



MARION DAVIS (right) and Roland Varnam fry fish at the Varnamtown Festival Saturday. The fish plates were sold out early in the day, forcing organizers to cancel plans to serve dinner.

Varnamtown Throws Third Birthday Party

BY DOUG RUTTER

Varnamtown residents celebrated their town's third birthday Saturday by tugging ropes, pitching horseshoes and eating more than 200 pounds of fried fish.

"I thought it went great," Mayor Judy Galloway said of the third annual festival. "There was somebody there piddling around all day."

Held to commemorate the founding of the town in 1988, the festival opened with a ribbon-cutting at the town hall.

Varnamtown Aldermen bought the one-story brick house off Varnamtown Road a year ago and renovated it so it could function as a town hall.

Following the dedication, American and North Carolina flags were raised on a new flag pole in the front yard.

A half dozen crafts booths and a hot dog stand filled one side of the lawn. Inside the town hall hung five anti-litter posters, which had earned blue ribbons for five Varnamtown youngsters.

Winners were Willie Varnam, Jessica Futch, Jesse Caudill, Cereta Varnam and Eric Caudill, who wrote a rap song about litter featuring a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle.

Volunteer cooks fired up their fryers just before noon and had sold about 210 pounds of fish by early afternoon. Plans for a fish dinner Saturday night were canceled because the fish plates were sold out.

Herbert "Midget" Varnum, a life-long resident of Varnamtown, was given a plaque Saturday honoring his 15 years of service to the community.

Varnum, a member of Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad since 1976, helps care for the elderly in the community by checking their blood pressure and hearts.

Afternoon activities attracted the younger generation to the town hall grounds, as scores of people turned out to pitch horseshoes and compete in the tug-of-war.

"There was a lot of people there to see all that," Mrs. Galloway said. "There were cars lined up and down the road."

The mayor's team won the women's tug-of-war, defeating last year's champ "Doug's Angels." Sue Galloway's team was victorious in the men's division, beating Trevor McDonald's squad.

Mayor Galloway said the Varnamtown Women's Club, which sponsors the annual festival, plans to put the parade back in next year's schedule of events.



HERBERT "MIDGET" VARNUM (left) receives a plaque from Varnamtown Alderman Ada McDonald honoring his service to the community. Varnum has been a member of Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad since 1976.

It was canceled this year because there weren't enough people to help organize it. "We're hoping to have the parade next year and make the whole thing a little bigger," she said.

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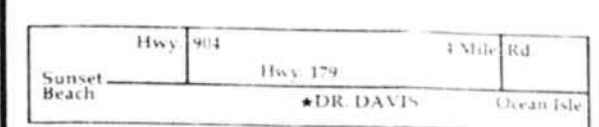
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