



## Informal survey dumps sewer idea

By Ed Harper  
Pilot Editor

This will be the most quoted article in *The State Port Pilot* this week -- maybe this winter -- and undeservedly so.

Opponents of a Long Beach wastewater management system can cite numbers that show a majority of respondents are opposed to a \$15-million system that would replace septic tanks that already are paid for.

Proponents can quote figures that indicate a sewer system will be necessary in the near future and will argue that now, in this period of low-interest loans, is the time to act.

Non-residents can use numbers from either side and say they had a voice in an informal survey, if not in town government.

But in any case, let them all be reminded that the "Sewer or not?" survey procedure was not without flaws:

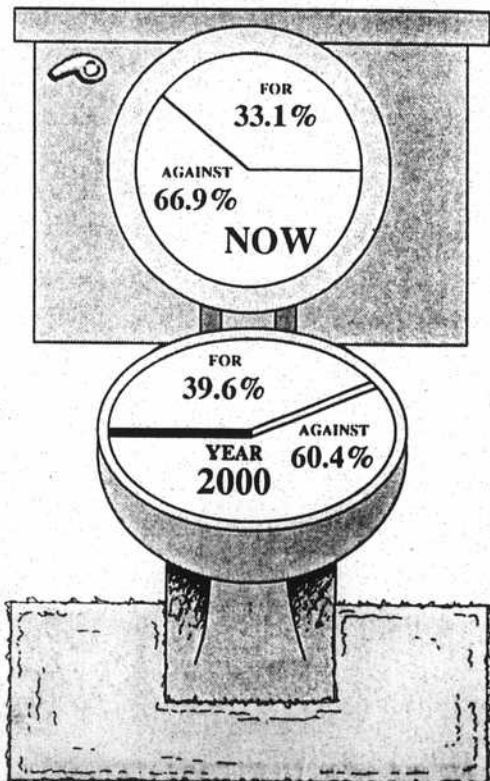
The survey was open only to readers of *The State Port Pilot*. An original newspaper clipping was required for voting but there was no assurance that those with access to more than one newspaper could not cast multiple votes. Proponents claim, and opponents admit, that negative feelings are more vigorously expressed than are the positive.

With that in mind, here are the results of the "Sewer or not?" survey conducted by the *Pilot*:

Of the 384 responses to the proposition of constructing a wastewater management system in the Town of Long Beach, 257 (or 66.9 percent) said no and 127 said yes. The

response from those with residences in the "wooded" area of town was the same percentage-wise -- 66.9 percent opposed -- with an actual count of 198 to 98. On the "beachfront" (Beach Drive and other streets south of Davis Canal), the vote was marginally closer: 66.2 percent opposed (47 to 24).

The survey asked for the respondents' addresses for the purpose of determining whether they lived in the wooded area or on the beachfront. The survey also asked whether one's property was occupied or



### ANALYSIS

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## Schools seek county funding

### Five-year, \$17.5-million improvement package

By Holly Edwards  
County Editor

"We know we are making progress in Brunswick County schools," superintendent of schools P. R. Hankins told the county board of commissioners Tuesday night. "We're in the people business, and you can't just press buttons and make a turn-around. It takes time to reach and to set goals. We're not satisfied in where we are, and that's why we're moving on."

And, in order to "move on," Hankins said, commissioners need

to approve a \$17.5-million, five-year plan to ensure the continued growth and improvement of Brunswick County schools.

"We are reaching the point where expansion is very important, and we don't want to wait until the last minute. We want to be ahead of the game," Hankins said. "I'd like the county commissioners to approve at least the concept of the plan." The county's student population has increased nearly 50 percent over the last decade, Hankins indicated.

