

Letters

(Continued From Preceding Page)

sponsible and then to ascertain how much it cost the taxpayers.

This information should be given to the public. The board need not have a closed session on the subject because the public is already aware of it. Mr. Worth should be made to refund every penny. The person who uncovered this chicanery was Rudi Fallon, the efficient finance officer.

While on the subject of the school board, we feel the public should know that the Brunswick County School Foundation was the brainchild of school board member Robert Slocket. This foundation now offers 14 scholarships to county school children. It is to be hoped that other board members will show the same dedication to the children in a non-partisan way.

Eileen Kellagher
Long Beach
M. L. LaMar
Yaupon Beach

Reassurance For Next Year

To the editor:

The general manager of Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation declares in the January 1991 issue of BEMC's *Tell-O-Watt* that "We move forward into the new year with a rededication toward working at controlling costs..." The following heading of "Challenges for 1991" reflects, among other things, a desire by BEMC to implement programs that help lower electrical demand and "...save our members money."

Immediately following these well-intentioned declarations is a heading entitled, "New Rate Design," which euphemistically, is a nice way of telling BEMC customers that their electric bills will reflect a five percent increase in February. I don't know what BEMC promised last year but it is reassuring to read of its commitment to the future.

Francis W. Niland
Shallotte

Parents Do Their Part In Operation

To the editor:

I would like to thank all the parents who have so unselfishly given their children to the thing we call "Operation Desert Shield."

Of course the guys in Saudi Arabia need your support, but so do the parents of the boys and girls who are over there. Let's think about the parents and what they do.

First off, they give their children to the military to protect our way of life. Then they stand back and support them 100 percent and ask for nothing in return.

They send them "care packages" with goodies galore, hoping that this will ease the burden of being out in the desert. They wait for so long to get a call from their son or daughter, and when they get it, they let five minutes suffice.

When it comes down to it they wait and wonder if they will ever see their child again. They tie yellow ribbons around trees, car antennas, doors and flag poles to signify their sacrifice for their county.

They even stand behind their children when others begin to dwindle and not really care. They watch the news ever so constantly to hear word of a peaceful resolve. They help their children financially because they know their children have other responsibilities.

But, best of all, through all of this they still have time to be parents. Thanks, Henry and Shirley Hewett, for just being mom and dad. I will be home soon.

SRA Shawn Hewett
USAF, proudly serving in the gulf.

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PUBLIC SALE

The contents of storage unit #10 located at U.S. 17 Self-Storage Company, Hwy. 17 South at Grissett-town will be sold at public sale to recover unpaid rent, as authorized by N.C. General Statutes.

The sale will take place Saturday, Jan. 12 at 10:00 a.m. at the site.

Reflections On A Beautiful Day

BY BILL FAVER

No one would believe the kind of day we had at the beach Jan. 6. After several days of warm but cloudy, threatening weather, we experienced the most beautiful winter day anyone could imagine.



FAVER

After the early morning sunshine gave way to gathering clouds, I thought we would have another gray day. But clouds moved on through, the sunshine prevailed and I spent most of the afternoon on the deck in shirt sleeves, reading and watching the birds and porpoises on the calm waters.

A few people walked on the beach to enjoy the weather and to get some much-needed exercise after the excesses of holiday eating. The birds circled over the water, probed at the water's edge, or stood like quiet sentinels high up on the sand. A few pelicans and gulls were diving, probably for fun, since I failed to see one pelican bill raised high for swallowing fish.

A slight breeze ruffled the flags out on the deck and waved some strands of beach grass. I couldn't help but think of other January days when a cold wind made it almost impossible to be outside. The book I had been reading was about winter in the Ozarks and how the snow and ice made roads impassable and life was brought to a standstill. The birds and animals suffered and the weather took its toll on humans as well. Life was difficult and spring was a distant promise of relief.

We can have some rough weather here, too, but most of it only lasts for a few days at most. Then we experience some of the other extremes of nice days to help us forget. Maybe this is why we had such a beautiful day at the beach this day. We needed sunshine and calm to help us forget the week of cloudy, gray days.

Those of us who live or visit the Brunswick County beaches know how fortunate we are to experience this special place. We know we share these beautiful days with the birds and the insects and the animals who were here before we came. We need reminding each day of our stewardship responsibilities for all of life. These kinds of beautiful days help us know that!

HAZARDS CAN BE REDUCED

Forest Ranger Says 1990 Was Mild Year For Fires

Brunswick County Forest Ranger Miller Caison said 1990 was a mild year, with only 113 wildfires burning 1,606 acres of land.

But the year could have been even better if more owners of timber land had taken advantage of a program that encourages people to burn their land under proper conditions.

The N.C. Division of Forest Resources landowner hazard reduction burning program emphasizes prescribed burning, a forest management tool that cuts down on unwanted undergrowth and brush from timber stands.

The program is designed to eliminate the build-up of pine needles, grasses and twigs on the forest floor that can burn quickly and easily during periods of extreme dryness and high winds.

The growth is eliminated by prescribed burning with a low-intensity fire during moderate weather conditions, according to a state news release.

Caison said 47 of the 113 forest fires in Brunswick County last year were classified as debris fires. They were started when landowners lost control of piles of burning debris.

