

Neighbors

South Brunswick got a look at coach's wide-open offense this week -- 1C

Our Town

Yaupon may have found alternative that suits town need to a tee -- Page 2

WINNING IS AN ATTITUDE

Sports

Commencement at South and North challenged grads to set goals high -- 1B

The State Port PILOT

VOLUME 64/ NUMBER 42 SOUTHPORT, N.C. 50 CENTS



Graduation exercises for all Brunswick County seniors were held Saturday in the Odell Williamson Auditorium on the campus of Brunswick Community College. North Brunswick graduated first at 11 a.m., followed by South in the afternoon and West that evening.

City keeps the 'bugs' in system

Wastewater treatment cost, maintenance are historic

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

It is hard to pinpoint exactly at what time in its history the City of Southport got into the sewer business, but it's been a long time.

The idea of collecting wastewater -- and then doing something with it -- may be a new or completely alien concept to those living on local barrier islands, but wastewater management has been a service provided by this city for decades. That doesn't mean the city has always handled its wastewater problems well.

"The first treatment was started in 1967," Southport public services director Ed Honeycutt said while conducting a tour of the city's wastewater treatment plants -- that's right, plants, plural -- Friday. "Before that it was just collected and discharged out into the river. The Bay Street pump station used to go straight out into the river. It was just straight piped out."

Wastewater management is a service the residents of Southport have come to rely upon. Few septic tanks remained in the city after 1987 when bond financing of a treatment plant expansion required mandatory tap-on to assure repayment.

Just as Southport residents have come to rely upon the city for their wastewater disposal needs, they have also become accustomed to paying for that service. In years past, when an electric system flush with money supported most municipal needs, wastewater management was a minor pinch in the municipal pocketbook. Since the late 1980s, however, as electric costs skyrocketed and state accounting practices dictated self-sustaining government enterprise funds, the cost of wastewater management paid by Southport residents has become a greater concern of city life.

If aldermen adopt the budget proposal submitted by the city's budget committee last week, city residents on July 1 will see yet another substantial increase in wastewater management costs. Fees for each 1,000 gallons of water used will jump 64 cents, leaving the average 6,000-gallon-per-month user a monthly bill some \$3.84 higher.

"I know it costs and we all have to

pay for it," city manager Rob Gandy said this week. "But, that's the cost of protecting our environment."

So, how does the City of Southport serve its environment by providing wastewater management service? And, what contributes to the cost city customers bear each month when that utility bill comes in the mail?

Actually, the city operates two wastewater treatment plants today, Honeycutt explained. The city has operated an activated sludge treatment process since 1967 -- the older of the two plants. This plant, which

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SBSD

Plan called 'workable', 'approvable'

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District commissioners were told Tuesday that spray disposal of treated wastewater is possible in a 142-acre site west of the Sea Pines community, and the district engineer said that final plans for such a facility would be finished and submitted on time.

Engineer Finley Boney is on notice from the board to produce such a disposal plan by June 26 or lose his contract. The ultimatum in May grew out of board frustration with lack of progress over the district's five-and-a-half-year existence.

At this time the challenges facing the commissioners are

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Forecast

Partly cloudy skies will prevail for the period of Thursday through Saturday with highs in the 80's and lows in the 70's.

Tide table

HIGH	LOW
THURSDAY, JUNE 15	
10:38 a.m.	4:30 a.m.
11:10 p.m.	4:38 p.m.
FRIDAY, JUNE 16	
11:34 a.m.	5:22 a.m.
----- p.m.	5:32 p.m.
SATURDAY, JUNE 17	
12:03 a.m.	6:13 a.m.
12:31 p.m.	6:28 p.m.
SUNDAY, JUNE 18	
12:56 a.m.	7:05 a.m.
1:27 p.m.	7:25 p.m.
MONDAY, JUNE 19	
1:49 a.m.	7:58 a.m.
2:23 p.m.	8:24 p.m.
TUESDAY, JUNE 20	
2:43 a.m.	8:50 a.m.
3:18 p.m.	9:24 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21	
3:37 a.m.	9:43 a.m.
4:12 p.m.	10:22 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.

