

Parking meter prime starting point for summer season

By KEITH BROWN

COASTAL MONMOUTH BUREAU

BELMAR — For something that gets so much attention, it's none too pretty. Not much of a personality, either.

It'll take your money without so much as a "thank you," and all you get is a little slice of its time. When it decides you've overstayed your welcome, it'll alert the police.

Yet despite its displeasing appearance and apparent abrasiveness, everyone from scantily clad college girls to middle-aged men pay for the privilege of spending time with parking meter No. 126 — a pock-marked hunk of metal that stands guard over arguably the most sought-after parking spot at the beach, just 5 feet from the entrance to land's end at the foot of 16th Avenue.

The Junquet family of Monroe Township, the Dobrzynskis of Tinton Falls and the Grecos of Lakewood all gave No. 126 a few bucks to hang out for a cou-

ple of hours.

Each contributed to the \$184,000 the borough collects seasonally from No. 126 and its nearly 400 clones that pepper the entire length of the boardwalk.

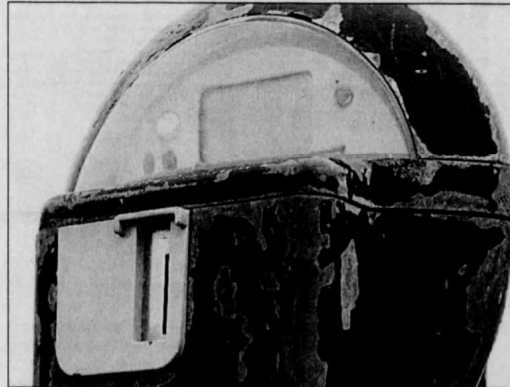
The Junquets traipsed to the Shore, got sandy toes and left when an impending downpour chased them

away with 28 minutes left to spare with No. 126.

"It was really hot and humid when we left at home," said Karen Junquet, while loading a beach chair into her sport-utility vehicle. "I guess we're just going to head back home."

Michele Dobrzynski stopped in, too, and got a quick bite to eat across the street. John Greco just wanted a cup of coffee and to do a little sightseeing.

"We're going to be here for



Weather-beaten and in need of a coat of paint, parking meter No. 126 is a silent sentinel standing guard over a choice parking spot by the beach in Belmar.

awhile," Greco said.

Better hurry. Once No. 126 decides you're done, you could end up like the owner of the white Honda up the street, who received a \$45 love note from Belmar Special Officer Mark

May. Pencil in June 7, say 1 p.m.? You've got a date with the court.

Friday was May's first day on the job. That was his first ticket of the season.

He's got more. Lots more.



Michele Dobrzynski (right) of Tinton Falls, with daughter Vanessa, brought her family to Belmar for a couple of hours on Friday.

(STAFF PHOTOS: KEITH BROWN)