

Sponsor Plows Profits Back Into Holden Beach Community

Since its inception in 1980, the N.C. Festival By The Sea has offered visitors, property owners and residents a weekend of family-oriented fun and games, while raising funds for worthwhile local projects.

Any profits realized by the festival are poured by the Holden Beach Merchants Association back into the community, says Johnny Craig, association president.

Other officers include secretary and treasurer Barbara and Jim Low-

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—Johnny Craig, President
Greater Holden Beach Merchants Association

ell and vice president Ben Tonking. Traditionally, half of any festival proceeds are divided between two emergency units that serve the wider Holden Beach community: Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad

and Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department, host of the annual festival Halloween carnival.

The balance is kept by the association, mainly going toward two long-term projects: beautification

and travel and tourism promotion.

"We've got a pretty big and expensive project going to beautify the causeway," he said. "It's about the biggest project we've ever tackled. It's been in the planning about a year."

While work has slacked off to allow planning of the festival, Craig expects the pace to pick up again this winter, when the festival and the main summer tourist season become history.

The master plan for the causeway includes decorative lighting and walkways and bike paths along both sides of the highway, and eventually, underground utilities. The association plans to start with the lighting part of the proposal.

Plans call for approximately a dozen decorative overhead lights along the causeway, which is nearly a mile in length. Pedestrian walkways and paths would be placed as far from the center of the highway as possible while still in the state's right of way, to allow for future widening of the road.

Craig said causeway merchants contacted so far have responded to the plan with enthusiasm.

"We want to give the causeway a

quaint atmosphere that gives you a warm feeling about Holden Beach. We really want to have a good entrance to the beach. That's one area that has been overlooked perhaps in the past," he said.

The Holden Beach Beautification Committee has done "a super job" on the island, he said, and the association would like to do the same on the mainland.

"I think it's something that's really going to look good and will give people a good feeling about the area," said Craig.

Also in the works is a brochure promoting Holden Beach. The association belongs to the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce, "which does a good job" of promoting the area, said Craig, but Holden Beach wants to expand on that.

To that end the association has applied for a grant from the state's Division of Travel and Tourism to help cover the costs of the brochure. It would be the first for the beach in about five years, and would be distributed through local businesses, welcome centers and other outlets, said Craig.

Gospel Groups Ready

(Continued From Page 8)

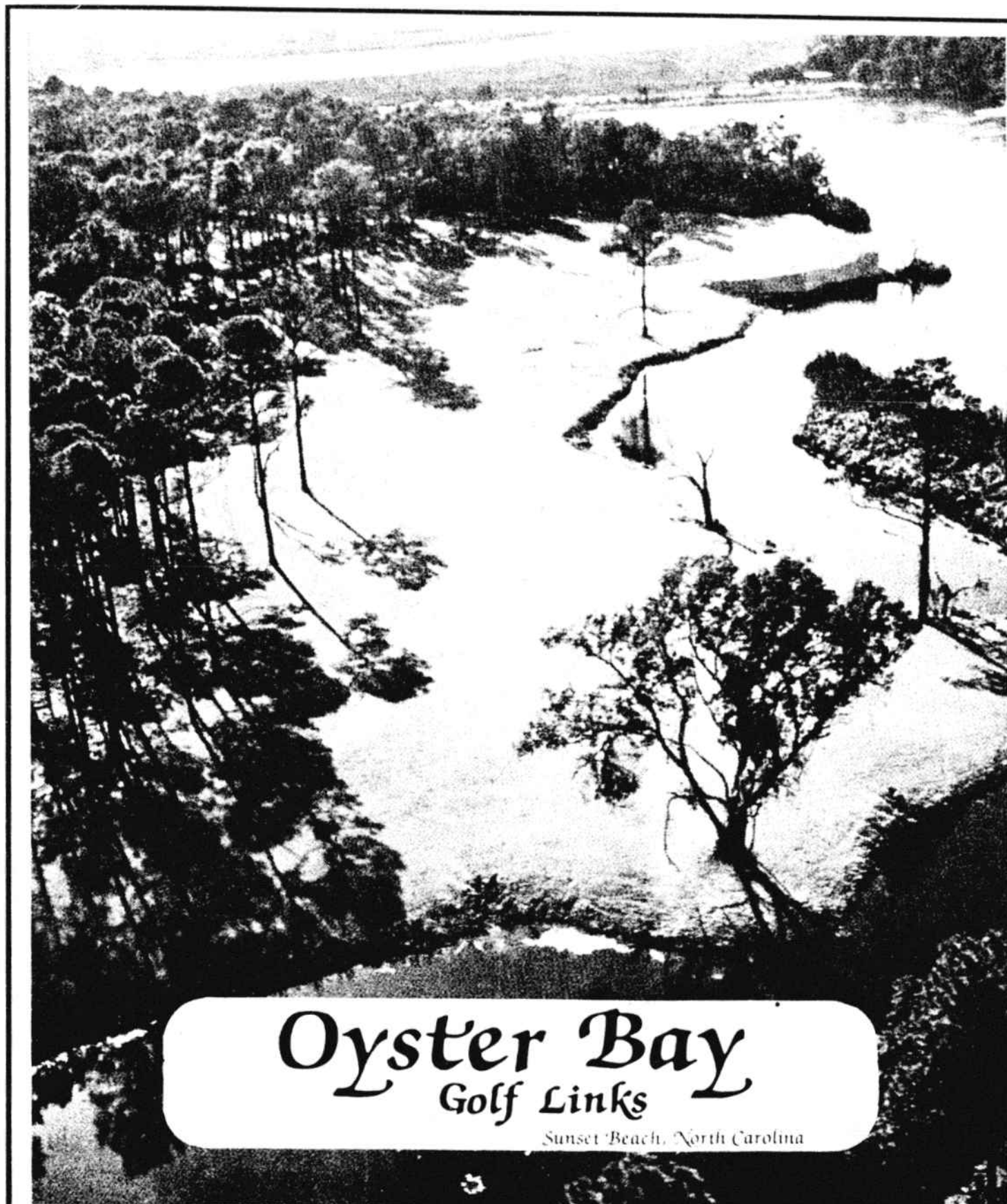
Holden Beach Fishing Pier; Carolyn Davis, a tax officer for the county; Kerry Cox Craig, a Holden Beach real estate agent; and manager Lalon Willoughby, a retired secretary.

The country gospel quartet performs under the slogan, "To accom-

plish the mission in song."

They will sing some of their favorites hymns, "Footsteps," "He Touched Me," "Love Can Build a Bridge" and "I Sing Because," said Bass.

Coastal Voices is a Shallotte-based gospel quartet whose members are Von Ferguson, Penny Gray, Landon Gray and Marie Gray.



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