



Sports

South Brunswick rode past the Stallions, now has week off from league play -- 9B

The State Port PILOT

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

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Neighbors

The finest instrumentalists strike up the high school band in area workshop -- 1B

Our Town

Is the Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District sewer plan down the drain? -- Page 2

Community Building: 'Lot of sentimental value there'

Blaze destroys Southport landmark

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Throughout Monday and Tuesday scores of city residents, and those of the surrounding area, strolled by the charred remains of Southport's Community Building to share a memory of a special time or event, to reflect on Southport as it was, and to ponder its next move.

What now? Page 8

The city-owned Community Building, built by the USO in 1941, burned to the ground in a ferocious early morning fire Monday.

City officials are to meet Saturday at the Sea Captain Restaurant to conduct a retreat session at which response to the loss will be discussed.

SBI investigators on site Monday attributed the outbreak to a faulty motor attached to the building's heating fuel burner.

Firefighters were alerted to the blaze by a neighboring homeowner at 5:10 a.m. Monday, records on file at the police department dispatch center indicate. Firefighters began arriving minutes later.

"It was extremely hot when we got there," Southport volunteer fire chief Greg Cumbee said. "The whole build- See Landmark, page 8



Photo by Ed Harper

An early morning blaze Monday destroyed the Southport Community Building on the city's waterfront. Built in 1941, the former USO center has been the site of many significant community cultural and civic activities, as well as homecomings, reunions, weddings and receptions. Area residents said a piece of Southport's history has been lost.

'Piece of history' is gone

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

While World War II raged overseas, young women in Southport would don their finest clothing and head for the USO Building to play ping pong, watch movies and dance with servicemen in crisp white uniforms.

The USO Building would later become the Community Building, and was for many Southport residents the place of high school proms, furtive kisses and first loves.

When the building was destroyed by fire Monday morning, many lost the most vivid reminder they had of their youthful exuberance.

"I think a lot of people feel like they lost their identity in that fire," said Ken Mabe, the chairman of the Community Building board of directors, charged with orchestrating renovations to the structure.

Lifelong Southport resident Mar-

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Foreclosure is considered for collections

By Terry Pope
County Editor

More delinquent taxes were paid when Brunswick County practiced foreclosure on property, a legal policy that abruptly ended seven years ago.

Now county commissioners may return to the practice to help boost its collection rate and to stop writing off past-due accounts. The 1994 collection rate stands at 96 percent, but bond rating companies would like to see it go higher.

"I'd like to recommend contracting with an attorney," said District 5 commissioner Bill Sue of Leland, who likes the idea of foreclosing. "It looks like you scared most of them into paying."

Up until 1983, state statutes allowed counties to sell tax liens on property held by individuals to settle tax accounts, but it was often See Foreclosure, page 6

Forum held Thursday

It's safe to say schools concerned by violence

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

The Safe Schools Forum did not solve the problem of violence in Brunswick County schools.

But it marked the first cooperative effort by parents, students, teachers, principals, school board members and administrators to understand the problem from a variety of perspectives.

No one denied that a serious problem exists, and at the end of last week's program most agreed that further discussion is needed.

Brunswick County schools reported 119 cases of violence and drug use on school campuses last year -- the high-

'I have a 17-month-old, and I don't want him to have to go see Daddy's tombstone.'

Marc DuBose

est rate in the southeastern district and the third highest in the state.

"Our report is not something we want to boast about, but we are committed to getting those numbers to zero," superintendent of schools Ralph

Johnston told the crowd of about 100 people who gathered for the forum at Supply Elementary School.

Johnston said he believes the county's rate was higher than other See Violence, page 5

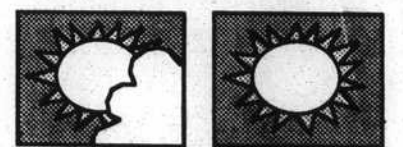
School bids high; board is 'cautious'

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

"This is a cautious board and we are not going to commit to spend money we don't have."

