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The State Port

PILOT

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Our Town

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Sports

Well-rested Cougars return to the hardwood, but drop closes ones Tuesday -- 12B

Schools to weigh options

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Two difficult decisions will confront the Brunswick County Board of Education Monday at its monthly meeting.

The first is whether to accept or reject an out-of-court settlement proposed by county commissioners to resolve a longstanding budget dispute.

The second is whether to abolish early dismissal on Wednesdays.

To flesh out the complex web of issues ahead of time, the board will hold a special planning session Saturday, 9 a.m., in the board of education conference room.

Parents and school officials were asked to state their opinions on the early dismissal policy in a written survey, and board members say they will consider results of the survey in making their decision.

While principals and teachers say they need the time for planning and staff development, parents complain that early dismissal provides too much free time for their children, and places a financial burden on them to provide child care or babysitting service.

The other major issue facing the board is the funding settlement advanced last week by county commissioners Bill Sue and Leslie Collier during a liaison committee meeting with school board members Billy Carter and Pat Brown.

Commissioners offered to give the school board an additional \$1.35 million for the current fiscal year, added to the \$9.4-million interim budget the schools are currently operating under.

Commissioners also offered to allocate 21.5 cents of the county's tax rate for the school system for the next two years, which would amount to about \$11 million per year with the current tax base.

The county's tax rate is 58.5 cents per \$100 property valuation.

If the school board rejects the commissioners' offer, the fate of a \$14-million jury award will be decided by the N. C. Court of Appeals.

School board members must decide if they want to settle for less money this year and have a guaranteed amount of funding for the next

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Supply drainage, Leland bids -- page 7



Mac Construction earth-moving equipment operators began pushing sand at Long Beach Monday in an effort to restore dunes damaged in a series of recent winter storms.

Photo by Jim Harper

Long Beach begins big push to restore frontal dune line

Work began Monday at Long Beach to restore frontal dunes lost to a recent series of winter storms.

Crews from Mac Construction Co., under contract to the Town of Long Beach, are expected to push sand for the next three to four weeks, public works director Charles Derrick said. The dune restoration work will begin at 39th Place West and equipment and

operators will move eastward to 58th Street East. The cost of the project has been estimated at between \$8,000 and \$10,000.

Derrick said the project was begun at the western extreme of the beach in order to allow sand to accrete in more severely damaged eastern portions of the strand.

"Some places just need a little trim

work on the dunes," Derrick said. "Some must be rebuilt totally -- and we've got everything in between."

The most critically eroded portions of the beach lie in the area from the 3500 to the 3700 block of East Beach Drive and in the area of the 3200 block of East Beach.

"We're sand-deficient there," Derrick said. See Dune line, page 8

Audit review

City's financial picture looking brighter in '95

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

If fiscal year 1993-94 was a bottoming out year financially for the City of Southport, 1994-95 shows signs of improvement, aldermen learned Saturday at a retreat session devoted to audit analysis.

And, a strategy to restore Southport, the municipal corporation, to financial health began to emerge from that session.

"It's going to behoove us all to be proactive rather than reactive," city manager Rob Gandy said Tuesday. "The board, at its retreat, made a commitment to break that pattern."

The Saturday retreat was scheduled after city officials received independent auditor Menton Padgett's review of fiscal year 1993-94 city accounts. Among his findings were that Southport had expended virtually all available non-appropriated general fund, electric fund and solid waste fund balances by June 30, 1994.

The city in 1993-94 had also spent some \$112,000 more than its general fund took in that year. Additionally, it was discovered at audit, the city's

'... it's not just my responsibility, it's the board's responsibility and it's the department head's responsibility to become involved in the planning process. It's imperative we do it that way.'

Rob Gandy
City manager

electric fund and water and sewer fund experienced operating losses in that year.

In short, all funds available to the city in the event of unforeseeable or emergency situations had been exhausted. See Financial, page 6

SBSD orders system design changes made

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District commissioners last week shelved plans for rapid-infiltration disposal in their projected wastewater system and directed their engineer to redesign the system for spray application on a golf course.

Studies of the suitability of present and future St. James Plantation golf courses for irrigation disposal are expected to be completed before the SBSBD March 2 meeting.

The board last week also decided to abandon plans to provide sewer service to the Dutchman Acres subdivision outside the district boundaries, which had been added to the project at federal money-lender request.

In the lengthy and intense February 1 session the board elicited an agreement from engineer Finley Boney to redesign the disposal system without charge

See System, page 6

Volunteers lend a hand

Seniors facility is now the center of attention

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

The property at 5918 Oak Island Drive is being transformed from a burglar-proof pawn shop housing thousands of dollars worth of TVs, stereo equipment, jewelry and firearms, to a friendly senior center designed to help local residents over age 55 shake off feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Bars have been removed from windows, new carpeting installed, a huge glass display case sawed in half and converted to a snack bar, walls erected to form a cozy lounge in the center of the building.

The property, formerly home of Bob's Pawn Shop, was recently purchased by the Oak Island Senior Citizens group for \$300,000.

The group hopes to have the senior center open by

March 1.

Group president Helen Cashwell said the project has already inspired many local seniors, and that more than 20 volunteers have become involved in refurbishing the building.

"There are guys here that until two weeks ago hadn't done anything physical in a long time," Cashwell said. "There have been days when you couldn't get in the parking lot because of all the volunteers. If we don't do anything but renovate the building, I'd say it's been a success."

The group will continue to use the Long Beach Recreation Center for its monthly dinners. There are more than 200 members of the organization, while the senior center will be able to accommodate no more than 70 people.

Cashwell said she hopes the center will be a valuable

See Facility, page 8



Oak Island Senior Citizens members Jim Barrett (left) and Ernest Jenkins are among the more than 20 volunteers helping refurbish the former Bob's Pawn Shop for use as a seniors center.

Forecast

Continued cold weather Thursday through Sunday. We can expect partly cloudy skies with temperature reading in the 40's each day and 30's at night.

Tide Table

HIGH	THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9	LOW
2:55 a.m.		9:15 a.m.
3:19 p.m.		9:28 p.m.
	FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10	
3:50 a.m.		10:11 a.m.
4:14 p.m.		10:23 p.m.
	SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11	
4:43 a.m.		11:04 a.m.
5:06 p.m.		11:14 p.m.
	SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12	
5:32 a.m.		11:52 a.m.
5:55 p.m.		----- p.m.
	MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13	
6:18 a.m.		12:01 a.m.
6:39 p.m.		12:36 p.m.
	TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14	
7:00 a.m.		12:47 a.m.
7:21 p.m.		1:17 p.m.
	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15	
7:41 a.m.		1:30 a.m.
8:02 p.m.		1:57 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.