

THE STATE PORT PILOT

A Good Newspaper In A Good Community

VOLUME 43 NUMBER 52

12 PAGES TODAY

SOUTHPORT, NORTH CAROLINA

JULY 19, 1972

5 CENTS A COPY

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

Quick Action Contains Oil Spill On Waterway



HEAVY OIL and fish residue line the north bank of the Intracoastal Waterway near the Oak Island bridge following an explosion last week at the North Carolina Menhaden Company. A boom has been set near the bank to contain the oil slick while crews worked round-the-clock to retrieve the odoriferous mixture.

A smelly mixture of oil and fish residue that spilled into the Intracoastal Waterway last Wednesday has coated the marshlands near Southport and created a nasty job for the Coast Guard and others.

The spill followed an explosion at the North Carolina Menhaden Company, Inc., located west of the Oak Island bridge on the waterway. About 10,000 gallons of Bunker C-type oil and stick water have been recovered and a Wilmington oil and asphalt firm has loaded more than 6,000 gallons of the fuel for reprocessing.

Considerably more of the oil would have poured into the waterway had it not been for quick action by Winnabow Construction Company, whose heavy equipment formed a dike to prevent further drainage of the mixture into the marshlands. A county employee who was on the scene in minutes said that nearly all the oil and fish residue escaped through a 48-inch drain that could not be closed.

The area surrounding the N.C. Menhaden Company is spattered with the mixture, which emits an odor well-known to residents of the Southport area. But the concentration of the liquid makes working in the vicinity of the plant almost unbearable.

The oil, spread eastward towards Southport by a falling tide, coated the north bank of the Intracoastal Waterway and the hulls of boats traveling the inland route. Reports this morning indicate traces of the oily substance reached the Southport Boat Harbor. Almost 1,000 bales of hay were spread on the waters, and a 3,500-foot stretch of booms was set near the (Continued on Page 7)



AN EXPLOSION last Wednesday at N.C. Menhaden Company caused heavy damage and allowed about 15,000 gallons of oil and fish residue to escape into the Intracoastal Waterway near Southport. Quick action by Winnabow

Construction Company, including the building of dikes, prevented further loss of the mixture. Standard Products, which operates a nearby menhaden plant, had leased the tanks for storage

No Jail Terms:

Local Judges Ahead Of Time

"It's what we've been doing all along down here", Judge Ray Walton said last week of a state court official's recommendation that jail terms for lesser crimes be eliminated.

"It's just common sense — you don't send someone to jail for speeding unless there's a far more serious violation

involved", the chief district judge for this area said, echoing an earlier statement by visiting Judge James H. Pou Biley ("You know beforehand whether you might sentence someone to jail if they're proved guilty").

The judicial comments came after a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision extended the right of free legal counsel to all indigents (those who cannot afford to pay) facing possible jail terms, rather than simply a jail term of six months or more.

Bert Montague, the state director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, quickly offered a recommendation to all state court officials (Superior and District courts) that active prison sentences for four types of offenses should be discarded as a means of punishment, eliminating the necessity of hiring lawyers for indigent defendants in many minor cases which carry possible jail sentences.

"The recommendation is a sound one," said Walton, "but it really means nothing new to Brunswick county since it's what we've doing down here for a long time already. We don't send people to jail for things like that anymore", referring to Montague's list of offenses, which include littering, speeding up to 80 miles an hour, driving with an expired license, public drunkenness (first offense) and passing a worthless check.

The state courts office has sought emergency funds from the General Assembly to pay for the spiraling costs of court-appointed lawyers under the new ruling, and is (Continued on Page 7)



JIM HUNT

Hunt Thanks Local Voters

Jim Hunt, Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor, visited in Brunswick County Tuesday and spoke to a group of Democratic voters at an evening session in the courtroom at Shallotte.

This was an informal gathering and included several candidates for county office. Hunt said he came to Brunswick County to thank his supporters for their help in the May primary which gave him victory over four other opponents.

The young Wilson attorney has embarked upon a 100-county tour of the state with similar meetings scheduled during the next six weeks.

The meeting was presided over by Odell Williamson, chairman of the Brunswick County Democratic Executive Committee, who called for an all-out effort by party members between now and November. "If we will work we can win," he stated flatly.

