



Sports

South Brunswick girls and boys defeat cross-county rival North Tuesday -- 1C

The State Port

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Neighbors

'The Nutcracker' was performed for an appreciative audience Friday night -- 1B

Our Town

Municipal and county officials meet to discuss their common problems -- Page 2

Test wells: Board says 'dig deep'

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

County residents who own marginally buildable lots will no longer be entitled to free test-well monitoring by the Brunswick County Health Department.

Upon recommendation of the board of health, county commissioners unanimously approved assessing a \$200 fee for the service.

Test wells are sometimes installed on lots that fail to meet building requirements stipulated in the initial site evaluation performed by the health department, explained Bob Odette, Brunswick County environmental health supervisor.

A test well is a four-foot pipe placed in-ground that allows the property owner and health officials to monitor the water table level on the lot, Odette said.

Last year, there were 85 test wells installed in the county on lots that did not receive initial septic tank approval.

The monitoring is performed during the wettest months of the year -- January through March -- and is designed to determine whether the lot is unbuildable, or potentially buildable with the installation of a drainage system.

The property owner, or an agent of the owner, is required to record the water table level every 72 hours and a Brunswick County environmental health official measures the level once a week, Odette said.

If the highest level measured during the period is less than 12 inches, the lot is unbuildable. If the highest level measured is between 12 and 36 inches, the lot may be buildable with construction of a drainage system.

"Nobody in the health department enjoys turning down a permit," Odette told commissioners Monday night. "The purpose of the test well is to go that extra step so we can write a permit."

Odette estimated it costs the county \$267 in labor to monitor each well site, so the \$200 fee still won't cover all costs associated with the service.

Commissioner Bill Sue said he was concerned that some residents will be unable to pay the fee.

"My concern is not for the folks at the beach with \$60,000 or \$100,000 lots, but for the folks up my way with \$3,000 or \$4,000 lots," Sue said. "Some folks out there can't afford to spend two hundred bucks."

Sue said some residents unable to pay the fee will leave their lots vacant for a longer period of time than they would if the monitoring service were provided free. And, he said, vacant lots mean fewer tax dollars.

"If there's a 50-50 chance the lot's

See 'Dig deep', page 11



Photo by Jim Harper

Roscoe Sales delighted both ballet aficionados and first-timers Friday in performances of "The Nutcracker" in Odell Williamson Auditorium at Brunswick Community College. Sales was one of the

featured artists in the presentation by the Greensboro Ballet, which also included a number of young local dancers in supporting roles.

Caswell Beach

Retiring mayor Cook had the right 'recipe'

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Shortly after 5 p.m. next Thursday Jack Cook will conclude 16 years as mayor of Caswell Beach.

Considering the town itself is only 20 years old, Cook's tenure is more than a little significant. It was under

his leadership that the character of the town that exists today was given birth.

Caswell Beach looks the way Jack Cook and those who served municipal government with him over the years believed it should look. The town's financial base is founded on the assumptions made by Cook and his contemporaries. The services that

town residents enjoy today are provided as Cook and his fellows envisioned them.

This election year, Cook decided not to shoot for his 20-year mayor's pin.

"It was 1979. I guess that's when it all started," Cook recalled this week. See Mayor, page 10

Brunswick schools

Board, faculty not the 'apple' of either's eye

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

The relationship between Brunswick County school board members and educators is like a "marriage gone sour," a "festering wound" based upon territorial disputes and power struggles, school board chairman Clara Carter said in a board meeting last week.

Carter said she fears disagreement over early release and site-based management will distract schools from the real issue -- educating children -- and noted that unless the school board and the next superintendent of schools provide solid leadership some county schools will face a state takeover -- See Apple, page 12

'Without an atmosphere for open dialogue, we're not sure what the board's motives are, and the board doesn't trust us anymore either.'

Diana Mintz
Leland Middle principal

SBSD move keeps water options open

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

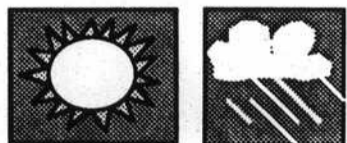
Collapse of plans to dispose of wastewater through Cogentrix or at St. James Plantation golf courses has caused commissioners of the Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District to enact an ordinance protecting its industrial disposal options.

In a special session Thursday, commissioners prohibited "spraying, placing or depositing of any spray effluent by any wastewater treatment facility upon property within the boundaries of the (district) by any person, firm, municipality or government entity...."

