

The State Port

INSIDE

Sports, page 16

Cougs make it four of five over 4A foes

Classifieds, 1B

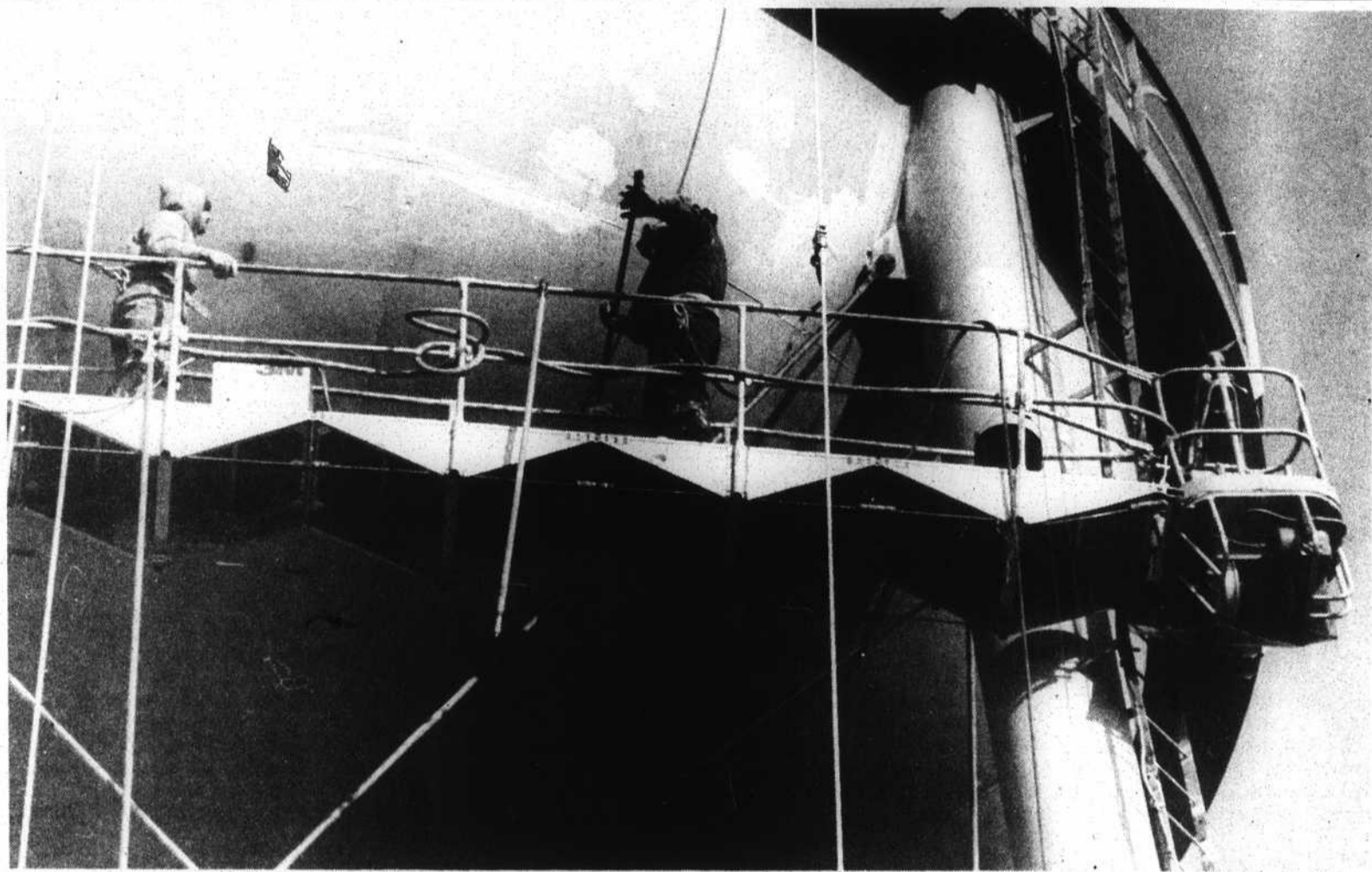
Southport-Oak Island's most complete listing of available real estate properties



Volume 61/ Number 21

Southport, N.C.

