

The State Port PILOT

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

50 CENTS

Sports

South Brunswick forgot to duck when the 'Pack came to town Tuesday -- Page 9B

Our Town

A Caswell Beach project is abandoned when the acreage won't measure up -- Page 2

Neighbors

Snakes alive! And they're slithering and sliding all over the house -- Page 3B

Sewer delays

Yaupon could ask AG Easley for assistance

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Rejecting open defiance of state edicts in favor of staying the course and seeking attorney general Mike Easley's intervention with regulators, Yaupon Beach commissioners Monday night seethed with frustration at the lingering state-imposed moratorium on sewer taps.

Neither state regulators, consulting engineers nor commissioners can predict when the moratorium will be lifted. And options for forcing the state's hand have been under consideration as the ban on new sewer taps reaches into its ninth month at an estimated cost of \$2,000 per week.

"What would happen if I simply directed our building inspector to start issuing building permits and directed our sewer plant operator to start going ahead and tapping people onto the system no matter what the states said?" Mayor May Moore asked town attorney James R. Prevatte.

"The most likely outcome is the state would obtain a temporary restraining order and ultimately an injunction to stop us," Prevatte said.

Moore conceded that would only lead to a court battle and likely a more protracted moratorium.

"I'm at that point," Moore said. As commissioners fired questions at consulting engineer Finley Boney for over an hour Monday, this assessment of the moratorium issue consistently emerged: State regulators are just dragging their feet. They keep changing their advice and directives. Every time the town completes one state-ordered task, another is conjured up.

The efficacy of the just-installed underdrains designed to lower the water table and promote faster percolation of effluent through the treatment system's rapid-infiltration basin is a case in point. Regulators have said if hydrogeologist Ed Andrews can prove 400,000 gallons of water per day can move through the basin, the moratorium will be lifted.

"We're under an agreement that when Ed Andrews' report comes out and we submit a plan for remediation, then they will lift the moratorium," Moore said. "But we do not know that when that plan is submitted that somebody won't sit there and say, 'We don't like this. You've got to do some-

See Sewer, page 7



Crews under contract to the state Department of Transportation have been at work these last two weeks preparing Southport's Howe Street for resurfacing. This vehicle is a milling machine that textures the existing road surface in preparation to accept new asphalt. The Howe Street work is expected to continue for two to three weeks.

Photo by Jim Harper

School money

Counter proposal presented county

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Calling commissioners' budget settlement offer inadequate, Brunswick County school officials presented a counter proposal to county representatives Tuesday morning to end a long-standing budget dispute.

If school and county officials are unable to reach a compromise the fate of a \$14-million jury award to the school system will be decided by the N. C. Court of Appeals.

To resolve the issue out of court, county commissioners offered to give the schools an additional \$1.35 million for the current fiscal year, plus 21.5 cents on the tax rate for the next two years.

The schools have been operating under a \$9.4-million interim budget, and claim to be facing a budget short-

See Money, page 7

'Talk' goes straight out school door

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

A majority of Brunswick County parents surveyed said they want schools to provide information to their children about the Straight Talk hotline -- a toll-free service that provides recorded messages about alcohol and drugs, birth control and pregnancy, emotional distress, family concerns, health and physical abuse, relationships, school and career, and sexuality.

But the Brunswick County Board of Education bowed to pressure Monday night from a small group who opposed the hotline, and voted 4-1 to prohibit middle school and high school guidance counselors from distributing Straight Talk pamphlets.

"It's such a controversial situation, and I think the board has enough to deal with," declared board chairman Clara Carter following the vote.

Carter said students can get most of the information they need from school guidance counselors. Only two counselors are provided to serve student populations ranging from 700 to over

See 'Talk', page 9

\$9,000 cash, but no takers

A traffic stop in the Maco community Saturday led to a search for drugs.

Brunswick County sheriff's detectives are awaiting results of laboratory tests to see if what drug dog Colonel sniffed inside a vehicle was drug residue.

Cory F. Lee, 18, of 4400 Smith Trail, Leland, was charged with driving left of center and with operating a vehicle without a license by Brunswick County sheriff's deputy David Edwards.