The move apparently blocks See Options, page 12

'It's going to be necessary to fall back on one of the other options. The other options are the east side of Beaverdam Creek and the airport.'

James W. Smith
SBSD chairman



Forecast

The extended forecast calls for seasonal weather with a chance of showers and highs each day in the mid 60's.

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'Deck the halls' Saturday

Southport activities include tour, flotilla

Christmas-by-the-Sea Festival activities move to Southport this weekend with the annual home tour, tree-lighting ceremony and holiday flotilla.

Eight historic homes will be included on the tour which begins Saturday, 5 p.m., at Franklin Square Gallery.

Tickets and refreshments will be available at the gallery until 9 p.m. Ticket-holders may take any route they choose through the city.

During the tour, carolers will stroll city streets and Santa Claus will make a 6 o'clock appearance at the Prince of Brunswick shop on Moore Street.

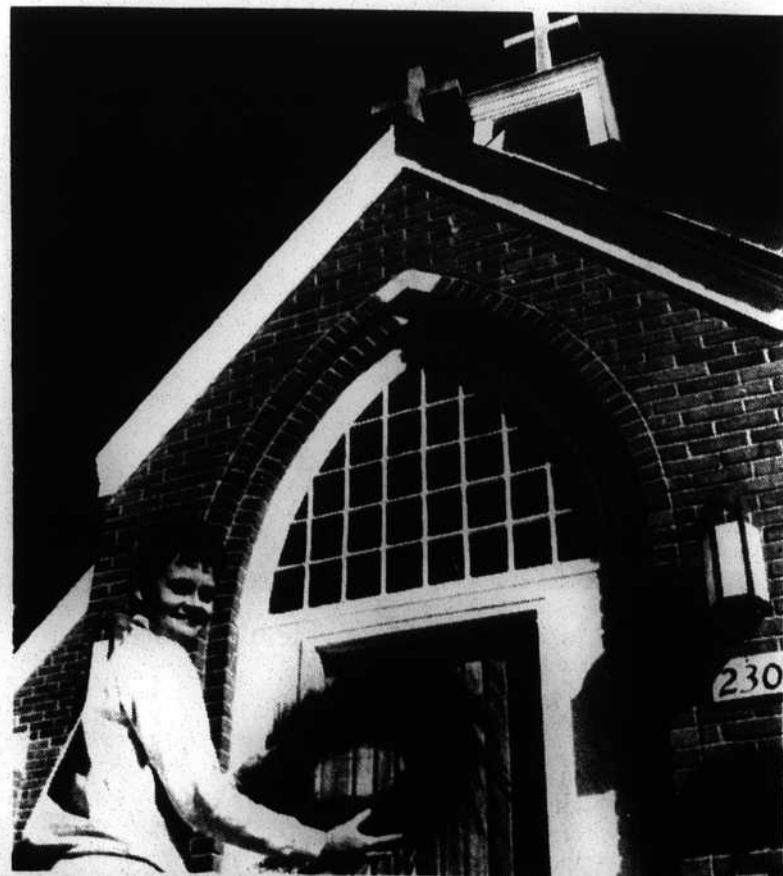
Among the historic homes featured on the tour are the Northrup House on Caswell Avenue, where the movie "Crimes of the Heart" was filmed; the old Sacred Heart Catholic Church, also on Caswell Avenue, which has been

converted to a private home; the Doshier House on Bay Street, now Lois Jane's Riverview Inn; the Brunswick Inn annex on South Davis Street, formerly part of the Hotel Brunswick constructed in 1882; the Swain House on Moore Street, typical of one-story homes constructed in Southport in the 1890s; and three homes -- the Larsen House on Atlantic Avenue, the Fisher House on North Lord Street and the Holden House on Caswell Avenue -- which are typical of Southport homes constructed in the early 1900s.

The annual tour of homes is a fund-raiser for Southport 2000 Inc., a downtown revitalization group.

Southport mayor Norman Holden will preside over the tree-lighting ceremony at 5 p.m. at Whittler's Bench, next to Waterfront Park, and the Sea Notes Choral Society will sing Christmas carols on the steps of Franklin Square Gallery at 7 p.m.

At 7:30 p.m. the annual holiday flotilla will cruise past the Southport waterfront. The flotilla is sponsored this year by Port Charlie's and Ship's Chandler restaurants.



Becky Felton hangs a wreath on the old Sacred Heart Catholic Church in preparation for the Southport Tour of Homes to be held this Saturday evening. Becky and husband Elbert have converted the former church into a private home, one of nine historic structures included on the tour.