

# Water Safety Program To Begin Immediately

(Continued From Page 1-A)

the strand south of Jordan Boulevard as a designated swimming area because of the nearby 90-space parking lot.

Tandy said a lifeguard on a stand could probably supervise about 200 feet of beachfront. "We've got 8 1/2 miles of beach and that's tough," Tandy said.

Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Barrett said she liked the idea of lifeguards at the Jordan Boulevard access.

She also suggested Holden Beach Fishing Pier and Campground By The Sea as possible sites for lifeguard stands because of the large number of swimmers in those spots.

Emergency personnel agreed that a lifeguard probably couldn't have saved the boy who drowned last week because he was never spotted after a wave knocked him from a raft and went under water.

Tandy wrote in his memo to the board that the water safety program should begin immediately and grow each year.

Over the next five years, the mayor said he thought the town board

should work toward establishing supervised swimming areas, buying equipment and hiring personnel.

Commissioner Judy Bryan said a Holden Beach resident has agreed to sell the town an inflatable boat for \$1,200. The boat could be launched from the beach and aid in search and rescue operations.

Sawyer said volunteer fire and rescue personnel will be better trained to deal with possible drownings after taking a water rescue class later this month at Ocean Isle Beach.

Two Holden Beach police officers, six firefighters and two rescue squad members from the Holden Beach area have registered for the class.

Sawyer and town officials agreed the water safety program must include public education about riptides and other dangerous ocean conditions.

Holden Beach Police Sgt. Robert Cook said he's noticed a lot of riptides lately, including the day of the drowning. "We've had more in the last three weeks than we've had all year," he said.



STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

## Warning System Needed

(Continued From Page 1-A)

tively safe. "We need to look at it real strongly and see if we can come up with some kind of device to warn the people," Logan said.

The drowning was the second at Holden Beach in the last six weeks. Three Greensboro men drowned May 28 after a fishing boat sank off Shallotte Inlet. Their bodies and the only survivor were picked up off Holden Beach.

Following the drowning in May, Holden Beach Commissioners were asked to consider forming a water rescue unit that could respond while Coast Guard boats travel from Caswell Beach.

A water rescue class designed specifically for beach communities is scheduled July 19-21 at Ocean Isle Beach.

Keith Sawyer, an officer with Tri-Beach VFD which is co-sponsoring the class, said all available spots in the course have been filled.

## Ash Teen Gets Life In Prison

(Continued From Page 1-A)

mother, who convinced her son to turn himself in.

In a plea agreement with Assistant District Attorney Thomas Hicks, Graham pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in Brunswick County Superior Court under the condition that he accept a sentence of life in prison.

Persons sentenced to life in prison must usually serve 20 years before becoming eligible for parole.

Hicks said Graham shot his brother in the head during an argument with a third person while walking down Ash-Little River Road (SR 1300). Daniel Ray Hines had been arguing about a financial matter with another person when the Graham brothers intervened, Hicks said.

One shot hit Lacy Graham in the head. After he fell to the ground, Graham approached and fired a second shot at close range at his brother's head, Hicks said.

An autopsy indicated one shot resulted in only superficial wounds while a second shot fractured the skull and caused extensive brain damage, said Hicks. Blood tests indicated Lacy Graham was not under the influence of alcohol.

Ms. McLamb told Judge Ellis that an altercation between the brothers took place the day of the shooting. The older brother had also continuously made verbal threats against Graham, she said.

"This is a tragic incident for you and your family," Judge Ellis told Graham. "This is a heavy sentence that I'm imposing on you, which the evidence supports."

Ellis told Graham that how long he serves in the N.C. Department of Corrections will depend on his be-

havior there. He ordered that Graham be admitted as a regular youthful offender.

"You can't find any more serious offenses than what you've been charged with," said Ellis.

Graham faced a maximum sentence of 10 years and a minimum of three years in jail for the Oct. 8, 1990 shooting of Wade Ashley, 14, of Shallotte, who was shot in the leg while riding his bicycle to a store.

The two boys apparently had an argument the previous day about a dog, Hicks said.

Ashley was riding a bicycle along side his brother when a car approached from the rear. The two heard several rapid shots and fled to the woods, where Ashley discovered a bullet had hit him in the right calf, Hicks said.

When interviewed by Det. Shay on Oct. 11, Graham admitted he had stuck a .22-caliber rifle out the window and had fired several shots at the ground, said Hicks.

While being held in jail, tutors helped Graham obtain his high school diploma in June, said Steve Yount, defense attorney. The defendant suffers from dyslexia, a disturbance in the ability to read, he said.

When Graham was 11, he was accidentally shot in the foot by a neighbor, Yount said, and he must wear a permanent brace.

As part of his sentence, Yount asked that Graham receive proper medical treatment for his injury, which may include another surgery procedure.

The shootings, Ms. McLamb said, are out of character for Graham.

"These two incidents are the only two where he has had any scrapings with the law," said Ms. McLamb.

## Crowd Gathers At Ocean Isle

Thousands of visitors play along the strand at Ocean Isle Beach on July 4. This view is looking west from the Ocean Isle Beach Pier. Hot temperatures drew people to the beach in throngs for the coast's busiest week of the season.

## Lewis Tells Health Board He Didn't Ask For Favors

BY TERRY POPE

The vice chairman of the Brunswick County Board of Health denies he used his influence to speed county permits for an employer.

At an emergency meeting of the health board last week, Jerry D. Lewis of Ocean Isle said a published report that he lobbied for permits to help rush a building project at St. James Plantation near Southport was "full of innuendos and fallacies."

Lewis told the board that he would give a more detailed account at Monday's regular meeting; however, he did not attend that meeting.

