

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Previous Years Surpassed

To the editor:

If you happened to observe a caravan of pickup trucks leave Brierwood Estates about noon Saturday headed north to the Volunteer and Information collection center at Supply, you have already guessed what this is all about.

On this our sixth year, we surpassed all previous years, thanks to our Brierwood golfers who gave (many of whom do not even live at Brierwood) and Brierwood Estates residents (yes, there are quite a complement of those who do not play golf).

To Morris Hall, Bill Strauss, newcomer Bob Tompkins, Jack Casner, Rev. Paul Shaffer, Larry and Ed Shreve, Tony Maglione, Neal McCall and so many other volunteers whose help we couldn't take advantage of, thank you.

Words cannot express the thankfulness, the joy, the relief, and the humbleness of the adults and children who will have food to eat, warm clothing and shoes to wear, and toys to kindle a sparkle in the eyes of those who hoped for some-

thing but looked for nothing.

What a wonderful gift we all have--to be able to share!

Jimmy Simpson  
Shallotte

Owners Are The Problem, Not Dogs

To the editor:

Our problem as owners of property in the Seaside area is more with the owners of dogs than with the dogs.

Some are resident owners who neglect their pets and expect the animals to make it on their own. Others are dog owners who returned home from vacation after turning their pets loose to survive alone.

What we need is a leash law, as well as more help from the Brunswick Animal Control Department. This problem goes on and on and on.

If you try to protect your property, you are fined and threatened with a jail term.

Jim Ballou  
Seaside

'Decking The Hall' Is Christmas Custom

BY BILL FAVER

The familiar Christmas carol, "Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly," reminds us of the importance of natural materials in our Christmas decorations.

We are told these evergreens have been used for centuries as symbols of life during the winter season. The largely rural settings where most people lived made it convenient to gather native greens.

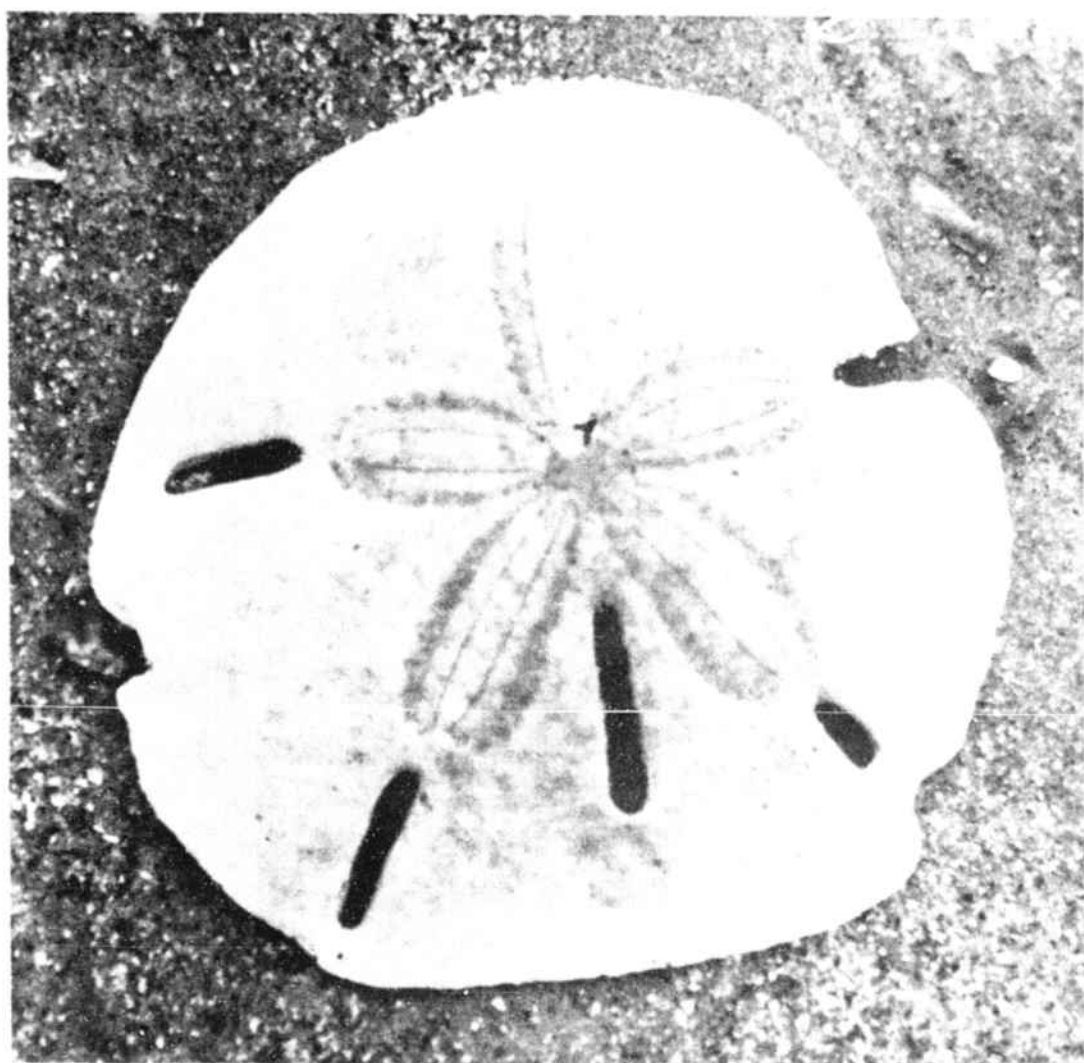
Many families have happy customs of "hanging the greens"--in decorating rails, mantles, doors and windows. Fragrant cedars, pine, galax, hollies and ivy have been used for years. Often wreaths are made from these greens to use on doors, windows, gates and light posts.