According to Edwards, the 1985 Audi driven by Lee had allegedly crossed the centerline of N. C. 87 (Maco

See No takers, page 6

Tighter crime control getting DA's best shot

Criminals get more support, Gore says

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Welfare reform and tax cuts may be the hot topics among legislators in Raleigh, but district attorney Rex Gore hopes to garner support for more crime control laws during this 1995 session.

"If we continue to expand the benefits given to criminals instead of demanding more protection for the common man, me and you, then we will soon have anarchy," said Gore, who represents the 13th Judicial District which includes Brunswick, Columbus and Bladen counties.

In the past, district attorneys have not attempted to influence state legislators in such an open manner. They tried to draw attention to criminal

justice needs, such as last year's attempt to boost the number of prosecutors allocated by the state during a special legislative session on crime.

Gore asked for, but did not receive, an additional prosecutor to help relieve his heavy caseload and the implementation of a special court for drug offenders. During this session, he and other prosecutors are stating their case more openly to elected lawmakers.

District attorneys in the state's 39 court districts are the chief law enforcement officials within their districts. Their job is to advise law enforcement officers on law and to prosecute criminals in court. Placed in such a position, he and other local district attorneys are uniquely situated to see how the passage of laws by the legislature affects the lives of people.

Gore and other prosecutors plan to issue "position papers" periodically

'Very few criminals are anxious for their day in court. They will welcome any move that has the potential to slow the process.'

Rex Gore
District attorney

to make lawmakers more aware of where prosecutors stand.
See Crime, page 8

County tops 60,000

Third fastest growth in state

Based on projected figures, the number of persons who now call Brunswick County home passed 60,000 in January.

From 1990 to July, 1993, the county had an 11.6-percent population growth, according to the North Carolina Office of State Planning in Raleigh.

It was the third highest growth rate in North Carolina, behind Pender County at 12.9 percent and Wake County's 12.4 percent. In July, 1993, there were 56,896 residents in the county, but it is a figure that continues to grow.

"Based upon this rate of growth, the estimated population of Brunswick County for January, 1995, would be 60,195," according to Tom Monks, executive director of the Brunswick County Economic Development Com-

mission.

The figures are based on permanent, year-round residents.

Comparing 1990 populations with the July, 1993, figures show local towns experienced the following growth rates:

- Brunswick County, 50,985 to 56,896, 11.6 percent
- Bald Head Island, 78 to 85, 9 percent
- Southport, 2,369 to 2,490, 5.1 percent
- Long Beach, 3,816 to 4,380, 14.8 percent
- Caswell Beach, 175 to 197, 12.6 percent
- Yaupon Beach, 734 to 821, 11.9 percent
- Boiling Spring Lakes, 1,650 to 1,861, 12.8 percent

- Belville, 66 to 89, 34.8 percent
- Bolivia, 228 to 257, 12.7 percent
- Leland, 1,801 to 1,986, 10.3 percent
- Navassa, 445 to 485, 9 percent
- Northwest, 611 to 658, 7.7 percent
- Sandy Creek, 243 to 265, 9.1 percent
- Calabash, 1,210 to 1,329, 9.8 percent
- Holden Beach, 626 to 728, 16.3 percent
- Ocean Isle Beach, 523 to 604, 15.5 percent
- Shallotte, 1,073 to 1,131, 5.4 percent
- Sunset Beach, 311 to 748, 140.5 percent
- Varnamtown, 404 to 454, 12.4 percent

Looking back at Oak Island

A 72-page "History of Oak Island" supplement will be published in next week's *State Port Pilot*.

The special publication, compiled from newspaper accounts over the past 40 years, celebrates the anniversaries of incorporation of Long Beach and Yaupon Beach and the 20th anniversary of Caswell Beach. Also included are feature stories on Buddy Brown, Fort Caswell and the Oak Island Coast Guard station, among others.

"It is a keepsake," said *Pilot* editor Ed Harper.

"Not many residents or non-resident property owners are familiar with the history of Oak Island," he said. "The publication will provide some answers and will, we hope, whet the appetite for more knowledge about the early days of these communities."

Harper said a limited number of advertisements, in quarter-page increments only, may be placed until 3 p.m. Thursday. None will be accepted after that time.

