



Sports

Cougar boys are run over by 'Pack Attack', but Lady Cougars rise to the top -- 1C

The State Port PILOT

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Neighbors

Let me call you Sweetheart -- or Honey, or Sweetie Pie this Valentine's Day -- 1B

Our Town

Caswell's undergrounding of utility lines is costly, and some haven't paid -- Page 2

STEPPING OUT

Bypass hearing

I-40 connector Tuesday topic

By Terry Pope
County Editor

The Brunswick County segment of the Interstate 40 bypass of Wilmington has a new name.

N. C. Department of Transportation officials now call the proposed highway the "North Brunswick Freeway" after it was pulled from the overall Northern Outer Loop package. The Wilmington segment will route traffic from I-40 to U. S. 421 north of Leland.

Although it is not scheduled for right-of-way-acquisition until 2001, the Leland bypass remains number two on Brunswick County's Transportation Improvement Plan behind a second bridge to Oak Island.

DOT will hold a public information workshop next Tuesday, February 20, at Leland Middle School, 5 to 8 p.m. to obtain comments on the freeway and a list of alternatives DOT has proposed, including widening of

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Drivers oppose pay cuts

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Brunswick County school bus drivers are "shocked and hurt" by pay cuts that resulted from changes in the way drivers' salaries are totaled, and many are considering work elsewhere, said bus driver representative Ginny Austin.

Austin, backed by a group of more than 30 drivers, appeared before the board of education Monday night to request that bus drivers' pay be restored retroactive to November, 1995, when the cuts took effect.

"The liability of driving a bus is a burden that no other job in the school system has. We've been patient and cooperative and doing the same job we've always done, but the time has come for positive action," Austin told the board as the drivers and their supporters in the audience stood in enthusiastic applause.

The board did not act on the request but scheduled a meeting with bus drivers Monday, February 19, 4 p.m., at Lincoln Primary School.

Board members said the pay cuts resulted from changes in the way work hours are totaled for bus drivers who also serve as teacher assistants. The changes brought the school system into compliance with state regulations, they said.

In the past, bus drivers/teacher assistants were paid a full-time teacher assistant salary plus an hourly wage

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Photo by Jim Harper

South Brunswick tennis hopefuls had their ups and downs Monday getting into shape on the Cougar stadium steps. Practice for other spring sports -- baseball, track, softball and golf -- also started in bone-chilling weather at South Brunswick and other county schools.

District: No way for plan

Owners of River Run Shopping Center are required by law to tap to the planned Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District sewer system when it is built and any attempt by the City of Southport to annex the shopping center will be challenged by the district, sanitary district counsel Jim Prevatte said.

Thursday, representatives of Riddle Development Inc., new owner of River Run Shopping Center, appeared

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River Run

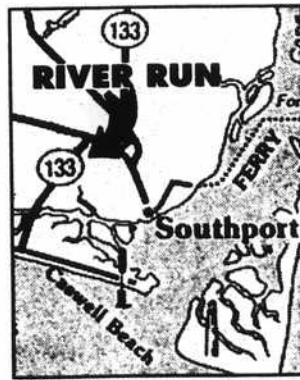
Center wants city's service

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

River Run Shopping Center will become an estimated 30,000-gallon-per-day sewer customer of the City of Southport, if a new shopping center owner has not inherited an obligation to the Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District in its on-going effort to establish a sewer system in that jurisdiction.

The Long Beach Road shopping center, anchored by Food Lion, was sold recently to Riddle Development Inc. of Fayetteville by former owner Bailey and Associates of Jacksonville, which had for years dodged environmental complaints and state-levied fines for its poorly operating on-site package wastewater treatment

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Caswell, Yaupon

Beach towns weigh chance of water reuse

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Although Caswell Beach commissioners have written state environmental officials asking them to require an environmental impact statement be performed before Yaupon Beach is permitted to deliver treated wastewater for irrigation of the Oak Island Golf and Country Club golf course, Caswell mayor Joe O'Brien said residents of that town sense the inevitability of water reuse programs.

O'Brien's assessment came after Caswell Beach commissioners met in regular session Thursday and again in joint session Friday with neighboring Yaupon Beach commissioners and their engineering consultants to discuss the proposed spray-irrigation project for treated wastewater dis-

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'I got some rumblings from some I talked to that, without a doubt, water reuse is something that's going to have to happen in the future.'

Joe O'Brien
Caswell Beach mayor

Martin Marietta

Mine opponents renew the battle

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Southport area residents are gearing up for round two in their battle against a Martin Marietta Inc. proposed limestone mine off Bethel Church Road.

The mining company's one-year extension to submit data on its rock quarry permit application expires in May. So far, the company has submitted no new information to state officials and is preparing for a legal battle in Brunswick County Superior Court over an anti-mining ordinance imposed by the county.

The Mining Awareness Committee, led by Southport's Bob Quinn, is keeping tabs on the permit and wants to regenerate community support for its opposition.

"For two and a half years, the state mining commission has left the citizens of Brunswick County hanging by their fingernails," said Quinn.

The committee has posted fliers throughout the community to mark a two-year anniversary of the Martin Marietta public hearing, where hundreds packed a Brunswick County commission meeting to demand protection of the ground water supply and safety from sinkholes near the Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point depot and Carolina Power and Light Co. Brunswick nuclear plant.

"Thousands of us that obtain our drinking water from the Castle Hayne

'In fairness to the public, no more delays should be entertained or tolerated. It would be a terrible act for this permit not to be denied.'

Bob Quinn
Committee spokesman

aquifer, along with Carolina Power and Light Co.," said Quinn, "have proven that a mine pumping 14 million gallons of water a day from the aquifer would turn our water to salt and create sinkholes. They cannot answer the questions because what

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Forecast

After the arctic temperatures this past weekend the mid 50's will seem like a 'heat wave'. That's what we can expect for Thursday through Saturday.

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Deputies' gunfire kills Shallotte man

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Brunswick County sheriff Ronald Hewett called in his department chaplain on Monday to counsel three deputies who returned gunfire and killed a Shallotte man Sunday evening.

Johnie Lee Hill, 60, apparently opened fire following a 45-minute standoff at 771 McMilly Road (Airport Road) where officers responded to a domestic call that an armed man was inside the mobile home and was holding a female against her will.

Deputies reportedly had to take cover behind trees and vehicles when the shots first rang out while a group of onlookers watched

from adjacent property. The female hostage was released and was unharmed in the incident.

"We thank God that the officers were not killed," said sheriff Hewett, "that they can go home to their families and serve again."

Deputies Keith Home, Macen Lavan and David Edwards have been suspended with pay pending a State Bureau of Investigation probe into the shooting that left Hill dead inside the mobile home. Deputies arrived at 7:24 p.m. but, said Hewett, were unsuccessful in speaking to Hill.

The incident turned deadly around 8:10 p.m. when the gunman opened fire and was in turn struck by the officers' bullets.

Paramedics responded to the scene but were unable to revive Hill.

An autopsy is being performed by state medical examiners in Jacksonville to determine the exact cause of death. An outside team of SBI agents was immediately called in to conduct an internal investigation, standard procedure any time an officer must use deadly force against a suspect.

"It is not an inference of guilt or of innocence," said Hewett. "This is a typical and customary procedure."

Hewett said he radioed for assistance when the shooting began. Deputies were joined on the scene by Shallotte and

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