That was school board chairman Clara Carter's comment after the board voted unanimously to postpone award of a \$7.5-million bid offered by Smith

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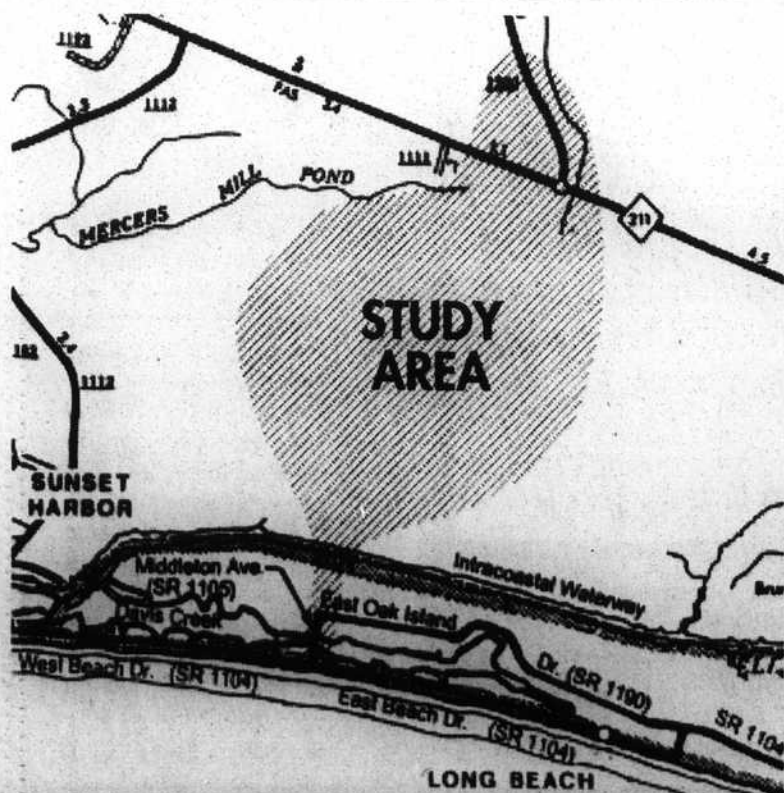
Forecast

More cold weather is in store for the area Thursday through Sunday. We can expect partly cloudy skies with temperature reading in the 40's to 50 each day and 30's at night.

Tide Table

HIGH	THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2	LOW
9:46 a.m.		3:21 a.m.
10:04 p.m.		3:48 p.m.
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3		
10:29 a.m.		4:06 a.m.
10:48 p.m.		4:31 p.m.
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4		
11:11 a.m.		4:51 a.m.
11:32 p.m.		5:13 p.m.
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5		
11:54 a.m.		5:37 a.m.
----- p.m.		5:59 p.m.
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6		
12:18 a.m.		6:26 a.m.
12:39 p.m.		6:45 p.m.
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7		
1:07 a.m.		7:18 a.m.
1:29 p.m.		7:37 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8		
1:59 a.m.		8:16 a.m.
2:23 p.m.		8:32 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; Lockwood Folly, high -22, low -8.



DOT to weigh impact Proposed second Oak Island bridge

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Construction of a second bridge to Oak Island at Middleton Street in Long Beach appears to be on target for 1998.

N. C. Department of Transportation announced last week it had contracted with DS Atlantic Corporation, of Raleigh, to perform work preliminary to formulation of a federally required environmental impact statement of the proposed bridge and accompanying road network.

The area to be studied includes the Middleton Street corridor, a portion of Davis Canal and an area between the terminus of the proposed bridge and N. C. 211 in the area of Midway Road where a connector road would be constructed.

DOT says the purpose of the DS Atlantic study will be to "evaluate alternatives and prepare (an Environmental Protection Agency) document for the proposed second

bridge to Oak Island."

As designed, the project would include an upgrade of Middleton Street from West Beach Drive to Oak Island Drive, including construction of a new bridge across Davis Canal on Middleton Street. The project, as designed, will also include construction of a new roadway from N. C. 211 at Midway Road to Oak Island Drive, including the bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway.

In all, the project spans about 5.25 miles. Long-debated construction of a second Oak Island bridge was made second priority of all transportation needs in Brunswick County this year upon update of the state's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). A logjam in project planning was broken in late 1994 when the state reached agreement with owners of property on the mainland between N. C. 211 and the Intracoastal Waterway.

"The purpose of this project is to provide a second access to the rapidly developing island," DOT said in its

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