January 8, 1992 / 50 cents



Crews from Utility Services Company began painting Southport's water tank this week. The preparation and painting project was delayed before the Christmas holidays because of high winds and rain.

The new paint job is to feature a darker blue background against which the name "Southport" amid a field of white stars will be emblazoned.

Photo by Jim Harper

Library

County agrees to take system responsibility

By Holly Edwards
County Editor

"County taxpayers are going to support the library system, and the board of commissioners will run it," commissioner Gene Pinkerton said Monday after the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to take over the library system that has been shared with Southport since the 1950s.

The board agreed to begin immediate work on a county library department, and turned the task of organizing the new department over to county manager David Clegg, who also serves as county attorney.

"There will still have to be a number of joint resolutions passed between Brunswick County and the City of Southport," Clegg said after the meeting. "I'm not so sure there won't be problems." Not everyone supports the idea of having a county library department, Clegg said, but he suggested the main problems would be with logistics rather than

with conflicts of opinion.

The county should be in complete control of the library system and all library employees should be put on county payroll by July 1, Clegg said. "It's not the intention of the board of See Library, page 11

'Southport is looking at their contribution to the library and realizing that the money would be better spent on the health and safety of its citizens.'

David Clegg
County manager

More sewer meetings on tap in Long Beach

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

In the first of what commissioners promise to be several workshops on construction of a public wastewater management system Thursday, Long Beach property owners fired questions at consulting engineers who have prepared a preliminary engineering report for the project.

Commissioners set a second workshop session with the engineers tomorrow (Thursday) at 7 p.m. at the town recreation center.

Throughout discussion last Thursday, engineers held to the assertion a public sewer system would cost about \$15.2 million to build and monthly sewer bills for average customers using 6,000 gallons of water per month would be between

\$15 and \$16 if expected favorable financing is obtained.

New facts emerging from the session include:

•The N. C. Local Government Commission recently instructed the town to underwrite the project by seeking approval of a \$15-million bond issuance. Before, town officials and their engineers had said it would be possible to authorize sales

of as little as \$1 million in general obligation bonds and then only sell bond anticipation notes while awaiting anticipated low-interest state loans.

•A referendum on the authorization of the sale of \$15 million in general obligation bonds has been tentatively set for March 31. Registered voters only may participate in the referendum to be conducted by the Brunswick County Board of Elections on the town's behalf.

"Therefore, there is adequate time for all your questions to be answered and all the engineers' work to be done," mayor Joan Altman told a standing-room-only crowd.

Consulting engineers Finley Boney and Robert Graham, both of Finley Boney and Associates of Raleigh, took turns presenting information and fielding questions of the property owners.

Graham outlined the preliminary design of the sewer system that

would be advanced to state regulatory and financing agencies.

The Boney firm began working for Long Beach in September, 1990, and revised design plans and cost estimates advanced by another firm in 1984. Sewer construction in Long See Beach sewer, page 11

N. C. Fourth of July

No festival pageant; cost is crowning blow

By Marybeth Bianchi
Feature Editor

With expenses outweighing the benefits, the N. C. Fourth of July Festival board of directors has voted to abandon the 1992 queen's pageant, the chairman said Monday.

"This is the way a majority of the board felt," chairman Wayne Berry said. There was a considerable amount of discussion about the pageant, which has been held for the past 27 years, but the directors' decision to abandon this year's queen's pageant "was unanimous before we left the meeting," Berry

said. "The board of directors (made up of past festival presidents) decided



not to have the Fourth of July pageant based on the costs involved with the event," he said.

That does not mean, however, that there will never be another pageant. Berry said the board voted not to have the competition this year, but left it open for the future.