Candidates present included Durwood Clark, Register of Deeds; E.J. Prevatte, House of Representatives; and Ernest McGee, county commissioner.

Time And Tide

Thirty-five years ago this week two young federal foresters spent two nights in the Green Swamp before being rescued by a search party led by Frank Rabon.

A mention was made of a report on a story about the Stuart House that appeared in the Wilmington Messenger in 1897. It said that the Stuart House may have been the oldest hotel in North Carolina, having been opened in 1830.

Entries were coming in for the sailing regatta to be held in August; case workers were ready to begin social security; and the Waccamaw Lumber Company had sold all of its timberland.

Thirty years ago this week shrimping was well underway in Southport. Good catches were reported and there were four shrimp houses here to accept the loads of shrimp. The menhaden boats were given permission by the Board of Conservation and Development to catch mullets. They were not to take any within 300 yards of shore.

Capt. I.B. Bussells, H.T. Bowmer and Crawford Ruark had caught 130 sea trout and 20 bluefish while fishing off one of the wrecks. Sports fishing near Southport had been prohibited during the past several months and reason for this ruling was that the area has been classified in the defensive area of the port of Wilmington.

(Continued On Page Four)

Yaupon Taxes Would Increase

The Yaupon Beach Board of Commissioners held its regular monthly meeting on July 3 when Mayor Clarence Murphy announced that the State Highway Commission had applied to the U.S. Coast Guard for a permit to build the bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway and it

was approved.

Commissioner McDougle announced that the Airport Commission had requested all municipalities in the county to unite and develop funding for the airport. The annual maintenance would be \$2,000 and Yaupon Beach's share would be \$175, and the amount must be collected before the FAA will approve the Master Plan for the Brunswick County Airport.

The Board voted to approve the \$175 expenditure.

The 1972-73 budget was tentatively approved and will be available for inspection at the town hall. The tax rate will be increased by 30 percent to \$1.30 if the budget is approved.

William J. Scott gave a report on progress in the formation of the Civil Defense organization for Yaupon Beach.

Mayor Murphy announced that the town is able to reduce the water rates for the residents who have hooked onto the town water system. There are now 316 meters, and since the rates were based on 250 meters, the rate schedule can be reduced and still meet obligations.

The new rate schedule, which was approved by the board of commissioners, was

effective on July 1:
first 3,000 gallons, \$5 minimum; next 7,000 gallons, 50 cents per 100 gallons; next 15,000 gallons, 40 cents per 100 gallons; next 75,000 gallons,

30 cents per 100 gallons; all over 100,000 gallons, 20 cents per 100 gallons.

The board of commissioners met July 14 at a (Continued on Page 7)

Board Adopts City Tax Rate

The Southport Board of Aldermen has officially adopted the 1972-73 fiscal year budget calling for a \$1.75 levy per hundred-dollar valuation.

The action was taken at the board's regular meeting last Thursday night. The tax levy, which was tentatively approved in June, includes \$1.60 for the general fund and 15 cents for debt service.

In other business handled by the board, Edward Clemmons was appointed to the local ABC board after a tie-breaking vote by Mayor Dorothy Gilbert. Clemmons and Robert A. Jones received three votes each from the other board members.

Jones was up for reappointment for a three-year term.

Also, H.A. Schmidt, Joe Walton and Bill McDougle, Jr., were appointed to three-year terms on the Planning and Zoning Committee by a unanimous vote of the aldermen.

A motion was made and carried that the city guarantee payment of a fire truck beginning next fiscal year. Amount of the payment would be between three and four thousand dollars a year.

The board was notified of an urgent need for some place to dispose of limbs and the board promised all efforts in locating a site. The city attorney offered an out-of-town location, and insisted that only the city use the site.

The Frying Pan Lightship Commission was authorized (Continued on Page 7)



A TOUR OF THE SOUTHPORT AREA was arranged last week for members of the North Carolina Press Association, which held its annual meeting at Wrightsville Beach. Included on the itinerary were stops at the Blockade Runner and Fort

Fisher museums, the CP&L visitor center (where this photo was made), Orton Plantation and Brunswick Town. The group made good use of the Southport-Fort Fisher ferry, cutting 40 miles off the overland trip.