

Family Loses 'Everything' In Friday Afternoon Blaze

BY SUSAN USHER

"They're going to need some help" is the way firefighter Larry Hewett summed up the situation as fellow firemen searched through the gutted shell of Roy and Sarah Long's mobile home at Shell Point.

"They won't have nothing left except a few clothes," said Hewett. "I took the clothes off the line when I got here. The house is gutted; I don't think any of it can be salvaged."

No one was home at the Long residence Friday when the fire was reported shortly after 4 p.m.

Roy Long, who works at Hewett's service station at Civietown, responded to the fire call to his home with fellow Civietown VFD members. Tri-Beach and Supply VFDs also responded to the scene, along with Shallotte Volunteer Rescue Squad. The Longs have lived in the Shell Point community since about 1981.

After examining the smoldering interior, Brunswick County Fire Marshal Cecil Logan said the fire apparently began in the vicinity of the washing machine.

Lost in the blaze along with household furnishings and personal belongings was the expensive medical equipment used by the Longs' 11-year-old granddaughter, Keisha Ann. A victim of cerebral palsy, she has lived with her grandparents since she was 23 months old.

"Her wheelchair, suction machine, respirator, oxygen tank—everything we had burned up. She has

to have that stuff in the winter because she gets pneumonia several times a year," Mrs. Long said Monday from a home her son James had rented on Civietown Road. Because of illnesses he had recently moved back into his parents' home, she said, but still had several weeks' rent paid on the house.

Mrs. Long said she wants to get the family settled back to normal as soon as possible, before cooler weather sets in. She cares for Keisha Ann, who has very low resistance to disease and "can't fight anything off," she said, and is frequently ill. Keisha Ann does not attend school or go out much and the family tries to make sure she stays in a controlled temperature setting.

Along with her medical equipment, Keisha Ann lost her three boxes of toys, including the large-size keys and other infants' toys she finds easiest to play with given her limited muscle coordination. "Other toys are too big for her to handle," said Mrs. Long. "That's what she's missing now are her toys."

A local church brought Keisha Ann some teddy bears and neighbors and relatives have brought the family furniture and other household goods, said Mrs. Long. "Everybody's trying to help and we really appreciate it."

Meanwhile, the Longs were waiting Monday to hear from their insurance company. "Maybe we'll get something worked out in the next few days," said Mrs. Long.



CIVIETOWN VFD firefighters (foreground) assist Brunswick County Fire Marshal Cecil Logan as he investigates the source of a Friday afternoon fire at the Roy Long residence at Shell Point. STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

Pope Returns To News Staff Of The Brunswick Beacon

Terry Pope has rejoined *The Brunswick Beacon* as a staff writer.

A native of Leland, Pope served as staff writer for the *Beacon* from 1983 to 1986. He also worked as a part-time correspondent in 1987 before leaving journalism to teach English at South Brunswick High School in Boiling Spring Lakes.

"We're delighted to have Terry back," said Edward Sweatt, publisher and editor. "He is a fine writer,



POPE

very knowledgeable about Brunswick County and will be an asset to our news staff."

Pope received his journalism degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1983. He is working on a master's degree in English at UNC-Wilmington.

As staff writer, Pope will cover county and city government and will also write a weekly column for the editorial page.

During his previous stint at the *Beacon*, Pope and News Editor Susan Usher shared a first place award from the North Carolina Press Association for their coverage of Hurricane Diana in September 1984.

Recycling Center Expands Its Hours

The Holden Beach Recycling Center has expanded its hours and is now open seven days a week around the clock.

The new hours should make recycling available to people who couldn't get to the center when it was open on Saturday morning only, said Lalon Willoughby, president of the Holden Beach Ladies' Club, which is sponsoring the recycling effort.

Residents and visitors can drop off their old newspapers, aluminum, plastic and glass containers and other recyclables at the trailer whenever they drive by. Mrs. Willoughby said volunteers will check on the trailer several times each day.

The recycling trailer is located on N.C. 130 East next to Video USA, about one-fourth mile west of the Holden Beach causeway.

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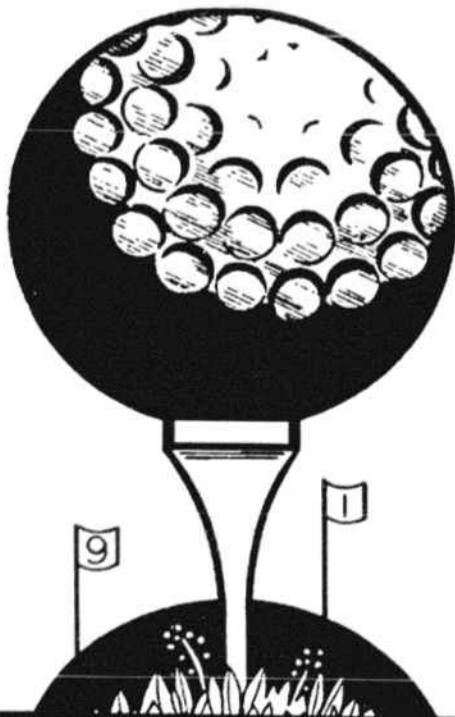
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