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North Brunswick used its defense to top the Cougars Tuesday, 77-72 -- 12B

The State Port PILOT

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Town sewer moratorium may soon end

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

A beginning of the end to the state-imposed sewer moratorium in Yaupon Beach may be at hand.

The town has received permission from one regulatory agency to open the ends of underdrains installed below its wastewater management system's troublesome rapid infiltration basin, and to extend those drains into the waters of Frazier's Branch, a cove off Carolina Power and Light Co.'s discharge canal.

Consulting engineers hope uncapping the underdrains and their extension will allow the drains to better remove groundwater from beneath the rapid infiltration basin. When the water table surrounding the basin is lowered, it is believed that treated effluent pumped to the basin will then infiltrate ground soils more rapidly.

The next step for the town will come when a hydrogeologist begins to measure the actual absorption of water through the basin. This modeling will demonstrate if the town's system actually can treat and dispose of wastewater at the 400,000-gallon-per-day capacity for which it was designed.

"This is very much a plus, that we are getting this behind us," consulting engineer Finley Boney told commissioners Monday.

Once the underdrain lines are extended and opened, modeling of flow from the basin into the ground will take about a month. If results demonstrate capacity at 400,000 gallons per day, the moratorium could be lifted by the N. C. Division of Environmental Management and a much-needed permit to expand the system's capacity by 100,000 gallons per day may be

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Worshippers celebrated Christmas on Sunday in the ruins of St. Philip's Church at Brunswick Town. The twilight service was one of many weekend events as the holiday season moved into high gear throughout the Southport-Oak Island area.

Photo by Jim Harper

Southport stuck with NCEMPA

The contracts expire in 2026

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Southport is responsible for about \$24.5 million of the N. C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency's nearly \$4-billion debt and is contractually bound to buy its electricity from that agency until 2026, a power agency manager told Southport aldermen Thursday.

NCEMPA operations manager Ken Raber said Southport, and 31 other municipalities which make up the agency, can expect up to 30-percent increases in electric rates over the next six years.

The only way members can cut their costs is to lower consumption at times of peak demand.

None of the members of NCEMPA is happy, Raber said, and virtually all of the economic assumptions on which the agency was founded -- and on which its immense debt was incurred -- have proved false.

"I don't think anyone is pleased with the power agency," Raber said. "I wish I could say you were the only ones and I can make you happy, but I cannot."

NCEMPA was formed in the late 1970s, and Southport aldermen voted in 1982 to join the municipal power buyers consortium which formed to purchase ownership interests in power-generating facilities as a means of cutting wholesale cost of electricity. The agency

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Rep. Redwine gets key minority post

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Democrats have elected a local representative to a key leadership position for the 1995 N. C. General Assembly which convenes next month.

Rep. E. David Redwine (D-Ocean Isle Beach) was elected last week by the Democratic caucus in Raleigh to serve as the minority State House whip.

"It enables me to be a part of the decision making," said Redwine, who with Rep. Dewey Hill (D-Lake Waccamaw) serves the 14th House District. "This person works with the minority leader in carrying out what the wishes for the Democratic caucus are."

The 14th District includes most of Brunswick and Columbus counties and a part of New Hanover County. A minority 98th District includes portions of northern Brunswick County, the mostly black communities of Northwest and Navassa. It is represented by Thomas

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Too tough to get permits?

Board wants 'second opinion'

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Developers have a voice on the Brunswick County Board of Health, and some members have entrenched the department into a debate over septic permit regulations.

"How far should health inspectors bend to appease lot owners denied septic tank approval?"

"The moment he says, 'No,' then the burden of proof is on the citizen," said Tom Pope, a Sunset Beach developer who was seated as the newest board member Monday. "That gets to be very expensive. A great amount of the economy of this county depends

'A great amount of the economy of this county depends on the resort industry. It's like a great big cork in the bottle, and that cork is environmental health.'

Tom Pope
Health board member

on the resort industry. It's like a great big cork in the bottle, and that cork is environmental health."

It's a board apparently split over its area of emphasis -- either on programs to protect the public health, or

ways to aid developers with coastal lots that won't pass perk tests.

Salaries have been raised for on-site evaluators who must decide if lots are suitable for homes. More employees have been hired.

Robert Odette took over December 1 as the new environmental health supervisor and received his marching orders from the board Monday. Salaries were boosted to match workloads for inspectors who often face a backlog of permits.

"We've come in here and spent the money," said board member Bruce Quaintance, chairman of the environmental health committee. "The county

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Supply Elementary

Designers want pay for faulty sewerage

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Should the architects and engineers who designed the malfunctioning Supply Elementary School septic system be compensated \$47,000 for repairing it?

Brunswick County's all-new board of education discussed the issue in closed session Monday night after board member Bud Thorsen cited an N. C. Open Meetings Law provision which allows a closed session to consult with attorneys about the amount of a proposed employment contract.

Architect Charles Boney asked the board to reimburse his firm, Boney Architects, about \$22,000, and to reimburse the engineering firm

Talbert and Bright approximately \$25,000 for time, mileage and equipment invested in the repair process.

The system was shut down in March after raw sewage was found bubbling to the surface. Since then, the school system has spent over \$60,000 to have the tank pumped daily.

School board attorney Glen Peterson is investigating the cause of the septic system failure and has not yet determined what liability, if any, the firms may bear for the repair, which will cost \$179,000.

The board took no action on Boney's request and referred all questions about the issue to Peterson.

Boney said both firms designed the original system to comply with all regulations stipulated by

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Half of Brunswick's schools over 'optimum' class numbers

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Overcrowded conditions at some county schools result in increased stress among students and teachers, less individualized attention and establishment of classrooms in converted mobile homes, school officials report.

Student populations at six of 12 schools in the county exceed optimum capacities established by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Of the other six schools, all but one are within 24 students of reaching maximum capacity.

"When people don't have enough space, they don't interact in a positive way all the time," observed Bolivia Elementary School principal David Corley. "It creates discipline problems that you might not have if you had

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Brunswick County STUDENT POPULATION

	CURRENT	OPTIMUM
Bolivia Elementary	560	432
Southport Primary	842	842
Lincoln Primary	761	720
Supply Elementary	702	700
Union Elementary	768	792
Waccamaw Elementary	479	480
Leland Middle	905	900
South Brunswick Middle	703	525
Shalotte Middle	872	900
North Brunswick HS	617	640
South Brunswick HS	787	900
West Brunswick HS	964	820