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The State Port

PILOT

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

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Our Town

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Paving for Yacht

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Despite scattered objections voiced at a public hearing, Yacht Drive in Long Beach will be paved its entire length.

Town council Tuesday night voted to accept the negotiated low bid of Mac Construction Company to pave Yacht Drive and construct associated drainage systems along it at an estimated project cost of \$730,201. Actual costs -- on which an estimated \$5 to \$10 front-foot assessment will be based -- will not be determined until the project is completed, town manager Jerry Walters said.

The bid awarded Tuesday night also will pay for paving 72nd, 73rd, 74th and 75th streets SE, but it is the long-awaited paving of Yacht Drive, a potential major east-west thoroughfare through Long Beach, that fulfills a town goal of long standing.

"It's been a goal of this board for at least three years to pave all streets in town," councilman Jeff Ensminger said. "After this, one more year and all will be paved."

Surprisingly, the proposal to pave Yacht Drive drew criticism from some of its residents at a public hearing prior to contract award.

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Caswell sanitation

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Operators of home septic tank systems would pay into a town enterprise fund to foot the cost of inspecting their wastewater treatment units every five years, under terms of a proposed ordinance now under consideration by Caswell Beach commissioners.

There are currently 159 private septic tanks in Caswell Beach which would be inspected for proper function in an initial round of inspections, if the board adopts the ordinance presented by commissioner Bill Boyd on Thursday.

"Trouble-free, low-cost service over an extended period of years, while protecting human health and the environment, is the objective of this proposal," Boyd wrote in a memorandum to the board. "If approved, the town will sponsor a maintenance program of scheduled inspections and pumping of all conventional septic systems within the town."

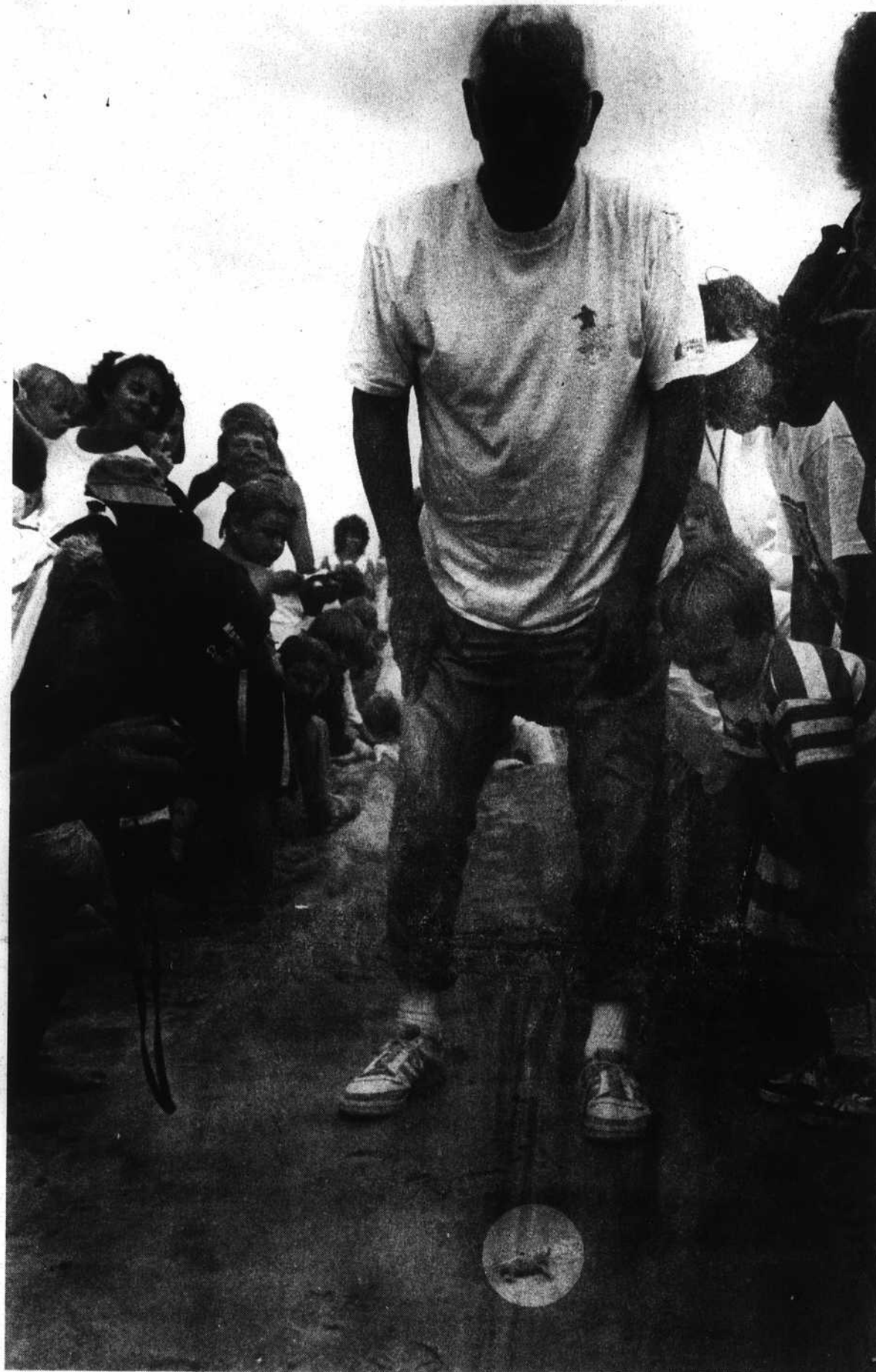
Boyd told commissioners an ordinance to govern privately owned septic tank maintenance was initially proposed, but abandoned, several years ago. But the town is now considering several other wastewater management alternatives and required maintenance of home septic systems should be reconsidered.

