

Emerald Tidings / Island Review – September 21, 2005 Print Edition

Bill Hargett Named New Police Chief

Following a nearly six-month assignment as Acting Police Chief, Bill Hargett has been officially named as the Emerald Isle Police Chief. Town Manager Frank Rush selected Hargett for the Police Chief position in August, arriving at this decision after working closely with Hargett in the acting role since March 2005.

Chief Hargett, 51, has nearly 26 years of law enforcement experience and service to the Town of Emerald Isle. Chief Hargett is the senior member of the Emerald Isle Police Department, having served since October 1979. He began his career as a Patrolman, and was quickly promoted to leadership positions over the next 5 ½ years. He was promoted to Sergeant in August 1981, Lieutenant in October 1983, and then promoted to Captain in March 1985. In April 2003, Hargett was promoted to the newly created position of Assistant Police Chief, and served in that role until assuming the Acting Police Chief role in March 2005. Hargett has vast experience in all aspects of Police operations and management, and has a keen understanding of the dynamics of the Emerald Isle community and the Emerald Isle Police Department.

"Bill has served Emerald Isle well for many years, and was most impressive during the past 6 months in leading the Emerald Isle Police Department through a transition into a new era. I am confident that Bill has the knowledge, experience, vision, and commitment to keep our community safe and lead the Police Department in providing the highest quality law enforcement and community services," said Town Manager Frank Rush.

Dune Vegetation Looking Good!

The Town's ocean beach is looking better than ever with the completion of more than 10 miles of beach nourishment projects over the past 2 years. The beach on the east end of Town has been fully restored and a new significant dune line is in place in areas where waves once lapped at the base of homes and walkways. The beach in the central and western areas of Town has been widened, providing additional recreational area and storm protection.

All along the beach, we are seeing significant new dune vegetation – both due to intentional planting and Mother Nature. On the east end, the Town installed dune grass all along the top of the newly constructed dune, and that vegetation has become well established. Some oceanfront property owners have planted additional vegetation, including American Beachgrass, Sea Oats, and Bitter Panicum, and the results of their efforts have been outstanding. In the central and western areas, the additional beach width has enabled dune vegetation to naturally migrate toward the ocean, in turn helping to build new dunes!

The vegetation in front of this vacant lot near 9th Street in the picture below has all been planted since the completion of the Eastern Phase project in late March 2003, and this dune is one of the most heavily vegetated dunes in Emerald Isle! The property owner has made a conscious effort to establish this vegetation, and it has definitely paid off, as evidenced in the photo.



The vegetation in front of this home in the 200 block is also all new since the completion of the 2003 nourishment project. There was little or no vegetation between the house and the flat beach two years ago, and this property owner's conscious and determined effort has also paid off.



The photo below is from the 3000 block, and shows recently planted dune grass on the new dune constructed as part of the Town's 2004 project that replaced sand lost in Hurricane Isabel. There are several local landscaping contractors who perform this type of work, and the Town encourages our property owners to contact them for assistance. Eventually, the dune below will likely look similar to the two above!



The photo below shows some of the natural seaward migration of dune vegetation in the 5600 block. This area was nourished in 2003, widening the beach by approximately 100 feet. Much of this vegetation has migrated seaward since that time, and is now assisting in the formation of new dunes further seaward. The new dune vegetation and resulting new dunes are becoming so prevalent that future beach walkway extensions may be necessary! Now that's a good problem to have if you're an oceanfront property owner!



The Town encourages all residents, visitors, and property owners to respect the dunes and the dune vegetation, as they are our first line of defense against heavy surf and storms, add to the

beauty of the beach, and serve as important habitat for beach wildlife. The Town also encourages our oceanfront property owners to plant additional dune vegetation where feasible and necessary, as this relatively small investment of money and/or time will potentially pay huge dividends!

NC Sea Grant recently published a new booklet called The Dune Book that includes a great deal of helpful and interesting information about dunes and dune vegetation. The Dune Book can be accessed at http://www.ncseagrant.org/files/dune_booklet.pdf or by contacting NC Sea Grant at 919-515-2454. You can also contact one of the many local landscaping contractors in the Emerald Isle area, and they can give you more specific recommendations on dune plantings in Emerald Isle!