The forest ranger said some of those could have been prevented if the debris had been burned in areas where the landowner hazard reduction program had been employed.

Furthermore, Caison said other forest fires could have been minimized if more people used the program and cut down on the amount of undergrowth in their timber stands.

Caison said there were only three large forest fires in 1990. The largest occurred Oct. 15 when 648 acres burned beside N.C. 211 north of Supply.

Approximately 287 acres of land burned Sept. 16 in the Maco area in northwestern Brunswick County. Another 253 acres off N.C. 211 south of Supply were blackened April 8.

The hazard reduction burning program is a cooperative effort between the forest landowner and the state forestry division, according to the news release.

Under the program, the division provides a written burning plan, plows fire lines and notifies the landowner when weather conditions are suitable for burning.

The landowner designates all fire line locations and structures that should be protected and agrees not to hold the state responsible for any damage that may occur while the fire lines are being constructed or the land is being burned.

The hazard reduction burning program is available through February. For more information, call the Bolivia Fire Tower at 253-5297.

INTERIM CLERK RESIGNS

Ocean Isle Beach Officials Take Next Step Toward Sewer Expansion

BY DOUG RUTTER

Ocean Isle Beach officials this week took another step toward a project that could allow all homeowners to hook on to the town sewer plant.

Town commissioners voted Tuesday to begin searching for an engineering firm to design what would be the first expansion of the plant since it began operating about four years ago.

Mayor Betty Williamson and Ocean Isle's Streets and Water Commissioner Odell Williamson were asked to contact two or three engineering firms and bring proposals to the Feb. 12 town meeting.

This week's action was the second major step the town board has taken toward the proposed expansion project.

The town paid approximately \$450,000 last year for land off Four Mile Road that would be needed to expand the sewer plant's capacity.

Ocean Isle Beach's sewer system presently serves about 80 percent of the town. Service is available to all

areas except the east end of the island, where residents have asked for sewer service.

Clerk Resigns

Interim Town Clerk Doris Stanley will resign her post effective Jan. 17. The move will leave Ocean Isle Beach with a fourth different person in that position in less than a year.

Marianne Metz, who has worked 3 1/2 years for the town and is presently in charge of accounting, will take over as interim clerk starting Jan. 18.

Commissioners accepted Mrs. Stanley's resignation and named a replacement following a 10-minute executive session Tuesday. Mrs. Stanley said she resigned because her husband is being transferred to Lynchburg, Va.

Mayor Williamson said Mrs. Stanley has been a dedicated employee since she started working for the town in June 1987. The mayor said Mrs. Stanley has agreed to help the town as needed through the month of February.

Mrs. Metz will be the third per-

son to serve as town clerk or interim town clerk since Alberta Tatum retired March 31, 1990. Mrs. Tatum had worked as town clerk for more than 15 years.

Other Business

In other business Tuesday, commissioners:

■ Asked the town planning board to look at changing the zoning ordinance so the town gradually can get rid of mobile signs in the extraterritorial area (ETA). Town Attorney Elva Jess said the town can require that mobile signs be removed or converted to permanent signs within a certain period of time. Town officials said they are concerned about mobile signs in the event of a hurricane.

■ Heard the December building inspections report from Building Inspector Druied Roberson. He issued 10 permits in town on a construction valuation of \$294,125 and collected \$2,413 in fees. Roberson issued one permit in the ETA and collected \$307 in fees on a construction valuation of \$38,448.

December 1990 Was Steamy Compared To Frosty 1989

What a difference a year makes. December 1990 was nothing like December 1989 in terms of weather in southeastern North Carolina.

After enduring bone-chilling cold temperatures and a record-breaking snowfall in December 1989, area residents last month enjoyed the seventh warmest December recorded by the National Weather Service in Wilmington since it began keeping records in 1871. It ended what the service described as its warmest year on record, with an average temperature of 66.5 degrees, compared to the previous record of 65.8, which was set in 1985.

The average temperature last month was 54.8 degrees, compared to an average of 38.6 degrees in December 1989, according to the weather service's monthly climatological report.

Last month's average daily temperature was 6.6 degrees above normal, while the average temperature in December 1989 was 9.6 degrees below normal.

The highest temperature recorded in December 1990 was 79 degrees Dec. 22, a record high for that date. Another record was broken Dec. 23 when the temperature reached 78 degrees.

The lowest temperature for the month was 29 degrees Dec. 6 and 25. The low reading Christmas Day was still 29 degrees higher than Christmas Day 1989 when the temperature was zero degrees, a record low for the area.

Rainfall during December 1990 totaled 2.65 inches, which was .78 inches below normal. Measurable rainfall occurred on seven days. The greatest rainfall in 24 hours was 1.33 inches between Dec. 7 and 8.

There was no snowfall recorded

during the month, compared to 15.3 inches in December 1989, according to the weather service.

Heating degree day units for the month totalled 327, which was 194 below normal. There were 13 cooling degree day units in December, which was 13 above normal.

There were 22 cloudy days during the month, six clear days and three partly cloudy days. Heavy fog occurred five days in December.

Due to the cloudiness, the area received only 51 percent of the possible sunshine during the month.

The average daily wind speed was 8.2 mph. The highest one-minute wind speed was 29 mph from the southwest Dec. 18. The highest wind gust during the month was 38 mph from the southwest Dec. 19.

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