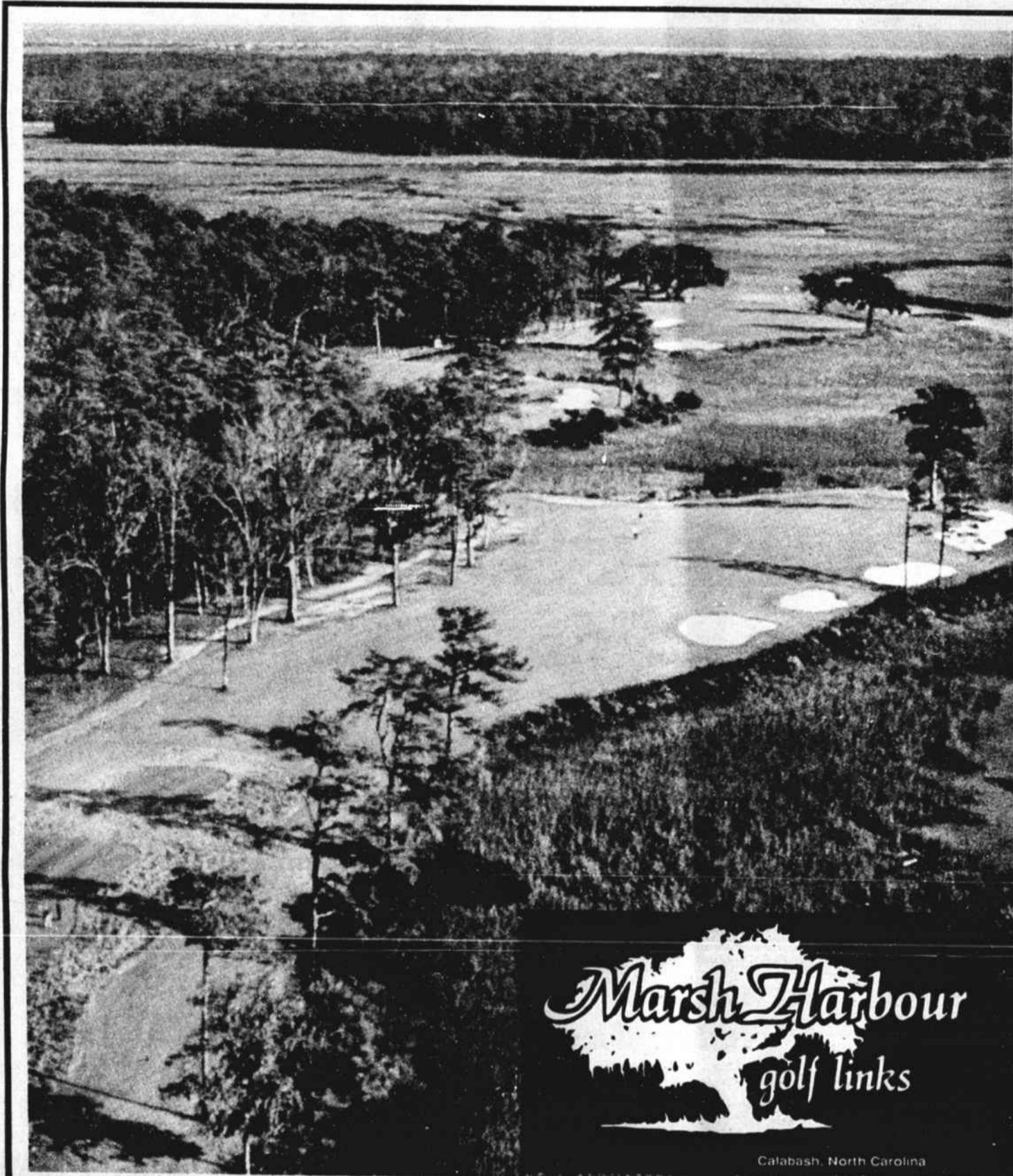
"There were already 10-15 runners registered as of our last festival organizational meeting on Sept. 25," said race chairman John Zachary. "We expect to have a lot more people registering as the race date nears."

"We really look forward to a much better run than a year ago," added chamber executive director Susanne Sartelle. "We have mailed out over 1,000 entry forms to potential runners and expect a super response."

Last year's men's and women's 10-K winners were Paul Chludzinski of Wrightsville Beach and Lindell Weeks of Nashville, Tenn. Steve Moffat of White Oak and Lori Hughes of Greensboro were the overall 5-K winners, while David Holden of Wilmington was the men's one-mile champion. There were no women entered in the one-mile event.

Forty-four runners were entered in last year's race with 25 competing in the 10-K, 17 in the 5-K and

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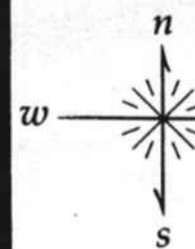
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