And, of course, there is mistletoe. One of the ancient legends acknowledges mistletoe as a part of our Christmas celebration, but gives its origin as a pre-Christian custom of the Scandinavians who saw it as a powerful spirit supposed to have killed the sun god, Baldr. They also called it "Allheal" because it was supposed to cure many ills and bring peace to those who became reconciled under it. The last claim was probably the basis of the English custom of kissing under the mistletoe and any girl who stood at the right spot was fair game!

Martin Luther is generally given credit for beginning the custom of bringing in a tree to decorate for Christmas. He is supposed to have selected a tree "as wide as love, as high as hope, one with the sign of the cross on every branch." Many families have customs in which symbols of the tree decorations are very important and personal to them.

There are many other Christmas customs associated with plants and flowers. In Bavaria, one custom has to do with "forcing" sprigs of fruit trees to bloom at Christmas. No doubt our forcing of bulbs is akin to this.

Straw stars are used to decorate some



ONE OF OUR LOCAL CUSTOMS is using sand dollars and shells as tree ornaments. It is easy to gather decorative shells along our beaches.

Scandinavian homes. Stars of all kinds are a part of Christmas. Lights have replaced candles as decorations on our Christmas tree, but candles are an important symbol of light on our

tables and mantles. By this time most of us have probably "decked our halls." But, in the event you still need some inspiration, sing along as you work!

Campaign Brings Middle East To Life For Eighth Graders

Personal contact with soldiers stationed in Saudi Arabia is helping bring current events alive for a group of eighth-grade students at Shallotte Middle School.

Students of English teacher Pauline Hewett and social studies teacher Ann McManus have teamed up with Patricia Hewett, a local chiropractor, and some of her friends and patients to support Specialist Mike Davis and his tent-mates.

So far the students have mailed the soldiers more than 75 letters.

Last week students Kelly Stepp, Kimberly Dowless, Penny Hill and Tony Shreve, accompanied by school guidance counselor Chris Judah, mailed Christmas cheer packages to the soldiers with the help of their business partner. The packages included items commonly

requested by military personnel, such as soft drink mixes, magazines and comic books, hard candy, books, gum, toothbrushes, insect repellent and holiday goodies.

For the students the project combines educational experiences and community service, said Ms. Judah. "It's a way to make the Persian Gulf crisis real."

The students are learning about Middle Eastern cultures; sharpening their letter- and essay-writing and grammatical skills; and improving their oral skills through giving class reports and through class discussions of letters received by the students.

"It's making the classroom come alive," said Ms. Judah. "It's getting them personally involved in current events."

Governor Ready To Select Coastal Initiative Sites

Gov. James Martin is expected to decide within the next few weeks whether any Brunswick County communities will be chosen to participate in the N.C. Coastal Initiative program.

Calabash and Southport are among seven communities in the state that have applied for the program. Towns selected for the program receive help from state agencies when applying for grants and permits.

The N.C. Coastal Initiative Blue Ribbon Commission met last Thursday in Raleigh. Board members reviewed applications and discussed visits they made last month to each of the communities, according to Tom Richter, chief planner with the N.C. Division of Community Assistance in Washington.

Each commission member ranked the seven communities, and recommendations were passed on to the governor, who will decide which towns will be included in the program.

Prior to last week's commission meeting, Richter said there was a general consensus that three of the seven communities would be chosen for the program. However, he said last week that there is a sentiment to pick more than three.

Gov. Martin could make the decision before Christmas. But Richter said it will more likely be made after New Year's Day.

Besides Calabash and Southport, other communities that have applied for the program are Currituck County, Elizabeth City, Hertford, Morehead City and Atlantic Beach.

Advertisement for Joe & Moe's Used Car Sales. Text: "A Safe & Happy Holiday... to all our loyal friends & customers." Includes phone number 754-8318/4715 and address Hwy. 17 S., Shallotte.

Advertisement for Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Society. Text: "May the joy & blessings of the season be yours. Share the spirit of Christmas!" Includes photos of Larry Heustess and Jimmy Marshall, and phone number 754-8400.

Advertisement for The Parson's Table restaurant. Text: "The Award-Winning Restaurant. Featuring Excellent Prime Rib, Veal, Steaks, Broiled Seafood, Duck and Chicken." Includes 50% and 25% discount coupons and address HWY. 17, LITTLE RIVER, SC.

Advertisement for Anchor Lumber. Text: "SEASON'S GREETINGS. All our best wishes to you and your loved ones on this joyous occasion." Includes phone number 579-8038.

Advertisement for Independent Seafood. Text: "Before we sail into a new year...we wish all our friends and customers a merry Christmas and a happy new year!" Includes phone number 842-2928.

Advertisement for Calabash Insurance & Western Union. Text: "Have A Safe Christmas! Be assured that a premium holiday is here. We wish you all good cheer. Merry Christmas and have a happy and safe holiday!" Includes phone number 579-5969.

Advertisement for J.M. Parker & Sons paint sale. Text: "Season's Greetings from our home to yours. From Glidden Paint & J.M. Parker & Sons. EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE PAINT SALE. \$13.99 Gal. spread satin LATEX WALL PAINT. \$15.99 Gal. spread enamel LATEX SEMI-GLOSS." Includes phone number 754-4331.