

COASTAL SITES CLEANER

# South Brunswick Beaches Big Sweep Nets 401 Bags Of Litter

BY DOUG RUTTER

Volunteers filled 401 trash bags with plastic bottles, aluminum cans and other litter while combing the South Brunswick beaches Saturday morning during Big Sweep '92.

Once again, though, it was the unending supply of cigarette butts that overwhelmed the 318 people who turned out at Sunset, Ocean Isle and Holden beaches for the annual cleanup.

Youth group members from St. Luke Lutheran Church found more than 1,400 butts on a short section of Holden Beach's strand alone, said coordinator Diane Clark.

"We want to remind people that's not good for our fish and to remove those butts when they leave," Clark said. "The filters are very dangerous to marine life."

The story was much the same elsewhere, as local volunteers picked up more discarded butts than any other item Saturday. Other popular finds included plastic, alu-

minum and glass containers. Big Sweep is an annual statewide cleanup of coastal beaches and inland shores. It is designed to preserve the environment while educating the public about the hazards of littering.

Ocean Isle Beach had the greatest turnout of the local beaches Saturday, with an estimated 175 volunteers participating in the property owners association "Trash Bash."

Coordinator Phil Holcombe said the group filled 283 bags, picking up an estimated 3,000 pounds of litter. "We didn't really have anything unusual. We didn't find any appliances or anything."

Although the Town of Ocean Isle Beach provides trash cans up and down the strand, Holcombe said it's apparent a lot of people haven't been putting them to use.

"It's really a shame," Holcombe said Monday. "People have to walk at most 100 feet and they won't

even do that."

In addition to Ocean Isle property owners, Hay Street United Methodist Church of Fayetteville sent a group to help out Saturday.

The Miles Co. of Clayton also sent some employees to the beach. "They came about three hours just for the cleanup," Holcombe said.

Down the road at Sunset Beach, coordinator Cleve Waldmiller reported the community's best turnout ever for the Big Sweep—93 volunteers.

The number of helpers was up from about 70 last year and included a dozen girls from Brownie and Junior Troops No. 140.

Waldmiller said the people picked up 62 bags of trash, which he estimated weighed around 900 pounds.

"A lot of it came from the east end, where we have had more construction, roofing shingles and that sort of thing," he noted.

Joe and Ann Polanski and Dick and Lee Zinser were among those picking up litter at the west end of Sunset Beach.

They found Christmas decorations, a broken fishing pole, a foam cooler and several fireworks tubes, along with lots of food wrappers and cigarette butts, one condom and a pair of panties.

Peggy Smiley and her cleanup crew saw the large number of volunteers heading to the beach strand and decided instead to clean up 11 vacant lots on the east end.

They filled two bags and went back for a trash can. "There was more than we expected," she said, adding that the lots could have stood a more thorough cleaning.

At Holden Beach, Clark said she was "thrilled" with the 50 volunteers who turned out Saturday to collect 56 bags of litter.

Other than cigarette butts, she said other items dangerous to marine life include plastic and glass containers, plastic foam cups and diapers.

Clark said it was obvious Saturday that boaters have been allowing their litter to fall overboard. The shore bordering Lockwood Folly Inlet was covered with fishing line and other trash that likely came from boats.

"There's still a lot more debris out there," Clark said, including a small refrigerator filled with empty beverage cans.

She hoped town employees would



OCEAN ISLE BEACH volunteers Bob Jewell and Hayden O'Neil stand by the 283 bags of litter collected during Saturday's "Trash Bash."



BIG SWEEP VOLUNTEERS at Holden Beach included J.B., Paige and Chris Orrock. They are members of the St. Luke Lutheran Church youth group that picked up more than 1,400 cigarette butts Saturday.

help remove the refrigerator, along with several slabs of concrete and pieces of lumber with nails exposed.

Elsewhere in Brunswick County, 125 volunteers in Long Beach bagged an estimated 4 tons of litter Saturday.

The dozen volunteers at Caswell Beach picked up about 800 pounds of trash, including 30 automobile tires.

With 80 of 100 counties reporting, Big Sweep coordinators said there were 9,552 volunteers statewide who picked up about 195 tons of trash.

Susan Bartholomew, executive director of Big Sweep, said a lot of the coastal sites weren't as dirty as they've been in past years.

"We're really seeing a big difference on the coast," she said. "More towns have put out trash cans, and the beaches are being cleaned more often."