Commissioners agreed to study the information Hankins and board

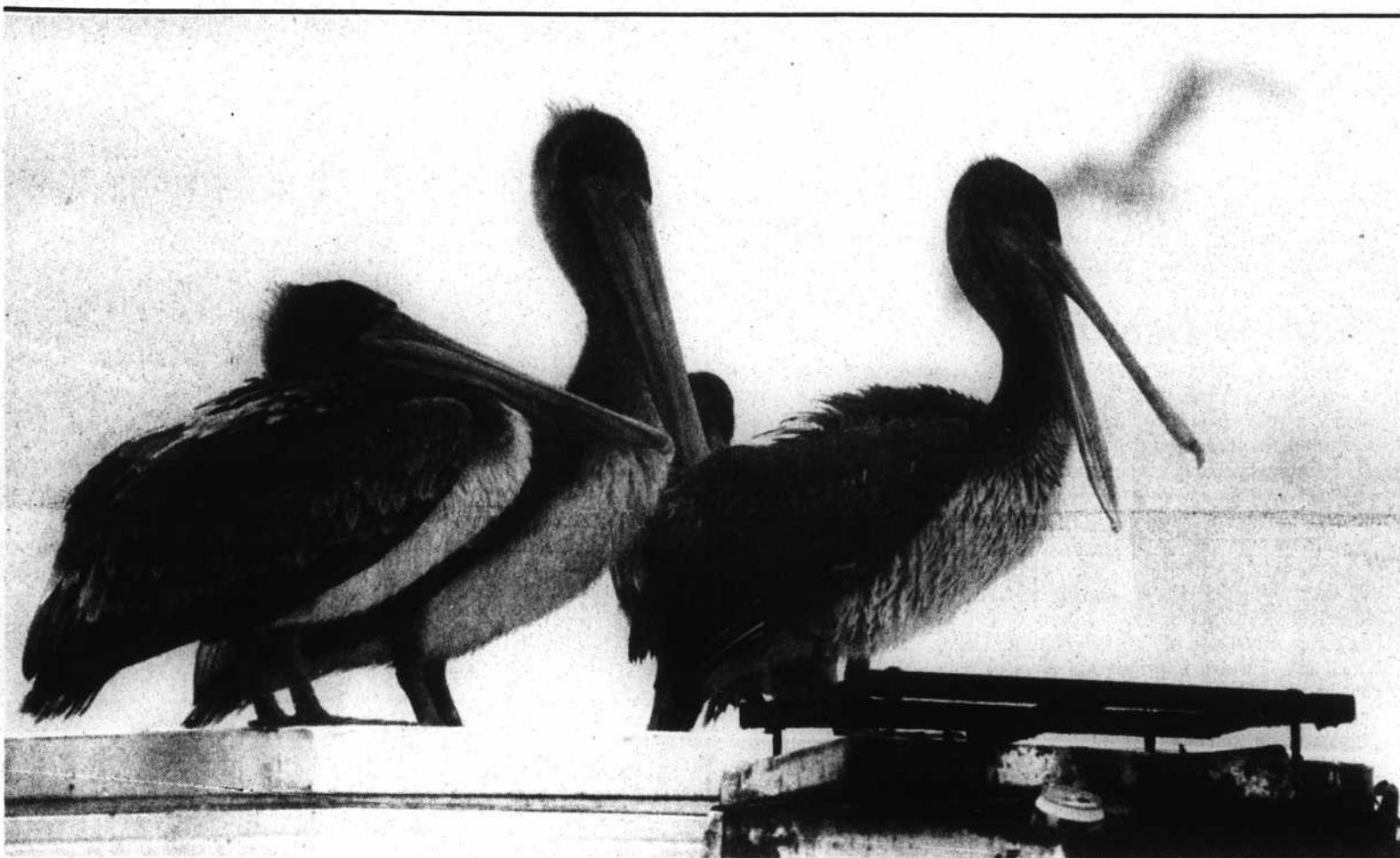
of education members presented, but declined to make any commitment. "We will be absorbing the information between now and budget time," said commissioners' chairman Kelly Holden.

One of the primary goals of the plan would be to eliminate all of the trailers currently used as classrooms, said William Turner, assistant superintendent of schools. A total of 41 trailers are used by the 11 schools in the county, he said. "We feel like the boys and girls in Brunswick County deserve better than trailers," Turner said.

Commissioner Frankie Rabon said he agreed that it was important to do away with the trailers. Moving children from one trailer to another presents a safety hazard, he said, and students would be inclined to perform better academically in a nice classroom rather than a trailer.

Another aspect of the plan would be to move the central office from Southport, and construct a new office building at the Brunswick County Government Center near Bolivia. The proposed building would cost an estimated \$1 million

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A trio of pelicans, shadowed by a fourth, visits the Southport yacht basin, hoping for a handout from a seafood packer. The local pelican

population seems to have swelled recently, perhaps reflecting hard fishing times in colonies farther up the coast.

Photo by Jim Harper

## Waste-to-energy plan may cut landfill need

By Holly Edwards  
County Editor

A Texas-based company has made an offer that could save valuable space in the Brunswick County landfill and provide the county with a long-term means of solid waste disposal.

Vedco Energy Corp. of Houston, a company that specializes in waste-to-energy projects, has submitted a proposal to build a solid waste combustion plant on DuPont property in Brunswick County near Leland. The \$32-million combustion plant would burn household trash from Brunswick, Pender and Columbus counties. And, by burning trash, the incinerator would generate steam that would be purchased by DuPont to power its plant.