New Beach Wheelchairs In Service

The Town recently took delivery of two new beach wheelchairs to aid our handicapped residents, property owners, and visitors in accessing the beach strand. The two new chairs supplement 3 existing chairs equipped with large inflatable wheels designed to operate more easily on the sandy beach. These beach wheelchairs are available on a first-come, first-serve basis, and can be borrowed at no cost by visiting the Emerald Isle Fire Station on a daily basis. The most convenient access points for the beach wheelchairs are located at the 3rd Street Park, Black Skimmer ramp, Randy's Way (in Ocean Oaks), and at Wyndtree Drive.

New Defibrillators in Service on Town Fire Engines

Through a grant from the NC Office of Emergency Medical Services, two new LifPak 500 Biphasic Defibrillators have been placed in service on the Town's two first-out fire engines. Defibrillation involves the application of a brief, high-energy pulse of electricity to the heart muscle, and is a recognized means of terminating certain potentially fatal arrhythmias of the heart. The use of defibrillation has the potential to save lives, and the Town is pleased to enhance our capabilities with the addition of the two new defibrillators.

Fire department personnel are all North Carolina Certified EMT's and run as 'first responders' for Emerald Isle Emergency Medical Services (EIEMS), the paramedic-level squad providing service to Emerald Isle. The Fire Department and EI EMS employ a cooperative effort to provide the fastest and most effective emergency medical services for Emerald Isle's residents, property owners, and visitors. The addition of these defibrillators will enable the Fire Department to assist patients who are unconscious, not breathing, and showing no signs of circulation in the time prior to the arrival of Emerald Isle Emergency Medical Services. As we all know, every second counts in a medical emergency.

The Fire Department extends its thanks to EI EMS Paramedic Ron Marks for providing the necessary training on the new defibrillators.

Residential Land Uses Promoted by the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners

The Planning Board and Board of Commissioners recently made significant land use decisions to allow residential development to occur at the current site of the Bridgeview Campground, located just east of the Cameron Langston Bridge on Bogue Sound. The property's Land Use Plan designation was changed from "Commercial Corridor" to "Single-Dual Family Residential", and the zoning was changed from Business-3 (B-3) to Residential-2 (R-2). The B-3 zoning district is the Town's most intensive commercial district, and would have allowed a wide range and scale of commercial activities. The rezoning to R-2 will allow the property owners to proceed with plans to

develop a new single-family, soundfront subdivision on this site. Subdivision plans are expected to be submitted to the Town in the coming months.

The Planning Board has approved, and the Board of Commissioners will soon consider a proposal to allow residential development to occur on the 18-acre vacant tract of land located on the oceanfront near Emerald Plantation Shopping Center. This property's Land Use Plan designation is currently "Village West", a mixed use (commercial & residential) designation, and it is currently zoned B-3. The Planning Board has approved a Land Use Plan amendment to the "Single-Dual Family Residential" designation and a rezoning from B-3 to R-2, and the Board of Commissioners will consider this at their September 13 meeting. The rezoning to R-2 would allow these property owners to proceed with plans to develop a new oceanfront residential subdivision on this site.

Employee Spotlight - Jerry Talton, Parks and Recreation

As you cruise into Emerald Isle, whether you're *lucky* enough to live here, work here, do business here, or just coming to visit this little bit of paradise, you can't help but notice the well kept, inviting landscaping along the way. One of the people responsible for making things look so good is Parks and Recreation employee Jerry Talton. Jerry has been with the Town of Emerald Isle since May of 2002, beginning in the Public Works Department, and subsequently transferring to Parks and Recreation in August of 2003.

Parks and Recreation staff is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of our roadside landscaping, bike paths, sidewalks, public beach accesses, soundside accesses, and the Town Hall complex grounds. These areas are among the most heavily traveled and used in Emerald Isle, and it is a priority to keep them functional, safe, and aesthetically pleasing. Thanks to Jerry and the rest of the Parks and Recreation staff, this mission is routinely accomplished! Jerry enjoys being outdoors and the variety his job offers, and the Town of Emerald Isle is *lucky* to have Jerry working hard every day doing what it takes to keep Emerald Isle looking good!