



Sports

The spring sports season is served up, tossed out, teed up at South Brunswick -- 9B

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Neighbors

It's the truth, it's actual... bluebirds are neat creatures, but need our attention -- 1B

Our Town

Are sands of time passing us by in our effort to combat beach erosion? -- Page 2

Parking lot vote

Affirmative action can't alter zoning

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Aldermen voted 4-2 Thursday night to rezone Bobby Willis' property at Moore Street and Willis Drive for general commercial use, but that affirmative vote was not enough to effect the zoning reclassification.

Because a citizens petition opposing the rezoning action had been filed, a three-quarters affirmative vote (5-1 or better) was needed for alderman Phil Joyner's motion to carry, city attorney Mike Isenberg ruled.

Only aldermen Meezie Childs and Paul Fisher opposed the rezoning action which more than 80 people jammed aldermen's chambers to oppose.

Willis has one other option available to him to keep his business -- contractor parking for Bald Head Island -- up and running. He has appealed the city code enforcement officer's decision that the business is not eligible to be grandfathered into existence as a non-conforming use of land.

Citizens in January presented aldermen with a 215-signature petition in opposition to the rezoning matter. Isenberg pointed to a state law which says aldermen must adopt a zoning change by a three-quarters affirmative vote if 20 percent or more "of adjacent property owners" petition in opposition to the measure. There are four persons whose property abuts Willis' and one or more of them signed the petition, Isenberg said during a break in the meeting.

Rick Johnstone, of 110 Willis Drive, presented the most comprehensive argument in opposition to the zoning change, though many more told aldermen why they did not want C-2 land uses on that parcel.

Johnstone said Willis had misrepresented to the building inspector and to the planning board the chain of ownership of the property and the uses to which it had historically been put. He said though the property had been in the Willis family since the early 1960s, Bobby Willis only acquired it in 1987 and began leasing it to Bald Head Island Management Co. for parking in 1988 or 1989.

Neighbors retained counsel in 1989 to try to stop the non-conforming use of property, Johnstone said, but Bald Head Island said it would shift its ferry operation to Indigo Plantation in 1990 and the issue died.

However, Johnstone said, when the

See Parking, page 8



Photo by Jim Harper

Crews began removing the charred remains of the Southport Community Building early this week from its site overlooking the Cape Fear River. Built in 1941 as a USO center, the building hosted most of the important civic, social and entertainment functions of its time.

Community and official debate of a replacement facility continues today. The city last week mailed surveys to residents asking them what kind of facility should be built to replace the venerable waterfront structure.

Yelton: 'Honored to serve'

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Ousted county manager Wyman Yelton said Tuesday he hopes to remain in the Southport community and shake free of the personal setback he



YELTON

sustained when county commissioners voted 4-1 to fire him Monday. "Needless to say, my future is unknown to me," said Yelton. "It came as a surprise. My plan is very unstable right now. I set out to be a ten-year man, and I made it just a short time."

When he was hired in June, 1993, See Yelton, page 7

'We need leadership here'

County manager fired after proposed shuffle

By Terry Pope
County Editor

A request last week to reshuffle county employees isn't exactly what the elected board of commissioners had in mind.

That was one example on a growing list which led to Wyman Yelton's firing by a 4-1 vote Monday as county manager.

County commissioners extended a trial run for three months, but in the end the gap between the board and Yelton had widened too far to mend. A growing list of department managers had also called for new leadership. They appear ready for a new budget and new fiscal year.

"We need leadership here at the county, and Mr. Yelton went through

'... we were hoping that (Yelton) would be able to come back and take over the reins. But that just didn't prove true.'

Bill Sue
District 5 commissioner

a very dramatic experience last year," said Bill Sue, District 5 commissioner. "And we were hoping that he

would be able to come back and take over the reins. But that just didn't prove true. You've got to have a leader."

In one week alone, Yelton proposed to create two deputy county managers on his staff, recommended the county yank its membership from the Cape Fear Council of Governments and asked to impose a hiring freeze on all positions until July.

Yelton was hired in June, 1993, by the previous board to replace David Clegg, who served as manager and as county attorney. Yelton was critically injured in a car accident near Durham on Easter weekend last year, a head-on collision on Interstate 40 that killed his wife.

