



The State Port

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Southport, N.C.

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High winds, tides storm coastal area

Damage is estimated in millions

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Overall damage is expected to exceed \$23 million locally from a winter storm that surprised Brunswick County residents Saturday.

No one was injured during the crisis that left 80 percent of the county without electricity for more than 24 hours while temperatures dipped into the 20s overnight.

"From what I've seen, it was not predicted," said Cecil Logan, Brunswick County's emergency management coordinator. "If I had known a day ahead of time, I would have known to stay."

Logan was in California attending a radiation protection conference when the storm equalling category II hurricane strength formed quickly and swept along the North Carolina coast. Holden Beach building inspector Dwight Carroll unofficially clocked wind gusts of up to 83 mph on his personal weather gauge.

The National Weather Service in Wilmington lost its data instruments during the early part of the storm.

Gov. Jim Hunt included Brunswick in a list of 40 North Carolina counties declared state disaster areas Monday. Logan hopes the state will also qualify for federal assistance.

Area beaches sustained the most structural damage, but fallen trees See Damage, page 8



The miracle of Saturday's surprising 100-mile-per-hour storm was that no one was killed locally or even seriously hurt. Adventures like this -- a videotaper seeking a better view of the tempest at Long Beach's 58th Street overwash -- were ill-advised, but common.

Photo by Jim Harper

Clean-up begins for city, beach

By Holly Edwards
Municipal Editor

"It scared the hell out of me, but we survived."

Southport police chief Bob Gray summed up the feelings of many people in the Southport-Oak Island area after Saturday's powerful storm pummeled the area with winds of up to 110 miles per hour for over 12 hours.

"I could not believe the continuous velocity of the wind," Gray said. "We had a severe weather warning, but I don't think the intensity of this thing was anticipated."

Several other local officials said they were not expecting the storm to be as violent as it was, and certainly were not expecting damages in the area to total more than \$6.5 million.

"Certainly nothing like this was indicated," said Long Beach mayor Joan Altman. "Under the circumstances, we would have advised people on the beach to leave ahead of time."

Long Beach town manager Tim Johnson said the area in effect experienced the force of a Level 1 hurricane without any warning.

"It was a sneaky one," he said. "When I went to bed Friday night I was told we would have 35-mile-per-hour winds."

Most houses lost power about noon on Saturday and regained current See Clean-up, page 9

'It was hurricane no-name, but hurricane it was'

By Marybeth Bianchi
Feature Editor

Some people say it may be the worst storm with no name to hit Brunswick County.

Winds gusting up to 110 miles per hour were clocked at the Cape Fear pilot tower in Southport where Boyce Spencer rode out the storm Saturday and Sunday. The anemometer measured sustained winds of between 70 and 90 miles per hour, Spencer said.

"It was pretty miserable, but we fared good," he said, noting that the rocking of the tower wasn't any worse than when someone's climbing the stairs to the office. "It wasn't the worst, but it was the longest one."

"There wasn't a lot to see except a hell of a lot of water coming over the bulkhead," Spencer observed. As the tide rose the water level inched toward the top of the bulkhead in front of the tower, but it was the wind-driven spray that flooded much of

Bay Street.

Down the street, Charlie and Karen Perry spent Monday surveying damages at American Fish Company.

The wooden building which rests on pilings extends over the water and was surrounded on the south and west sides by about 300 feet of dock. Monday morning tall pilings stood alone as sentinels around the building.

"It did what the two hurricanes

didn't," Mrs. Perry said. "All the docks are gone. Lines are busted."

"We prepared for high winds, but we didn't prepare for no hurricane," Perry said.

Of the eight boats moored there, "all but one was damaged," Perry said. The *Warlock*, which suffered worst, sank completely. Perry's barge also sank, and Raymond Jones and Pat Thomas were injured when the

barge flipped as they were trying to save it.

"Two of our own (boats) won't be fishing for months," Mrs. Perry said.

They have no insurance to cover their losses, which Perry estimated to be about \$230,000, but they were starting the rebuilding process Monday, cleaning debris which collected under the building and floated in the water.

The owners of businesses and boats around the old yacht basin have been supporting each other, said the Perrys, who weren't the only ones to suffer. The wind curled back the roof of Pipe Welders Marine metal building up the street.

"Everyone was just trying to keep a grip for everybody," Perry said.

Elwood Cheers was on the deck of the *Wahine* pulling some loose boards off the stern, which he said on Saturday rose as high as the roof of the

See No-name, page 7

'It was dramatic as hell. This desert was three feet underwater. I'm standing here at the side of my house and here comes the ocean rolling right toward me.'

T. D. Puckett
Long Beach



Charlie Perry has a big job ahead as he works to repair the docks surrounding American Fish Company on the Southport waterfront. Winds and high water from Saturday's storm wiped out the docks and damaged seven boats there.

Clegg resigns manager's post

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Those who packed the Brunswick County commissioners' chambers Monday were there to support parks and recreation director Bobby Jones, but they were stunned when told county manager David Clegg had suddenly resigned.

"The citizens of Brunswick County are the real losers," said Cynthia Tart of Leland, whose comments sparked a round of applause.

"I think we are losing a fantastic county manager," added Frances Allen of Long Beach. "You're going to have a hard time finding anyone of his caliber. I really am sorry to see David Clegg go."

Clerk to the board Kelly Barefoot wiped away tears as chairman Don Warren read Clegg's letter of resignation, effective as of 5 p.m. Monday. Clegg, who said he reached the decision last week, did not attend the meeting and had apparently cleaned his office over the weekend.

Following the meeting, board members pointed fingers

at one another for events that had led to Clegg's departure. Republicans Donald Shaw and Jerry Jones voted not to accept the resignation, saying they did not want to see him leave.

"He told me he had about all that he could stand," said Shaw. "I think some people wanted him to do some things that were not exactly honest, and David Clegg is an honest man. That's about the bottom line. Time will tell."

Warren said Democrats had placed no pressure on Clegg to step down and that no one had asked him to do anything unethical.

"I don't know what they're talking about," said Warren. Clegg, a Democrat, was hired as county manager/attorney by an all-Republican board in 1990. The Lee County native joined county government as attorney in 1984 and had served as interim manager on several occasions, acting county manager and assistant county manager.

Democrats gained three seats on the board in December. Party chairman Bill Stanley immediately called for

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OUTSIDE



Tide table

HIGH	THURSDAY, MARCH 18	LOW
4:31 a.m.		10:36 a.m.
4:48 p.m.		10:54 p.m.
	FRIDAY, MARCH 19	
5:22 a.m.		11:25 a.m.
5:36 p.m.		11:41 p.m.
	SATURDAY, MARCH 20	
6:07 a.m.		12:07 a.m.
6:18 p.m.		----- p.m.
	SUNDAY, MARCH 21	
6:45 a.m.		12:26 a.m.
6:58 p.m.		12:45 p.m.
	MONDAY, MARCH 22	
7:23 a.m.		1:08 a.m.
7:35 p.m.		1:24 p.m.
	TUESDAY, MARCH 23	
7:59 a.m.		1:47 a.m.
8:10 p.m.		1:59 p.m.
	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24	
8:32 a.m.		2:24 a.m.
8:43 p.m.		2:34 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.

Forecast

The extended forecast calls for partly cloudy skies on Thursday and Friday, followed by showers on Saturday. High temperatures during the period are expected to be in the 50s with lows ranging in the 30s and 40s.



CLEGG