"It's not the final chapter because the title itself was not retired," he said. "They didn't vote to retire the title."

While directors recognize the long tradition of the title and the fact that the crown, studded with red, white and blue stones, is the oldest in the See Pageant, page 7

"... the town cannot advertise for and let bids until it has money in the bank. The only way we can have money in the bank is to sell bonds."

Finley Boney
Consulting engineer

Supply fuels lower gas prices

By Marybeth Bianchi
Feature Editor

Unlike many other consumer goods, gasoline prices are falling. Nationally, prices have dropped an average of 4.3 cents since mid-November, and a few places in Brunswick County are now selling gas for less than a dollar a gallon.

Quentin Anderson of the AAA-Carolina Motor Club said the drop is due to the reduced price of crude oil. Also, supplies have been above normal because of the unusually mild winter experienced so far this year, allowing more crude oil to be channeled into gasoline production rather than home heating oil. It also helps that OPEC has continued to maintain a steady flow of oil to the United States, he said.

With Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last year, gasoline prices rose substantially. But for the past few months they have been dropping, and Anderson foresees them going even lower -- at least until Memorial Day. He predicted last week that the national average cost of gasoline will be as low as \$1.05 a gallon.

Gasoline prices in North Carolina, which has one of the nation's highest gasoline taxes, are slightly higher than their neighbor to the south, Ander-

son said, but the Southeast as a whole has the lowest average in the nation: \$1.07, compared to \$1.21 in New England.

"From the way I look at it we're coming out better than anyone else," he said.

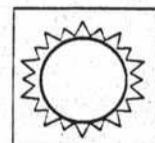
Bob Patel of E-Z Way in Southport said it's the overall economy that is affecting gas prices. "No one's consuming as much. People are cutting back on driving," he said. He said he's noticed fewer people not only at his pumps, but also at his competitors'. One reason, Patel said, is a slowdown in the construction and fishing industries.

In the Southport-Oak Island area, a gallon of unleaded regular gas costs between \$1.019 and \$1.059 with some locations selling it as high as \$1.189 a gallon. The price of super unleaded goes ranged from a low of \$1.169 to a high of \$1.259.

In the Leland area, regular unleaded gas is selling for 98 cents a gallon. Sam Brothers, manager of the Scotchman store in Belville, said the price is the same at the other gas stations in that area because they are all competing against each other. Just across the river in Wilmington, some stations are selling regular unleaded gas for 95.9 cents.

Will the prices drop further? "I've heard rumors," Brothers said. "Everyone's hoping they will."

OUTSIDE



Forecast

The extended forecast for the Southport-Oak Island area calls for mostly cloudy skies Thursday with a high between 60 and 65 degrees. Skies will clear Friday, with an expected high temperature of 50 and low of 40. Saturday's high will be about 50 degrees with a low in the 30s, then on Sunday expect a chance of rain.

Tide table

HIGH	THURSDAY, JANUARY 9	LOW
10:23 a.m.		4:11 a.m.
10:39 p.m.		4:44 p.m.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 10		
10:57 a.m.		4:50 a.m.
11:20 p.m.		5:21 p.m.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 11		
11:35 a.m.		5:35 a.m.
----- p.m.		6:06 p.m.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12		
12:07 a.m.		6:30 a.m.
12:22 p.m.		6:54 p.m.
MONDAY, JANUARY 13		
1:06 a.m.		7:30 a.m.
1:21 p.m.		7:50 p.m.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14		
2:09 a.m.		8:39 a.m.
2:27 p.m.		8:54 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15		
3:14 a.m.		9:47 a.m.
3:35 p.m.		9:58 p.m.

The following adjustments should be made:
Bald Head Island, high -10, low -7; Caswell Beach, high -5, low -1; Southport, high +7, low +15; Yaupon Beach, high -32, low -45; Lockwood Folly, high -22, low -8.