After months of rehabilitation See Shuffle, page 7

Sewer tap ban

Moratorium may be lifted this week

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

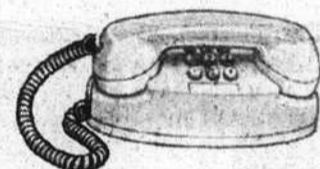
No one dared say it as commissioners met Monday night, but the nine-month moratorium on taps to the town's wastewater management system could be over within the week.

"We are awaiting our hydrogeological study," mayor May Moore said. "It should be imminent."

The hydrogeological study is a fancy name to describe an analysis of how fast treated wastewater is seeping through the treatment system's rapid-infiltration basin. In a nutshell, it was the failure of treated wastewater to pass quickly enough through the basin that prompted the state's Division of Environmental Management (DEM) last July to order the moratorium on new taps until the town could prove the capacity of the system to handle the flow for which it was designed.

Moore said Monday night hydrogeologist Ed Andrews has substantially completed his analysis of flow through the basin and may sub-

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Sewer responsibility

Long Beach, Caswell Beach and Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District are in various stages of studying or planning for municipal wastewater management systems. Yaupon Beach has recently constructed such a system. Is it local government's job in Brunswick County to provide wastewater collection services?

To vote:
• Yes, dial extension 1001.
• No, dial extension 1002.
You may tell us why you voted as you did. Leave your name if you wish.

Last week's results, page 7.

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Forecast

The extended forecast calls for beautiful weather Thursday through Saturday with highs in the 70's and low's in the 40's. Could Spring actually be here?

Tide table

HIGH	THURSDAY, MARCH 16	LOW
7:11 a.m.		1:07 a.m.
7:38 p.m.		1:27 p.m.
	FRIDAY, MARCH 17	
7:55 a.m.		1:53 a.m.
8:22 p.m.		2:09 p.m.
	SATURDAY, MARCH 18	
8:39 a.m.		2:39 a.m.
9:09 p.m.		2:52 p.m.
	SUNDAY, MARCH 19	
9:25 a.m.		3:26 a.m.
9:58 p.m.		3:37 p.m.
	MONDAY, MARCH 20	
10:15 a.m.		4:15 a.m.
10:50 p.m.		4:25 p.m.
	TUESDAY, MARCH 21	
11:08 a.m.		5:08 a.m.
11:48 p.m.		5:18 p.m.
	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22	
--- a.m.		6:06 a.m.
12:08 p.m.		6:17 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.



North Carolina first lady Carolyn Hunt was the guest of honor at Friday's "State of the Child" luncheon hosted by the Brunswick County Partnership for Children. Mrs. Hunt told the crowd that her husband's number-one goal is to improve the lives of children throughout the state. Seated beside her are partnership chairman Lori Bates and Rep. David Redwine.

Local program gets headstart

Partnership for kids looking to the future

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

"Today in North Carolina there are some things happening to children that shouldn't," declared Walter Shepherd, executive director of the North Carolina Partnership for Children.

Shepherd said three babies will die today in this state, 43 teens will give birth, one baby will be born to a child under age 14, and thousands of children will be abused and neglected.

"But," he continued, "the line in the sand is called Smart Start, and that's where we're at."

Shepherd was among guest speakers at Friday's "State of the Child" luncheon held at the Gauntlet Restaurant, kicking off a year-long, fund-raising campaign for the Brunswick County Partnership for Children.

The county partnership was formed two years ago to obtain about \$1 million per year in state-supplied Smart Start funding.

The Smart Start program was initiated by Gov. Jim Hunt to improve the school readiness of children under age five and thereby prevent future academic failure, which often leads to other problems.

The county has been turned down twice, however, and future state funding for the program is questionable.

North Carolina first lady Carolyn Hunt, guest of honor at the luncheon, assured the crowd of more than 100 people that her husband would continue to support the Smart Start program until all counties receive funding.

"The number-one goal in this administration is to try to help the children," Mrs. Hunt said. "And you will be a much better Smart Start county because of all the hard

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