

OUR TOWN

Long Beach

Long Beach public works crews last week began the town's annual dune maintenance program.

Beachwalkers and oceanfront owners could see earth-moving equipment on the beach restoring dunes as part of the on-going process in which the town has engaged for several years. The action comes as about 89 percent of respondents to a recent survey voted to reject a comprehensive beach renourishment program that would have cost the town nearly \$6 million.

Town officials say the current dune maintenance program is unrelated to the failed beach renourishment initiative and is funded completely by the town's three-percent accommodations tax charged short-term renters of hotel and motel rooms and beach cottages.

Commissioners will hold six more informal information sessions at the recreation center prior to the March 31 \$15.5-million bond referendum to construct a public wastewater management system. Three sessions -- at which two commissioners are present -- have already been held.

Times and dates for upcoming sessions are: Wednesday (tonight), March 18, commissioner Bill Easley and mayor Joan Altman; Saturday, March 21, commissioner Danny Leonard and Altman; Monday, March 23, commissioners Jeff Ensminger and Horace Collier; Wednesday, March 25, Easley and Collier; Saturday, March 28, Leonard and commissioner David Durr; Monday, March 30, Easley and Collier.

Weekday sessions are held between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. Saturday sessions are held between 10 a.m. and noon.

Southport

Southport will soon have a new logo on its freshly painted water storage tank and by next year it may even be visible at night.

City manager Rob Hites said Thursday a contractor will install a light atop the city water tower for between \$2,800 and \$3,500, but that money is not in this year's budget. Aldermen tabled action on the lighting until budget deliberations are completed. The tower painting project is expected to be completed within the next two weeks.

Look for a general sprucing-up of the downtown area shortly. A group of merchants has asked the city to sweep sidewalks, edge borders and spray weed killer. Aldermen say it will be done.

Sightseers on the Southport waterfront may soon get a better view, thanks to a local civic club. City parks and recreation director Joe Medlin said Thursday the Southport Rotary Club is interested in placing a coin-operated telescope in Waterfront Park. The telescope would be placed at no cost to the city and proceeds from its operation would be returned to the city, Medlin said.

Caswell Beach

An amendment to the Caswell Beach zoning ordinance allowing the town's building inspector to condemn abandoned and substandard structures will be the subject of a planning board meeting March 19 and a public hearing before commissioners on April 9.

In his report to the board of commissioners Thursday, commissioner Bill Boyd said the town is "a little bit behind" on its receipt of interest due, but that would not significantly impact the town's overall 1991-92 budget. About 83 percent of anticipated revenues have been collected and only 64 percent of all projected expenditures have been made.

Tax collector Linda Bethune told commissioners 97 percent of all 1991-92 property taxes have been collected. Delinquents have been sent second written notices and are now receiving phone calls in efforts to get them to pay up. Foreclosure notices will appear in the Pilot this month and foreclosure proceedings will begin shortly after that.

About \$3,600 in taxes owed by ten property owners is outstanding, but Caswell Beach has had a 100-percent tax collection rate for the past three years.

Commissioner Johnny Gillis recently completed a N. C. Institute of Government school for newly elected officials. She sent fellow commissioners a letter last week thanking them for allowing her to attend and attesting to the worth of the schooling.

Yaupon Beach

Yaupon Beach town crews continue to plant the traffic islands created last year and help is pouring in from local merchants who have made contributions to the beautification program.

Among the contributors have been Oak Island Sporting Goods, Rosalie's, Century 21 Gordon Realty, The Raw Bar and Arthur's Video Super Store. Thank-you letters have been sent to these businesses.

Town personnel have been watering the planted areas, but have asked for assistance from central business district owners. A little sprinkle every now and then would be greatly appreciated.

Commissioners will conduct their first budget workshop on March 30 at 7 p.m. The board is charged with adopting a balanced budget no later than June 30. The 1992-93 state budget year begins July 1. Staff is now preparing to present commissioners with initial requests and revenue projections.

Town clerk Nancy Wilson will attend a seminar for coordinators of the Americans with Disabilities Act on April 3 in Durham. The session is set to apprise municipalities of their role in complying with the recent legislation.

Finally, Yaupon Beach has issued a last-minute plea for residents to comply with the town's ordinance requiring the visible posting of house numbers. Compliance is critical to the success of the county's 911 emergency response system which is scheduled to go on line April 1.

Don't forget the new Yaupon Beach Police Department telephone number: 278-9242.

Boiling Spring Lakes

Take out the papers and the trash.

That's the message coming from Boiling Spring Lakes Town Hall this week.

There's a dual message here: A special large-item collection is scheduled soon and the town's recycling center is still open.

A large-item pickup -- for large appliances, furniture and the things you can't fit in your garbage can -- is scheduled April 3. Items to be removed must be placed at curbside. No appointments are necessary. Waste Industries will drive the entire city that day.

Rumors to the contrary, the Boiling Spring Lakes recycling center is still open and is still receiving all recyclable items it always has. The city plans to keep the center open and is in the process of negotiating ways to make recycling more attractive to more city residents.



NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

Exhibit will open tomorrow

CP&L energizes Bicentennial

By Marybeth Bianchi
Feature Editor

"Wonderful", "interesting" and "great" were just a few of the first impressions area residents had of the exhibit celebrating Southport's Bicentennial at the newly remodeled CP&L visitors center.

Sneak previews have been going on for several days as the center prepares for its grand opening at 10 a.m. Thursday, March 19. A group of about 75 Southport area residents were in-

ited to view the "Celebrate 200 Years of Southport" exhibit Monday night.

Walking through the front door of the visitors center, eyes are drawn to the 27-foot time-line illustrated with dozens of historic photos. It traces Southport history, decade by decade,

from 1790 to the present and includes other historic world events.

Two display cases feature memorabilia and artifacts important to the town's history, including scales, a 1911 menu and sundae dish from Watson's Pharmacy, Fort Johnston keys and Civil War relics.

Exhibit organizer Vicki Spencer said she was surprised when she discovered several items received from different people were all related. And so, a pocket watch, circa 1874, belonging to river pilot J. J. Atkins is displayed on a pilots association ledger with an entry logging Atkins' piloting of the USS Raleigh and a red ribbon with the ship's name on it.

Spencer, who is senior energy information specialist with CP&L, began working nights and weekends on the project in August, 1991, while she was still serving as executive director of the Brunswick Community College Foundation. She spent hours doing the historical research needed for the time-line. She enrolled in Susie Carson's history class, poured through dozens of bound volumes of The State Port Pilot and received many photos and relics from James and Margaret Harper's collection.

In November she was hired by CP&L and began working on the project full-time, as well as those nights and weekends.

"It was not enough time," Spencer said with a smile. "It really wasn't. I loved the project."

Southport mayor Norman Holden said, "I found it very interesting," and he commended CP&L for thinking of and creating the exhibit which will be open throughout the year.

"People are real enthused about it," Holden said, and he said it will add much to the city's Bicentennial celebration. "I think it will create a lot of historical interest in Southport."

Don Johnson, Southport Historical Society president, said he is pleased visitors now have someplace they can go for information on Southport. He also expects some of the people attending the reception Monday will go back to the visitors center for a leisurely look at the time-line and relics.

"I think it's wonderful," Joanne Wesson, director of Southport 2000, said. "It's so good to see local industry do something like this. I think it shows

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Ann and Don Tucker of Southport study artifacts on exhibit at the CP&L visitors center tribute to Southport's Bicentennial. The case features a copy of the *Southport Standard* newspaper, a collection of Fort Johnston keys, Civil War relics and letters of recognition written to Jessie Stevens Taylor for her many years of service as a weather observer.

Move saves historic structure

The historic structure will be located near the old county jail on Rhett Street

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Southport aldermen rushed in Thursday night to save a historic building from the corporate wrecking ball.

On the motion of alderman Nelson Adams, the city will allow the Southport Historical Society to place a historic log building on city-owned property adjacent to the former county jail on Rhett Street.

The old log structure, thought to be a schoolhouse, which dates to a time between 1800 and 1840, today sits on property retained by Pfizer Inc., which maintains significant land holdings here despite the sale of its citric acid manufacturing business to the Archer-Daniels-Midland Corporation (ADM) last year. Pfizer has notified local officials it will raze the building if it is not moved from its property.

"The building is a two-story structure 18 by 25 feet," a report to aldermen from Southport Historical Society president Don Johnson notes. "It is typical of master carpenter craftsmanship with two-way beveled tenons forming locking dovetail joints; Rafters that are lap-jointed with a wood peg at the peak and no ridge pole; second floor joists mortised into the exterior wall; and small windows to conserve heat."

Johnson said the structure is a "rare example" of a building matching the size and description of houses used by pilots and fishermen in the Fort Johnston area. The structure may have been a home for a planter or farmer, an early schoolhouse or a tobacco barn.

"This simple, unpretentious building is more significant than the fine houses and plantations," Johnson said. "It more accurately illustrates how the vast majority of settlers lived."

Through a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Southport Historical Society has begun a sturdy report on the structure.

The society will move the structure from the Pfizer property at its own cost and place it adjacent to the old jail on Rhett Street.

"This would make two historic buildings available for public examination on one site," Johnson said. "The site is in the historic district adjacent to the Old Smithville Burial Ground and very accessible for visitors."

For its part, the city will move a temporary power pole, clear lines while the structure is moved, remove a few tree limbs encumbering the move and will assist the Southport Historical Society in determining specifications for a required fence around the structure.

The accommodation to the Southport Historical Society comes with opposition from city staff, which asserted rear-yard setbacks in zoning regulations would be violated by the proposed placement. City manager Rob Hites had



Built sometime in the early 1800s this structure probably served as an early schoolhouse and possibly as a pilot's or planter's residence. The building is to be removed from property owned by Pfizer Inc., and will be re-situated on Rhett Street.

recommended the matter be referred to the planning board for review.

But, aldermen saw an urgency in protecting the building.

"Why don't we give them temporary permission to park it, before Pfizer tears it down?" alderman Bill Delaney asked.

"Right now he needs a place to put it," mayor Norman Holden agreed.