

Holden Commissioners Considering Changes In Auto Sticker Program

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach officials are considering drastic changes in the town's vehicle sticker program, including reinstating nominal fees for the decals and penalizing residents who don't use them.

The small windshield stickers are used to identify island property owners and residents following evacuations. The purpose of the sticker is to prevent from coming on the island following hurricanes or other disasters those who have no business on the island.

Following Hurricane Hugo last September, a number of problems with the sticker program surfaced because many property owners did not pick up their decals until after the storm.

As a result, people who should have been kept off the island were allowed on the island, and town employees were kept busy for several days following the storm issuing hundreds of stickers.

There were also rumors that the yellow slips of paper used when the town ran out of stickers were duplicated and sold to people who had no right to be on the island.

As a result of these post-Hugo problems, town commissioners are talking about charging for the decals and enforcing an old ordinance that requires residents to display the decals on their vehicles at all times.

A committee made up of Commissioners Gloria Barrett and Kenner Amos and property owner Ben Tonking presented a list of proposed changes to the town board at a work session last Wednesday. Commissioners may approve changes in the sticker program at their Feb. 5 meeting.

A major point of the committee proposal is to go back to charging people for the stickers. The proposed fee is \$2.50 per sticker through June 30 and \$5 after that time.

Holden Beach used to charge res-

idents and property owners for the decals but started giving them away two years ago. For now, stickers are free and available at town hall.

Commissioner Bob Buck said last week he was disappointed that the town has been put in a position that it has to charge for the decals. "I don't like it, but I can't vote against it." He suggested, however, that the town give the stickers away through June 30 and charge \$5 after that date.

Besides reinstating a fee, the committee has also recommended stricter enforcement of an existing vehicle registration ordinance that requires residents to use vehicle stickers and penalizes them if they don't.

The town ordinance, adopted following Hurricane Diana in 1984, requires residents to register vehicles with the town clerk by January 30 of each year. Failure to register vehicles or display stickers is punishable by a \$5 fine.

Under the committee proposal, contractors who work on the island on a regular basis would be required to display stickers just like residents.

Contractors, insurance adjusters and others coming onto the island for official business following an evacuation would be given one-day passes which would be issued at a checkpoint on the north side of the bridge and turned in at the end of

each day.

To make things easier on town staff, the proposal would also limit the amount of information needed to issue a sticker to the name and address of the vehicle owner and the year and make of the vehicle. Presently, staff also records vehicle registration numbers and auto tag numbers, information which is never used.

Land Use Meeting Planned At Holden

A public forum on future land use and development at Holden Beach will be held Tuesday, Feb. 6, at 10 a.m. in town hall.

Caroline Bellis of Henry Von Oesen & Associates, a Wilmington engineering firm working on updating the town's land use plan, said the meeting will be an informal question and answer session.

"It's an opportunity for public comment about land use issues as well as an opportunity for us to answer any questions the public may have," she said. A representative from the N.C. Division of Coastal Management is also expected to attend.

Questionnaires giving property owners another chance to comment on land use issues were early mailed last week. Results will be presented at the board of commissioners' meeting in March.



PINEWOOD DERBY TROPHY WINNERS are, from left, Jonathan Galloway, Clinton Roundtree, Al Bulak, Neil Ansley and Scott Macon.

Pinewood Derby Winners Named

The ruckus at the N.C. National Guard Armory in Shallotte last Friday night wasn't the guard preparing for a weekend of training.

Rather, the noise was created by about 40 members of Shallotte Cub Scout Pack 227 cheering their miniature race cars to the finish line in the annual Pinewood Derby.

The derby is a double-elimination contest in which scouts race their cars down a narrow 30-foot track which is elevated at the starting line. Working with their parents, Scouts make their own cars from

blocks of wood, and the finished product cannot weigh more than five ounces.

The top finishers in each of the four grades competing last Friday won trophies, and second- and third-place winners received medals. All participants took home ribbons.

Winners, listed in order of finish according to grade, were as follows: Al Bulak, Roger Cox and Kelly Mintz, 2nd grade; Jonathan Galloway, Conrad Bulak and Jordan Reeves, 3rd grade; Clinton Roundtree,

Eric Carpenter and Wesley Fenton, 4th grade; and Neil Ansley, Scott Walters and Thomas Gore, 5th grade.

Scott Macon won the trophy for best of show, given to the owner of the best-designed car. His black car was modeled after the *Batmobile*.

Last week's derby was the smoothest in years with the competition lasting just over an hour. For the first time this year, the track was roped off to keep scouts and younger siblings from interfering with the race.

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ROCAME Holds Third Meeting

Fourteen students and two parents attended the Jan. 17 meeting of the South Brunswick Chapter of the Region O Council for the Advancement of Minorities in Engineering (ROCAME). Held at South Brunswick High School, the meeting was the group's third of the year.

Timmy Myles, Patrice Law and Jussani McKoy were picked as delegates to a state conference March 8 and 9 at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. They also will attend at training session Feb. 1 at Wilmington's Hoggard High School.

In other meeting activities, the organization reviewed a newspaper article on black individuals who hold Ph.D.'s in math and science. Also, students were given forms to record their first-semester grades.

A senior high school quiz bowl was held, with girls competing against boys. The team of Ralph Parker, Travis Sidberry, Eric Wearren, Lamont Tobler and Timmy Myles defeated the team of Larniece McKoy, Kristie Joyner, Patrice Law, Toy Gore and Brenda Tobler. Myles and Ms. McKoy were chosen as outstanding performers for their respective teams.

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