

# The Shoreline



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A Shoreline Community, Pine Knoll Shores, N.C.

Town Hall 247-4353



In her kayak Lori Balch gets an up-close view.

## Rare Right Whale Sightings

By Phyllis Makuck

Sunday morning on May 25 Pine Knoll Shores' residents and visitors were greeted with blue skies, a flat blue ocean and a pair of right whales swimming less than a mile offshore. Excited by the rare sighting, many of those with sea kayaks headed down to the beach and paddled in the direction of the whales. Beacon's Reach residents Dave and Barbara Prutzman, Ed and Eddie

Janosko, David and Lori Balch, Richard Taft and Jeff Viscardi were among the kayakers.

Approaching the whales, they discovered what appeared to be a mother whale and her calf. "I got close enough to pet its tail," said eight year-old Eddie Janosko. In all the excitement Barbara Prutzman unknowingly paddled over the baby whale. She and her kayak were lifted aloft when the whale rose beneath her. "I screamed," she said, "and my husband yelled back: "Stay calm and hold on!" In less than a minute, the whale submerged and the kayak was back in the water. A thrilling moment! David Balch had brought a video camera out on his kayak and got some great footage but unfortunately missed the moment Barbara was airborne.

The right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*) probably got its common name from being the "right whale" to hunt because it has large amounts of blubber. A rotund body, a large head with curved jaw line and absence of a dorsal fin help identify the right whale. Generally black, right

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## Budget Business Ended

By Charlie McBriarty

It is over! The long thorny process of rebuilding the current budget and developing a new one for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2008 has finally ended. The bottom line is most PKS citizens will find their taxes have increased. All tax bills will find the charges for waste collection services have increased by \$15 from \$145 to \$160. The *ad valorem* tax rate that impacts all PKS property owners has increased from 8.5¢ to 11.5¢ per \$100 of assessed property value. However, the beach tax also levied in PKS has been cut by 40% from 17.27¢ to 10.5¢ for beach property and from 2.64¢ to 1.6¢ for all other property. The following chart is a two year comparison of the property taxes per \$100 assessed valuation.

### TWO YEAR TAX\* COMPARISON

	2007-2008		2008-2009	
	Ocean Front	Non-Ocean Front	Ocean Front	Non-Ocean Front
Ad Valorem Tax	8.5¢	8.5¢	11.5¢	11.5¢
Sand Tax	17.27¢	2.64¢	10.5¢	1.6¢
Total	25.77¢	11.14¢	22.00¢	13.10¢

\* Per \$100 Assessed Valuation

The result of these changes is the non-oceanfront owner of property assessed at \$250,000 will find the tax bill has increased by approximately \$64, whereas the owner of oceanfront property assessed at \$750,000 will see a \$267.75

tax reduction.

The budget building process, always a complicated, time consuming and often contentious procedure, was exacerbated this year when it was discovered that the town's current reserve fund had dropped below acceptable levels. This problem tracked back to 2002 when the sand tax was levied and the town's overall income was increased accordingly. A decision made at that time required funds to be transferred to the Beach Escrow Account, designed to accumulate funds to pay-off the beach renourishment loan. However, this transfer was not accurately accounted for when building subsequent annual budgets. As a consequence, the budgeted deficits were masked since the annual shortfall was covered by the

town's reserves. This revelation stimulated immediate and extensive exploration into how this situation was allowed to happen and what cost-saving measures could be immediately implemented. A series of departmental reviews,

commissioner workshops, and special public meetings eventually resulted in the implementation of a series of cost-savings within the 07-08 town budget. In addition accounting measures were implemented to address the cause of

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Thank you. Yvette Bannen, Circulation Manager

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