"This is absolutely the best technology for the environment, and the

best technology in the world for handling waste," said Vedco vice-president Alan McDonald. "Especially in eastern North Carolina, where 85 percent of the land is unsuitable for a landfill."

The biggest stumbling block to the project, McDonald said, is that it would require 200,000 tons of trash per year to support the project, and Brunswick, Pender and Columbus counties combined produce only about 100,000 tons of trash per year. However, McDonald added, the potential benefits of the project could outweigh any problems.

"We are in the very early stages (of planning)," he said. "We could probably justify a project based on 100,000 tons, but the tipping fees would be much higher. Also, in Brunswick County, the population quadruples in the summer, and we

See Waste-to-energy, page 7

*'Incinerators have gotten a bad reputation for polluting the air and wasting energy. We're not at all like that. This is about as high-tech as you can get for solid waste disposal.'*

Alan McDonald  
Vedco vice-president

## Rabon won't seek election to new term

Two-term Republican incumbent Frankie Rabon Tuesday night became the third county commissioner to announce he will not seek re-election in 1992.

Rabon, who represents District 4 and was first elected to the board of commissioners in 1984, joins commissioners' chairman Kelly Holden and District 3 commissioner Gene Pinkerton of the Southport-Oak Island area as announced non-candidates. All five present county commissioners are Republicans. Only commissioners Jerry Jones of District 2 and Donald Shaw of District 5 have not indicated publicly whether or not they will seek re-election.

Rabon denied a recent initiative to force county commissioners to seek office every two years factored into his decision to not run for office. He also indicated he might have other

See Rabon won't, page 18

## Board help sought for new fire truck

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Volunteer firefighters in Boiling Spring Lakes turned to commissioners Tuesday night for help in securing a new combination pumper and tanker truck.

"The volunteer fire department has not grown any as far as being able to handle structure fires," department officer Randy Stewart told commissioners.

Stewart asked commissioners for the assistance of town attorney Elva

Jess, who will be charged with making application for Farmers Home Administration loans and grants to offset the anticipated \$130,000 cost of the firefighting equipment.

The purchase will pay-off for homeowners in the form of reduced fire and homeowners insurance rates, Stewart said.

"With the personnel we have and (new) equipment, it is highly likely we can drop the insurance rates a

See Board help, page 18

## Not worst, school board told

By Marybeth Bianchi  
Feature Editor

Education has made some positive movement in Brunswick County during the past year, the board of education was told at its meeting Monday night, and strategies are being developed for problem areas that exist.

Despite receiving a "below aver-

age achievement and below par" rating in the 1991 Report Card issued last week by the N. C. Department of Public Instruction, "We're not one of those schools ranked among the 23 percent lowest in the state," assistant superintendent Mose Lewis assured the board. The school system met or exceeded 81.5 percent of the standards listed.

State regulations target schools for

takeover if they do not meet 75 percent of the state accreditation standards, if student performance is in the bottom 23 percent of all school districts, and if the dropout rate is higher than 4.86 percent.

"There were 19 areas of the Report Card where we made positive improvement," Lewis said.

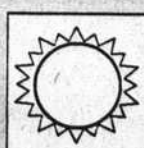
There were four areas of non-compliance in the 1990 Report

Card. This year there were two where Brunswick County schools did not meet the state accreditation standards: student performance in algebra I and student attendance.

Lewis pointed out that attendance was up one-tenth of a percent from the previous year but still five-tenths of a percent below the level recom-

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### OUTSIDE



### Tide table

HIGH	THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6	LOW
9:22 a.m.		3:11 a.m.
9:32 p.m.		3:37 p.m.

HIGH	FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7	LOW
9:51 a.m.		3:48 a.m.
10:09 p.m.		4:10 p.m.

HIGH	SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8	LOW
10:23 a.m.		4:28 a.m.
10:50 p.m.		4:46 p.m.

HIGH	SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9	LOW
11:05 a.m.		5:11 a.m.
11:37 p.m.		5:27 p.m.

HIGH	MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10	LOW
11:51 a.m.		6:01 a.m.
12:09 p.m.		6:18 p.m.

HIGH	TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11	LOW
12:33 a.m.		7:01 a.m.
12:49 p.m.		7:18 p.m.

HIGH	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12	LOW
1:39 a.m.		8:09 a.m.
2:01 p.m.		8:24 p.m.

The following adjustments should be made: Bald Head Island, high -10, low -7; Curwile Beach, high -5, low -1; Southport, high +7, low +15; Yampoc Beach, high -32, low -43; Lockwood Folly, high -22, low -4.