

## New Ocean Isle Commissioner Stays Involved In Community

BY DORI COSGROVE GURGANUS

Janet Sanders, a comparatively new resident of Ocean Isle Beach, says she's excited about winning one of the two available commissioner's seats on Nov. 5, garnering the second largest number of votes received.

"I'm very excited about tomorrow," she said the evening before her first town board meeting, admitting to being a little nervous about it. This four-year term is her first time serving as a government official.

She has worn many different hats in her roles as wife, mother, volunteer and airline employee, but what made her run for public office?

"I wanted to be involved in what was going on," she said, noting that "most everywhere I've lived I've been involved."

Mrs. Sanders chose to run, she said, because of her interest in Ocean Isle from the viewpoint of a resident.

She and her husband, Adam, moved to Ocean Isle Beach around two and a half years ago from Lake Norman, where they had previously lived for five years. Before that they lived in Winston-Salem, where Mrs. Sanders has her roots.

The two discovered the island in a manner slightly different than most other people. They were traveling in a sailboat down the North Carolina coast about three years ago on a month-long trip from Oriental to Charleston, S.C., and noticed the beauty of the Brunswick County islands.

Ocean Isle Beach especially appealed to them as they sailed along the intracoastal waterway. They decided to find out more about the community.

They finally relocated here in the fall of 1989 and had a house built on a canal near the east end.

Adam is what he calls "semi-retired," and runs a charter fishing business.

They have two children, but only one lives at home. Jennifer, 22, is a student at Brunswick Community College in Supply, and Adam Jr., 25, is a member of the police force in St. Simons Island, Ga.

Mrs. Sanders said that many activities originated through her children and kept her involved in community life. They include the PTA, the neighborhood recreation association when her children were on the swim team, and the March of Dimes, an organization that funds research on birth defects.

Back in Winston-Salem, she was on the board of directors of the March of Dimes and was a volunteer with the Meier's March. It was her duty to organize shifts for telethons and to make sure that everyone showed up to answer the phones while the cameras rolled. When a telethon goes into the early hours of the morning, Mrs. Sanders explained, this isn't always easy.

"Nobody wanted the 3 a.m. shift," she said, but finally somebody would accept the time slot.

Until the family relocated to Brunswick County, however, Mrs. Sanders was a reservation sales agent for 10 years at Piedmont Airlines, before US Air took over.

She quit when she and her husband moved here, and said that not going to work every day took some getting used to.

"I loved my job," she said. "It was a wonderful job, and it took about a year to get over not going someplace every day."

Luckily, through a neighbor, she heard about and volunteered to work at the new Museum of Coastal Carolina in Ocean Isle.

The museum, which opened in May 1991, offered

*"We feel it's very special here. Ocean Isle is a very special place. We're very lucky."*

-Janet Sanders

Newly-elected commissioner



**"THIS IS WHAT I DO,"** says newly-elected Ocean Isle Beach Commissioner Janet Sanders of her passion for knitting. Above, she's surrounded by sweaters she's made, including one that won best of show honors in competition.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOKI C. GURGANUS

Mrs. Sanders a way to meet people in the community.

"At first, it started as something to do," she said of her volunteer time at the museum. "But it became a chance to meet visitors, and to talk to people."

And she must have talked to a lot of them, since she

reports that 13,000 people came through the doors during the museum's first season.

Sometimes she guides school groups through the exhibits, but mostly she takes admission tickets or rings up purchases.

"When you first move into an area, you have to find things to do," Mrs. Sanders said. She said she's glad she found the museum, and enjoys volunteering there during its regular open season.

In addition to the museum, she serves on the board of directors of the Ocean Isle Beach Property Owners Association.

Being so visible in the community must have paid off, because she received enough votes in November to put her on the board of commissioners.

"I enjoyed the campaign," she said. The couple invited the entire community to a pig-picking at their canal home on the island as a way to let the voters get to know her.

"It was a good way to see all the people," Mrs. Sanders said.

She was sworn into office Dec. 9, and attended her first meeting as a commissioner the following morning.

Nervous? "Yes, I'm nervous about my first meeting!" she said the evening before, but showed no signs of it the next day.

Mrs. Sanders said that she expects to enjoy being on the town board, and that she plans to try her best to ensure that Ocean Isle remains a peaceful, family community.

"We feel it's very special here. Ocean Isle is a very special place," she says of her husband's and her feelings about the place. "We're very lucky."

These days, there appears to be more than enough activity to eat up any spare time Janet Sanders might have. She mentions enjoying taking her own 14-foot boat out in the canals to dig for clams and set crab traps. Family and friends come to visit often, she says, so she frequently takes guests out on the water.

She won't admit to being a golfer, but instead says "I own a set of clubs, but I wouldn't say I actually play." Golf is more of a social pastime and sometimes she plays when her sisters, one of whom is her twin, come to visit.

Under slight prodding, Mrs. Sanders admitted to an avocation, a hobby of choice.

"Well, I knit," she said, indicating the sweater she was wearing at the moment. "I always have a sweater on the needles," added Mrs. Sanders knits for herself and her sisters.

Her efforts are not always so private. One of works of art won "Best of Show" honors in the Southeastern Yarncrafters Association competition in 1987 at Lake Norman.

"Anybody can do it," she said humbly as she brought out examples of her work. But it was readily evident that Mrs. Sanders' efforts are the result of skills beyond those gained from just a few lessons or reading a book.

Each sweater combines complex textures and styles, or shows elegant simplicity.

She knits when she has free time ("It helps to have a lot of spare time," she said), and the results have become a wardrobe of lovely sweaters and light jackets that she said she really enjoys creating.

"You could say that this is what I do," she said of the hobby.

Mrs. Sanders doesn't anticipate problems with overlapping activities, even with her newly acquired responsibilities.

"I do several things, but each one doesn't take that much time. I know I'll be able to do it," she said. "I just want to be involved in seeing that Ocean Isle is kept as a family place for people to live in and visit."

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