



**Sports**

Brunswick's 'Hook a Kid on Golf' recreation program wins national honors -- 8B

# The State Port PILOT

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**Neighbors**

Brunswick Buddies offers a helping hand to youngsters who just need a friend -- 1B

**Our Town**

A man, who told police he had committed murder, dies in police custody -- Page 2

## Recreation name stays for facility

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Although not among the greatest issues facing local government in the 1990s, town council's decisions to not rename the Long Beach Recreation Center and to continue requiring town auto registration stickers clearly drew the greatest attention of councilmen and citizens Tuesday night.

At his second meeting as a town official, newly appointed town councilman Bob Boyd saw his motion to redesignate the town "recreation center" a town "community building" go down to defeat on a 5-1 vote. Only Boyd supported the motion.

In a resolution which would have  
See Long Beach, page 13

## Hewett says no meeting

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

Sheriff Ronald Hewett says he is doing all he can to appease a black group that has accused his department of discriminating against women and minorities.

Members of the Concerned Citizens for Equal Justice, led by Dr. George Saunders of Calabash, held a press conference at the county government center last week to again criticize Hewett's administration. They claim Hewett has "slammed the door in the face of peaceful law-respecting citizens" by refusing to meet with the group as a whole to further discuss the issues.

Hewett says he hasn't slammed the door in anyone's face.

"I would be glad to help them on a personal level any way I can," said Hewett, "but I felt we'd addressed all the issues that needed to be addressed."

The CCEJ says it is concerned because the number of African-Americans in the sheriff's department over the last few years has declined. It asserts there are too few women deputies in the department and that Hewett's actions have done nothing to change matters.

Hewett assumed the position of sheriff in December.

In a news release issued just days  
See Hewett, page 6



Photo by Jim Harper

Sunny Waterfront Park was just the right spot for Greer Hughes to practice his ki stick exercises to reggae sounds Monday, but the weather forecast for the end of the week rules out more barebacking.

## Middle up, high down Room for improvement, schools say

By Holly Edwards  
Feature Editor

More Brunswick County students in grades three through eight performed at grade level last year than the year before, but the percentage of county high school students who performed at a proficient level decreased.

And, while the percentage of third-through-eighth graders who performed at grade level was above the state average in both reading and math, the performance of

county high school students was below state average on end-of-course tests on core subjects -- algebra I, biology, physical science, economic, legal and political systems, U. S. history and English I.

Brunswick County's dropout rate (2.54) was lower than the state (3.09), as was the county's average score on the Scholastic Assessment Test. While the average North Carolina student scored 835 on the SAT, the average

See Schools, Page 8

## No public review

# Audit reveals Southport had negative funds

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

In the year ending June 30, 1994, the City of Southport overexpended its budget in the general fund, the electric fund and the water and sewer fund.

Southport also began 1994-95 -- the current budget year -- with negative fund balances available for appropriation in the general fund, electric fund and solid waste fund, but appropriated \$27,671 from the prior year's general fund balance anyway.

In 1993-94, the city spent \$112,160 more from its general fund than the general fund took in.

And, in the 1993-94 budget year the city's two biggest enterprise funds -- its water and sewer fund and its electric fund -- both posted operating losses. The electric fund sustained an operating loss of \$47,514. The water and sewer fund operated at a loss of \$26,244.

These are among the findings of independent auditor Menton Padgett of the accounting firm Brock, Padgett and Chandler of Wilmington and Southport. Padgett delivered a report of his audit of the books and records

*The city began 1994-95 -- the current budget year -- with negative fund balances available for appropriation in the general fund, electric fund and solid waste fund*

of the City of Southport to city officials with a management letter dated December 7. Copies of the auditor's findings were distributed to staff, the mayor and city aldermen sometime before Thursday's meeting of the board of aldermen, but the documents were never discussed publicly.

In past years, audit findings have been presented publicly to the board in open session and Padgett has been  
See Audit, page 8

## County allows homes to stay

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

There was no real solution, only a compromise.

But what Brunswick County commissioners arrived at Tuesday will allow the Applegate family to live and build homes on its scenic 13-acre tract along the Cape Fear River north of Southport.

That will ease the zoning controversy which has frustrated those caught in the middle since October, when they learned the family tract was zoned for heavy manufacturing (H-M) use and homes were not allowed on the waterfront lots.

The property was platted as a family-owned subdivision off

Shepard Road in 1990, surrounded by industrial and farmland owned by Archer-Daniels-Midland Corp. and Carolina Power and Light Co.'s Brunswick nuclear plant.

However, homes have been there for more than 50 years, and those residents made a tearful plea again Tuesday to allow them to live there without restriction.

Commissioners voted to amend the county zoning ordinance to allow single-family homes as special exceptions in H-M zones. That places final approval for anyone who wishes to build homes in H-M zones in the hands of a county board of adjustments, a move that has the Applegate family still a bit un-  
See County board, page 13

# A burning issue

## Retreat was all business

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

You can quick-fix almost anything. But the new Brunswick County Board of Commissioners says it will seek long-term solutions when it tackles the county's growing list of  
See Retreat, page 6

## Incineration favored with 12-year backout

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

County officials say they favor a 25-year garbage incineration proposal with Vedco Energy Corp., now that the contract includes an option to break the agreement after 12 years.

David M. Griffith and Associates is expected to give county commissioners its analysis of the deal within 30 days. A clause that allows the county to back out at the halfway point pleases the ones who may sign the long-term deal.

"They've come a long way," said District 5 commissioner Bill Sue. "If the numbers are a little higher, even with Vedco versus handling a solid waste landfill site, environmentally and every other way it's best to burn it and get some energy out of it."

See Burning, page 10

