

Photo by Jim Harper

Frank Parslow clears away an oak tree in sections preparatory to removing the crushed pickup truck beneath it. The huge oak near the Clarendon-

Brown street intersection shattered and fell in three different directions during the hurricane-force storm on March 13.

Board considers plan to ease pre-sale rules

By Terry Pope
County Editor

County law prohibits local developers from pre-selling lots before streets and other improvements are in place.

The goal is to protect consumers, but developers say it's too costly and are asking for relief.

A plan to allow companies to sell lots before roads are built to standards would require changes in the county subdivision ordinance.

The Brunswick County Planning Board and an ad hoc

committee appointed by Brunswick County commissioners are studying ways to do just that.

"We've got to be very careful here that we don't create something that's going to put the price of lots at \$50,000 to \$60,000," said Dean Walters, a developer of Sea Trail Plantation. "The people then are not going to be able to afford them."

The ordinance may be changed to allow developers to either post a performance bond or a letter of credit to ensure roads are built to standards by a certain date.

See Pre-sale, page 6

Non-support has day in court

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Parents behind in their child support payments will have a courtroom all to themselves next week.

A special Brunswick County District Court civil session Friday, April 2, will only hear cases of men and women accused of failing to make support payments on time.

The Brunswick County Department of Social Services hopes the special child support enforcement court will have an impact on collections.

DSS has filed 109 show cause orders against parents who individually owe from \$80 to \$21,400 each.

"It is a day in court set aside for

'Hopefully, this will send a message out, to drive home the point that fathers and mothers have a responsibility to their children.'

Jamie Orrock
DSS director

nothing else," said DSS director Jamie Orrock. "We hear complaints that persons in non-support cases must wait in court until the afternoon, after all other cases are heard."

Of the show cause orders filed, 56 have been served by the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department. Another 26 have not yet been served, and 23 may have the wrong addresses, or

officers are unable to locate the person.

After the papers were served, two defendants went to DSS and paid off their debt, said Orrock.

"We're really putting a lot of emphasis on this, to see if it has an impact," he added.

DSS attorney Elva Jess filed the orders and will argue for the department in court. The special civil session is not a criminal courtroom setting and does not involve prosecutors, said district attorney Rex Gore.

DSS hopes to hold two or three sessions each year. Papers were served against all men or women who owe money, from the smallest amount to

See Court, page 7

Officials await federal response

Clean-up is underway with beach in 'limbo'

By Holly Edwards
Municipal Editor

Southport-Oak Island town officials are in limbo in the wake of last Saturday's powerful storm and are still unsure of how much, if any, federal funding the area will receive for repairs and restoration.

Debris clean-up has progressed daily, but local towns are reluctant to spend their money on larger repairs until they receive an official decision from the federal government on whether or not this region will be declared a disaster area.

"I'm just so frustrated with them," Long Beach town manager Tim

'I'm just so frustrated with them. Everyday since last Tuesday we've been hearing that today would be the day. I have no idea what's holding them up.'

Long Beach manager Tim Johnson, commenting on federal response

Johnson said of the slow response from federal government officials. "Everyday since last Tuesday we've been hearing that today would be the

day. I have no idea what's holding them up."

Federal Emergency Management See Clean-up, page 6

County 'heads' won't roll, members assure employees

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Commissioners Don Warren and Jerry Jones told Brunswick County employees Friday there is no "hit list" of persons whose jobs are in jeopardy.

That message came at the end of a rocky week which began Monday when county manager David Clegg suddenly resigned.

Warren, a Democrat, and Jones, a Republican, met to try to soothe fears that commissioners are out to fire certain employees.

For the partisan Brunswick County Board of Commissioners, controlled by Democrats, 3-2, and whose members have voted mostly along party lines since December, it was a rare display of unity.

Clegg resigned amid pressure from some Democrats and the Democratic party chairman, who had called for his firing.

Warren and Jones said Friday they want to take a more non-partisan view of county government and to act more "as a team of five people."

"I have only seen one employee who has not accepted

See Employees, page 7

Manager doesn't care to take city by storm

By Holly Edwards
Municipal Editor

At 11 p.m. Saturday -- when most Southport residents were trying to cope with a power outage and a devastating storm -- new city manager Rob Gandy Jr. rolled into town with his cat T-Bone and a U-Haul truck full of furniture.

Equipped with candles and a hurricane lamp, Gandy and two friends unloaded the truck until 2 a.m. Sunday, then curled up for a few hours of rest.

"It was cold in here," Gandy recalled with a shiver. "But a lot of other people were braving it out, so we thought we would, too."

Gandy had worked for the town of Plymouth for ten years and had been

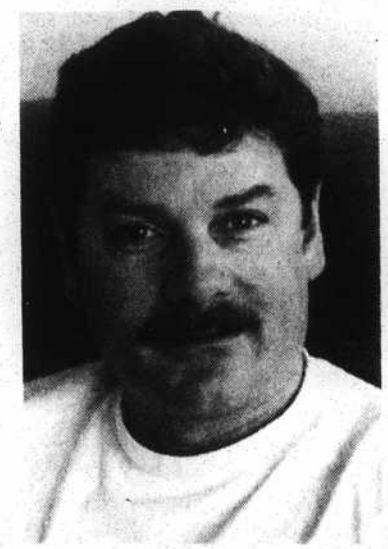
the town manager there for five years. Prior to that he served as planning director. He was apparently a popular figure in town; upon his departure Plymouth officials declared him "Citizen of the Year" and presented him with a combination key to the city and bottle opener.

"It wasn't easy to leave," he admitted. "But the people here have bent over backwards to make me feel welcome, and that makes a big difference."

Gandy assumed his new position Wednesday, and said he was attracted to the area because of its small-town charm and proximity to the river and ocean.

"It's kind of a unique town. It's a beach community that doesn't feel

See Manager, page 7



GANDY

OUTSIDE



Tide table

HIGH	THURSDAY, MARCH 25	LOW
9:02 a.m.		3:00 a.m.
9:15 p.m.		3:09 p.m.
FRIDAY, MARCH 26		
9:33 a.m.		3:38 a.m.
9:50 p.m.		3:44 p.m.
SATURDAY, MARCH 27		
10:06 a.m.		4:18 a.m.
10:29 p.m.		4:23 p.m.
SUNDAY, MARCH 28		
10:46 a.m.		4:58 a.m.
11:16 p.m.		5:04 p.m.
MONDAY, MARCH 29		
11:35 a.m.		5:47 a.m.
----- p.m.		5:56 p.m.
TUESDAY, MARCH 30		
12:11 a.m.		6:43 a.m.
12:37 p.m.		6:58 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31		
1:14 a.m.		7:47 a.m.
1:47 p.m.		8:05 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 forecast for Thursday through Saturday calls for rain throughout the period, with highs in the 60s and lows in the 50s.