Ocean Isle Beach volunteer Martha Benton agreed. She said the group that cleaned the area near Concord and Craven streets found less trash than it had expected. "It looked good. Maybe it's catching on."

At Sunset Beach, one of most common comments on tally sheets

was that the beach looked cleaner this year than ever before.

"I think we ought to make it known that people are really interested in taking care of the environment," Waldmiller said.

Local coordinators commended the efforts Saturday, but urged residents to help keep the beach clean by picking up litter throughout the year.

That shouldn't be a problem at Ocean Isle. The island's property owners association presented an all-

terrain vehicle (ATV) and trailer to the town Saturday that will be used by volunteers to pick up trash year-round.

Clark said there are already a bunch of permanent residents at Holden Beach who pick up litter every day when they walk on the beach.

"We hope that we don't just do this annually but continuously," she said. "We can help every day by picking up what we see and putting it in a can."



JOE POLANSKI (left) and Dick Zinser (background) pick up litter as Lee Zinser (right) records each find Saturday near the west end of Sunset Beach.

## Erosion Control Structures Back On CRC Agenda Next Week

A draft rule regarding shoreline erosion control structures is on the agenda for discussion when the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission meets Thursday and Friday, Sept. 24 and 25, at Coast Line Inn Convention Center in downtown Wilmington.

Meetings begin both days at 8:30 a.m. and are open to the public.

The debate on hardening of the shoreline will continue next week with a look at the draft rule. At the CRC's July meeting, it voted 7-6 to deny a request by the Department of Cultural Resources for an exception to the CRC's rule that prohibits seawalls and other shoreline "hardening" structures.

A variance may be granted if applying the rule results in hardship, the situation is unique and circumstances exist that could not have been anticipated when the rule was adopted, and the project is consistent with the spirit, purpose and intent of the Commission's rules.

The agency sought the variance to construct a 3,200- by 70-foot seawall to protect Fort Fisher State Historic Site in New Hanover County.

The CRC determined the proposed seawall did not meet those guidelines. The agency can appeal the decision to Superior Court, petition the Commission for a rule change or redesign the project without the seawall.

The draft rule would allow "hard structures" if the Commission finds

that the project "will not cause significant adverse impacts" or would provide public benefit that "clearly outweighs" the short- or long-range adverse effects.

The applicant would have to show that all reasonable means and measures to prevent adverse impacts are being implemented at the applicant's expense, and that any adverse impacts will be mitigated by limiting the scope of the project, restoration of adversely affected properties or if that isn't possible, compensation.

Proposed changes in pier rules to be presented next week aren't considered substantive, since they do not affect the length or location of piers. They are intended to clarify existing rules and improve consistency among rules governing pier construction.

Also on the agenda are public hearings set for 4 p.m. Sept. 24 concerning a definition for submerged aquatic vegetation and a minor change to the ocean hazard rules.

The N.C. Department of Transportation will ask for an exception to the setback rule in order to complete S.R. 1568 at Topsail Beach. Other items include a report on the Albemarle/Pamlico Estuarine Study and preliminary results of a marine sewage study.

The Planning and Special Issues and Implementation and Standards committees will meet concurrently Thursday starting at 9 a.m., with the full commission reconvening at 1 p.m. Contested cases and committee

reports will be considered Friday morning.

The CRC is responsible for adopting rules and policies for development in the coastal area. The marine ecology seat previously held by Dr.

visit will be from 9-11 a.m. and the Winnabow visit, from noon until 2 p.m.

Those having a problem with a federal agency or questions or opinions about federal legislation are invited to visit the mobile office.

The mobile office of Congressman Charlie Rose will visit two locations in Brunswick County during September.

A representative of Rose's office will be available for conferences at Leland and Winnabow post offices on Tuesday, Sept. 29. The Leland

Loan Expanded For Yaupon Beach Sewer

Yaupon Beach has received a \$280,000 increase in its state loan that will be used to construct a wastewater treatment system.

The Oak Island community had originally received a \$2.8 million loan, bringing the total loan value to \$3.08 million, a state news release said.

The money will be used to build a 400,000 gallon per day treatment plant. The \$3.2 million project in-

cludes installation of a collection system and transport lines to the plant.

The N.C. Environmental Management Commission awarded the loan in accordance with the N.C. Clean Water Revolving Loan and Grant Act of 1987.

Under this act, the state helps local governments finance wastewater treatment facilities through low interest loans.

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