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# the Seahawk

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## Economy rising

**TAYA OWENS**  
STAFF WRITER

Last week two UNCW economists forecasted a 4 to 4.5 percent increase in the economic activity in New Hanover, Pender and Brunswick Counties during 2003.

Rising almost 2 percent from 2002, this forecast predicts strong growth in the second and fourth quarters.

UNCW director of economic services William Hall, Jr. and professor of economy Claude Farrell have worked on a series of economic forecasts for this region several years in a row. They recently reviewed activity in the private business sector and determined that spending is rising and will continue to rise through 2003.

These rates of growth are compared to other counties in Southeastern North Carolina, which are expected to grow 1 to 2 percent.

"New Hanover has an advantage of lying on the coast," Hall said.

Compared to last year, "there are more job openings in retail," Hall said, noting that one out of

four jobs in New Hanover County is a retail position. "You can say so goes retail trade, so goes local economy."

The typically strong fourth quarter in 2002 showed that unemployment and building permits bottomed out. Now that rates are rising again, there are more employment opportunities and construction endeavors, Hall said.

For a student living in Wilmington, this information shows there are more possibilities of part-time jobs, Farrell explained. "A student will readily find work in retailing, construction or fast food," he said. "Not to mention that jobs might be better paid."

However, Hall forecasted that other sectors outside of private business, such as professional services, would not see much growth.

Neither Farrell nor Hall predicted that regional military action would have a noticeable impact on New Hanover County.

"We receive some of their business, but we won't be impacted the way Onslow County will be," Farrell said.



UNCW sophomore Karen Rea inventories merchandise at Bed, Bath and Beyond where she has worked all semester.



Courtesy of NOAA.gov

Loggerhead turtles are losing their nesting grounds.

## Beach driving hurts wildlife

**LORRIE LALIBERTE**

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Camping, fires and driving on the north end of Carolina Beach were discussed at the Feb. 3 New Hanover County commissioner meeting.

Driving on the beach has become a hot debate in the past few years. Citizens for the Conservation of the North End was formed at the beginning of this year to "protect the north end of Carolina Beach by eliminating abuse caused by vehicles," founder Lynda Bilbrough said.

There are eight major property owners that own the North End.

All eight want to stop the traffic on the beach.

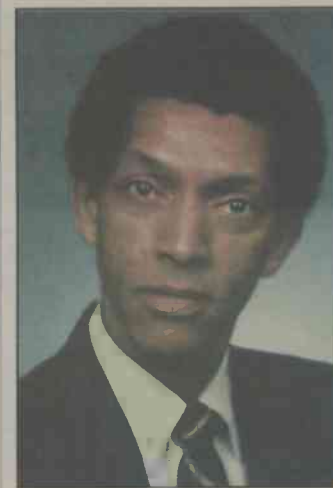
The commissioners decided to put off a decision to look for the best solution. "It's a work in progress," commissioner Nancy Pritchett said.

Commissioner Bill Caster said they are "working on some issues to solve some problems," and hope to have a few solutions in March.

Todd McLeod, the spokesman for CCNE at the meeting, specifically addressed the issue of driving on the beach. He talked about various environmental issues at

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## ASTROPHYSICIST BRINGS IMAGES OF THE STARS



George R. Carruthers

**J.K. ALSTON**

STAFF WRITER

An award-winning astrophysicist will speak as a featured guest lecturer for the physics department in honor of Black History Month.

George R. Carruthers is a University of Illinois graduate from inner-city Chicago. He has held the senior position in the Naval Research Laboratory's space science division since 1982.

During his professional career with the Naval Research Laboratory, Carruthers has become internationally known for his research on the conditions of the earth's atmosphere using aeronautical technology.

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