Trailers, too?

County missing boat on taxes?

By Terry Pope
County Editor

When it comes to collecting property taxes, Brunswick County may literally be missing the boat.

And the mobile homes. County tax administrator Boyd Williamson said his department is working on a way to find those owners who dodge listing their taxes each year. There are a number of mobile home and boat owners who do not comply with state laws for listing property on time.

"You may have to spend a dollar to get two dollars," said Williamson. "It's a labor-intensive issue. But there's a fairness issue here, too. Everybody has got to be chipping in their fair share."

The public is more ready to pay higher taxes if there is a sense that

everyone is paying his share. The proposed county budget for 1995-96 includes a 12-cent tax hike, from 58.5 cents per \$100 of property value to 70.5 cents.

A 6.1-percent growth in the county tax base will add another \$1.8 million in property tax revenues for the 1995-96 fiscal year. But there are mobile homes and boats that enter the county each year which slip through the cracks in the system.

Williamson says of an estimated 14,000 mobile homes in the county -- according to the latest U. S. Census figures -- about 12,000 are listed with the tax department. That means 2,000 mobile home owners are not paying county taxes on their units parked on county land. The department can meticulously trace down those units based on occupancy stickers that the

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Long Beach

Solid waste fees back in budget

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

A monthly residential solid waste collection fee is back in the budget plan for the Town of Long Beach in the year to begin July 1, but if no further expenditures are approved at subsequent budget workshops there will likely be no property tax increase this year.

Town manager Jerry Walters said council Thursday reversed its decision of earlier this month and voted to continue operating its solid waste collection effort outside the town's general fund.

That means monthly refuse collection fees, not general fund revenues, will fund garbage collection efforts. Walters said the vote to reverse council's earlier determination to fund solid waste collection with general fund monies was 4-2. In the last week of May, mayor Joan Altman broke a tie vote of commissioners to move the garbage collection effort back to the general fund.

The effect of that decision was to necessitate the equivalent of a six-cent tax increase to support solid waste collection. In subsequent meetings last week, however, council trimmed the equivalent of three cents on the town's tax rate from the general fund budget.

On May 1, Walters submitted a budget proposal which called for no

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CP&L petitions to reduce charges

Nuclear plant success may reduce bills

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

Carolina Power and Light Co. has petitioned to reduce North Carolina electricity bills due to a lowering of company fuel costs, and Brunswick Nuclear Plant vice-president Roy Anderson says that a major factor is the increasingly better performance of the local plant after an extended shutdown for maintenance and repairs.

Power companies are permitted to factor fuel-cost increases or decreases into their customer billing, Anderson explained here Monday, and when the cost of power production goes down throughout the CP&L system the company can pass that benefit along to customers.

"We're generating more power for less cost here at Brunswick," Anderson said, "and since Brunswick is generat-

'You preach to people that "this is important." Well, this is a coming to fruition of what we said would happen if we did our jobs.'

Roy Anderson
Brunswick vice-president

ing about 25 percent of the electricity for the entire CP&L system the cost of electricity goes down.

"This is a direct result of those two big blue units doing better."

Thus in August the N. C. Utilities Commission is to hold hearings on a CP&L proposal that would drop the 1000-kilowatt-hour residential rate from \$82.86 to \$80.85 beginning September 15.

By CP&L figuring, that will reduce the average household electric bill \$24.12 per year.

Not only is this sort of performance good news for the household consumer, Anderson said, but keeping rates constant or falling can be a major recruiting factor for outside industry.

Household rates for CP&L customers have varied over the previous five years in this order -- \$85.25, \$84.93, \$85.06, \$85.04 and \$82.86.

"Brunswick started coming back into power production in 1993 and the rates started down," Anderson pointed out. "the

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