"With 159 systems in town in-ground for one to 15 years, some of those systems have been pumped in the last three years. Others may have been sitting in the ground for 15 years and percolating," Boyd said. "We may be sitting on a time bomb."

Under terms of the ordinance proposal, after an initial inspection of all in-ground septic systems, tanks would be inspected every three years and ordered pumped of sludge build-up, if necessary. Inspection and pumping would be performed by a certified individual or firm under contract to the Town of Caswell Beach.

"As a general rule, the tank should be pumped if the sludge layer in the bottom of the tank has built up to within 18 inches of the tank outlet or

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This lively loggerhead youngster was in the spotlight last week as members of the Oak Island turtle protection program gathered to witness unearthing of a sea turtle nest and only he turned up. A great deal was made of his subsequent march to the sea.

Photo by Holly Edwards

Hurricane Felix

Area residents on storm alert

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Evacuation of some 1,700 residents and visitors on Bald Head Island was recommended by village officials Tuesday afternoon in the face of approaching Hurricane Felix.

Notification of the storm's approach was made over island-wide cable TV beginning at 1:30 p.m., and volunteers later visited residences where TV was not available to suggest evacuation.

Village officials and island development and transportation staff were to meet later to discuss whether evacuation would be made mandatory.

At the time the storm with 80 m.p.h.

winds was some 400 miles south-southeast of Cape Hatteras, heading that way at 15 miles an hour, and hurricane warnings had been posted from South Carolina to the Virginia Eastern Shore.

Oak Island officials said Tuesday they would look to Brunswick County emergency management officials for direction should evacuation become necessary.

"We've got all our folks on alert, making sure we're in shape to deal with whatever we have to deal with," Long Beach town manager Jerry Walters said Tuesday afternoon.

He said town-owned buildings were being secured and equipment needed subsequent to any severe

See Storm, page 6

School starts August 23

School calendar still uncertain

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

With the first day of school just one week away -- August 23 -- the calendar for the upcoming school year remains uncertain as principals and school board members negotiate for a compromise that will satisfy both teachers and parents.