An article printed June 29 in a local newspaper was headlined, "Health board official rushes permit for boss."

It had at least one board member, Dr. Brad Williams, stirring at a meeting last Tuesday called to restructure the environmental health department.

The matter involving Lewis was not on the agenda of that emergency meeting. When

Williams attempted to ask Chairman Bill Rabon about the report, Lewis asked if he could address the issue.

"I did not do anything illegal," Lewis said. "I did not do anything immoral."

Lewis was accused of approaching County Commissioners Kelly Holden, Donald Shaw and Jerry Jones about speeding the process for building permits on a project for Longview Golf Corp., which is building a clubhouse at St. James.

A conditional improvement permit for the clubhouse's sewer system was issued by the health department on May 6, before the state had approved final plans for the 100,000 gallons per day wastewater system.

Conditional permits can be given before the state approves sewer system designs, said Lewis.

It allows the builder to obtain building, electrical and plumbing permits to keep a project on schedule. However, certain conditions must be met before the county will allow the sewer system to operate.

Lewis said he contacted county officials for information rather than to lobby for special treatment.

"I did not ask for any special favors," said Lewis. "I really am not that concerned about it, except for its reflection on this board."

Lewis said he does not work under contract for Longview Golf Corp., as had been reported. "It talks about professional contracts that do not exist," said Lewis. "I do not deal with professional contracts. If I don't like working at a site, I don't stay."

Lewis turned to Health Director Michael Rhodes and asked, "Have I ever asked for any favors?"

Rhodes shook his head to indicate "No". Williams said Lewis' explanation cleared up questions he had about the report. Other board members remained silent on the matter.

Lewis told the board that he would give them information that proved he did not work under contract for the company that obtained the conditional permit.

Lewis was appointed in December to a three-year term on the board. He filled the seat vacated by Ricky Parker, immediate past chairman.

Lewis is a former Brunswick County manager and former consulting engineer to the county's water system and had previously served on the health board.

## Angry Health Board Restructures Department

(Continued From Page 1-A)

As environmental health supervisor I, McDonald's duties were: 1) to permit sewer systems that exceed 3,000 gallons per day capacity; 2) to review subdivision plats for the planning board; 3) to perform second evaluations when requested by an applicant; 4) to assist the environmental health supervisor II; 5) to help with swimming pool inspections; 6) to coordinate new state septic tank regulations that take effect in 1992; and 7) to oversee monitoring wells.

In the environmental health section, McDonald was second in command behind John Crowder, environmental health supervisor II.

Whitrow, of Winnabow, will now help with second opinions on site inspections under Crowder's supervision. Applicants can appeal Crowder's decision to a state regional soil specialist.

"I have an idea that could take months," said Rhodes. "We're hoping that we won't be delaying those types of evaluations."

Last week, the department had 80 to 90 active files awaiting site evaluations, said Crowder.

"It's really growing because the summer months are here," he added.

Active files that lag past 10 working days are considered a backlog, said Rhodes.

*"I feel that if my input is worth that little, then why am I serving?"*

—Dr. Bill Phillips, Health Board Member

Whitrow will also review preliminary subdivision plats for the planning board, but on-site soil studies, as Marley had performed, will no longer be done. Instead, Whitrow will review available soil delineation maps and render an opinion.

Starting Sept. 1, Whitrow will be responsible for permitting all sewage systems with a capacity greater than 480 gallons per day. All others will be conducted by the health specialist in the assigned area of the county.

Whitrow other duties include permitting for all systems other than conventional sewer systems, annual inspections of mobile home parks and community water systems and filling in when a health specialist is out.

"I think we all realize it's going to be a very difficult time in our program," said Rhodes.

Not all of McDonald's duties will be covered under the restructuring, said Crowder.

"There's going to be a big gap there," Crowder said. "We're going

to have to deal with that."

Rhodes said Commission Chairman Kelly Holden told him the cuts were made to reduce top-heaviness within the department.

"He informed me that there had been a study of the water system showing that," Rhodes said. "He felt that our department had the

same problem. I explained that the health department had totally different types of demands."

Brad Williams serves on the health board's budget committee. He said commissioners should consult with the board about where to make budget cuts.

"I want to know that next year, when I serve on that committee again, that it's not going to happen again," said Williams.

Veteran health workers should not have to worry about losing their jobs, said Rabon.

"This place was like a mortuary Friday afternoon," he added.

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## Normal Weather In Forecast

The South Brunswick Islands area should see normal midsummer weather for the next week or so, Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady indicated Tuesday.

He expects temperatures to range from around the low 70s at night to around 90 during the daytime, with approximately three-quarters inch of rainfall.

For the period of July 2-8, Canady recorded a maximum high temperature of 96 degrees on July 8. The minimum low of 73 degrees occurred on both July 3 and 7.

An average daily high of 92 degrees combined with an average nightly low of 74 degrees for a daily average temperature of 83 degrees, about three degrees above average, said Canady.

He measured rainfall of .53 inches.

### It Just Feels Hotter

Mid-day temperatures are running in the mid 90s, but local residents and visitors may be feeling hotter than the thermometer indicates.

Canady said the heat index—the measure that describes the combined effect of humidity and high temperatures—has been running about 100 degrees to 105 degrees in the middle of the day.

"The heat index measures how it feels to your skin," he said. "When higher temperatures are combined with high humidity your body cannot evaporate sweat as well."

"Those figures are not all that uncommon for this area and this time of year," said Canady. "It's when it gets over 110 to 115 that it becomes dangerous. Still, it's nothing to take lightly. You should reduce your activity accordingly."

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