



SUNSET BEACH opened a new beach access, Lot 1-A, on Labor Day weekend. The N.C. Supreme Court declared the lot a public accessway in a controversial legal battle.



THE TOP OF THE FERRIS WHEEL offered a great view of the 1991 N.C. Oyster Festival, one of several fall events that extend the area's tourist season.

Sunset Beach Sets The Pace In Banning Nudity

(Continued From Page 11-A)

town can control growth through its zoning and subdivision rules.

"I look at it more as a protective device to keep necessarily unwanted or unsightly development from coming into the community," Reeves said at a September public hearing.

Morris Hall and Roney Cheers were elected in November to replace Simmons and Hewett on the town board.

Holden Beach, Sunset Beach and Ocean Isle Beach Holden took in increased accommodations tax revenues that helped them provide the expanded services required during the peak summer season, as well as attract more tourists to the area.

With Sunset Beach setting the pace, all three "family-oriented" communities banned nudity in public areas, making topless sunbathing and the wearing of thong swimsuits against the law.

Holden Beach was a hotbed of activity in 1991 as town officials completed several projects including a new public works garage and sidewalk along Ocean Boulevard.

Much was accomplished during the year, despite frequent changes in the town's top administration post and election of a new mayor and four new town board members in November.

Holden Beach went through three chief administrators in 1991, including two hired on an interim basis, before Gary Parker took over as town manager in August.

Police Chief Raymond Simpson, a fixture at Holden Beach, retired in December after 15 years with the department. Robert Cook was promoted from sergeant to chief.

In the political arena, Holden Beach Commissioners pushed for state legislation in 1991 that could allow island voters to decide any proposed change in the town boundaries.

The N.C. General Assembly passed the law in July that allows the town board to call for a special vote on any proposed annexation. Registered voters can force a referendum if 40 percent of them sign a petition.

The town board allocated \$15,000 in August to establish a water rescue team in response to five drownings during the year. Two visitors drowned in the surf, and three men drowned when their boat sank off Holden Beach.

Commissioners adopted the town's land use plan update in December after nearly two years of work, and were still considering changing the outside lighting ordinance that has been debated since it took effect last November.

Town officials also were working on a program to manage septic tanks and other wastewater treatment systems.

Calabash, Sunset Beach and Ocean Isle Beach investigated either adding sewer service to their area in place of septic tanks or expanding existing systems.

Ocean Isle contracted Boney and Associates to perform a \$28,000 study on the proposed expansion of their existing sewer lines to the east end of the island.

By fall, Sunset Beach and Calabash both had separately hired Powell Associates of North Myrtle Beach to study the feasibility and expense of installing sewer systems in their areas, with long-range consideration of a regional solution to sewage treatment and disposal.

The prospect didn't please opponents of a proposed high-rise bridge at Sunset Beach resembling the ones at Holden Beach and Ocean Isle. The bridge—and the potential of a sewer line suspended from it—became a symbol for population growth and density that could change the nature of the island.

Sunset Beach added to its problems with disagreeing factions in its community by annexing more than 1,200 acres of land into its boundaries.

"We're going to be busy this year," said Mayor Mason Barber in February as commissioners moved to begin the annexation process that would bring in more tax base.

As they approved annexation of the Seaside Food Lion area on N.C. 904, a large portion of Sea Trail, Kings Trail subdivision, and Oyster Point I and II in 1991, they heard praise from residents who liked being part of the town, but they also heard grumbles from those who wanted the quiet little island-dominated community to remain that way.

"I have less and less voting power on the island every time the town annexes an area on the mainland," said Cletus Waldmiller, president of the

Sunset Beach Taxpayers Association. "Pretty soon we're not going to be a beach town, but a town with a beach."

Ocean Isle had high hopes of seeing Shallotte Inlet dredged by the Corps of Engineers early in the year, but the Corps announced that the project wasn't affordable. But by December, the town received notice that the Corps was reconsidering its request.

Meanwhile, the town expected material from routine maintenance dredging of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway to help renourish its eroding east end.