While teachers say they need time for planning and staff development in order to fulfill the requirements of site-based management -- which hands much of the responsibility for improving education to each individual school -- many parents say they do not want their children to have a half day off each week.

During the last school year, students were sent home after lunch on Wednesdays while teachers and principals conducted training sessions.

Many county educators say this time has enabled them to make progress they otherwise would not have made.

But, upon assuming office in January, school board members received a flurry of complaints from parents who said the early release policy was disruptive and placed a financial burden on them to provide day care or babysitting services for their children.

Board member Clara Carter agreed that the policy was not "educationally sound" and noted that some students and teachers considered it a "fun day."

However, many teachers and principals say the day was filled with serious work and thought-provoking discussion.

A group of principals met with the board Monday afternoon and presented an alternate early-release proposal that would schedule early releases on days immediately preceding holidays and teacher workdays.

The board took no action on the proposal but asked the principals to create a formal, written proposal com-

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Fire and rescue tax

Are districts a real solution?

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Fire and rescue tax districts will get a closer look from county officials.

The idea has been tossed around for years, but the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners has now ordered interim county manager Charles McGinnis to arrange a meeting with state officials who can better explain it.

Some local towns, along with several fire and rescue units, have petitioned the board for action. But could districts become a workable solution here?

"Right now, things are not working out right," said District 5 commissioner Bill Sue of Leland. "We're just not getting all of the bang for our buck."

Tax districts can be drawn according to electoral districts (the county has five), or one territory for the entire county. They would only tax residents outside of municipalities.

Each district would set its own tax rate based on what is needed to operate the departments. An independent board would oversee the district and set the rate. Assessments would be listed on tax bills collected by the county tax department.

Commissioners have stated they are hesitant to set up tax dis-

'Some haven't answered a call in eight to ten weeks. All of these rescue squads are getting the same amount of funding from the county.'

Bill Sue
District 5 member

tricts because of the difference in property values. Land in rural Ash doesn't compare with beachfront lots or at golf course developments. Rural departments face an equal expense to operate, if not more because of the added mileage.

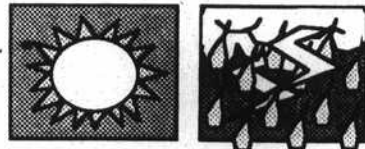
"You're going to get all kinds of responses," said commission chairman Jerry Jones of District 2. "I don't know how you work it out."

Also, some commissioners say they don't like the idea of five separate entities establishing five different tax rates -- with the result a mass confusion for county agencies. Waccamaw residents may have to pay a 35-cent rate and Ocean Isle Beach a three-cent rate to support the same size department, if based on property values.

Jones said he wants McGinnis to arrange a "brainstorming session" with county emergency medical services director Doug Ledgett, emergency management coordinator Cecil Logan and state officials to review the pros and cons of some districts now in operation in North Carolina.

"I think we need to develop a philosophy on rescue squads right now," said Sue. "Some haven't answered a call in eight to ten

See District, page 6



Forecast

Hot! Hot! Hot! That's what we have to look forward to through the weekend. Temperatures will be in the 90's with highs in the 70's

Tide table

HIGH	LOW
THURSDAY, AUGUST 17	
1:26 a.m.	7:30 a.m.
1:58 p.m.	8:06 p.m.
FRIDAY, AUGUST 18	
2:16 a.m.	8:21 a.m.
2:50 p.m.	9:02 p.m.
SATURDAY, AUGUST 19	
3:09 a.m.	9:15 a.m.
3:44 p.m.	10:00 p.m.
SUNDAY, AUGUST 20	
4:04 a.m.	10:10 a.m.
4:38 p.m.	10:57 p.m.
MONDAY, AUGUST 21	
4:59 a.m.	11:04 a.m.
5:29 p.m.	11:49 p.m.
TUESDAY, AUGUST 22	
5:51 a.m.	11:55 a.m.
6:17 p.m.	----- p.m.
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23	
6:39 a.m.	12:36 a.m.
7:01 a.m.	12:43 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.