Growth came in the form of modern lighting to Varnamtown, when

shortly before its third birthday, aldermen had installed amber street lights in the town limits. A healthy budget also helped the board pay off the remaining debt owed on its town hall building a year ahead of schedule.

Calabash wrestled with errors, enforcement and changes in their zoning ordinances all year. Agreements on town ordinances were finally reached concerning signs, yard sales, manufactured homes, tree pruning, abandoned structures and peddling.

The Calabash Planning Board looked to be in jeopardy when on August 27, the entire membership resigned, citing lack of communication and support from the commis-

sioners.

Eventually Pati Lewellyn, Forrest King, Bruce Bunt and Warren Pienack returned at the commissioners' request, and additional new members were found. The commissioners also added another representative from District 1 (the old Town of Calabash) and another from District 2 (Carolina Shores), thus balancing the representation to equal that of the town board.

In municipal elections, incumbents fared well across the South Brunswick Islands.

Like Shallotte, Ocean Isle, Sunset Beach and Varnamtown returned their incumbent mayors to office—Betty Williamson, Mason Barber

and Judy Galloway respectively.

At Ocean Isle newcomers Janet Sanders and Kendall Suh were elected, while incumbent Debbie Sloane Fox won re-election.

In Calabash incumbents Jon Sanborn (District II) and Keith Hardee (District I) returned and Robert Noe, former Carolina Shores POA manger, joined the board from District II.

Councilman Mary K. Griffith won re-election at Sunset Beach, while Cheri Cheek defeated Waldmiller for the other available seat.

In Varnamtown, voters returned John David Dawson to the board, while Tonya Robbins and Faye Galloway won their first terms.

LAST BIG SALE

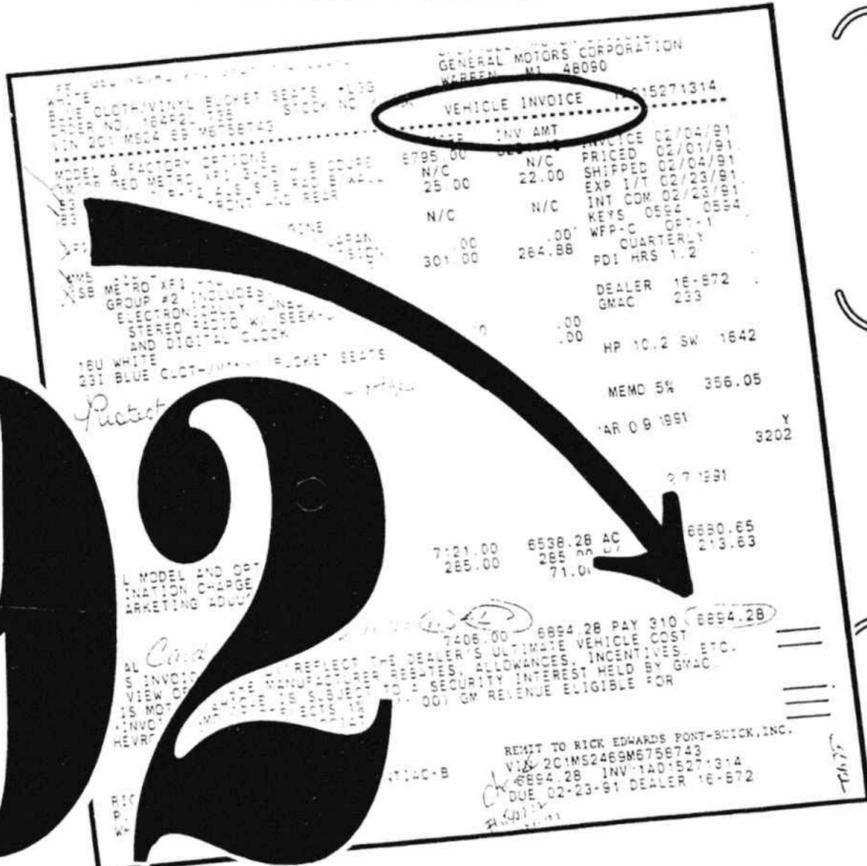
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