

The State Port

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50 CENTS



SPORTS

North Brunswick, which won state 1A championship, paces all-county team -- 1C



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Festival to begin Monday

It's time to take to the streets of Southport, as the people of this region prepare to parade through its thoroughfares, take to its waters and light up its sky.

The 1996 N. C. Fourth of July Festival -- the state's official celebration of Independence Day -- begins Monday.

The modern-day N. C. Fourth of July Festival is a Southport tradition that dates to the years immediately following the war for independence, when residents of this city -- then known as Smithville -- would welcome visitors from outlying areas of Brunswick County to join in celebration of our nation's birth.

Historian Lawrence Lee wrote of an early July 4 celebration: "It was an occasion of patriotism and merriment, and perhaps the highlight of the day was the banquet generally held and attended by the prominent men from throughout the county. The feast always closed with a series of toasts."

Today the N. C. Fourth of July Festival in Southport is a week-long family celebration with a parade, fireworks, crafts, great food, clowns, street players, pretty girls and musical entertainment to suit all tastes.

Yet, even though the festival has grown from its humble beginnings in immediate post-revolutionary times, the spirit of patriotism the founding fathers of Smithville brought to their celebrations remains alive in Southport today. A special tribute to the U. S. Constitution and a naturalization ceremony will be held to honor America at Festival '96.

The program of the 1996 N. C. Fourth of July Festival is included in the "Cape Fear Coast" supplement to this The State Port Pilot edition. The newspaper will publish one day early, on Tuesday, next week. Any last-minute schedule changes will be noted in that edition.



Safe after their auto was smashed to the top of a five-car pileup on Howe Street (see photo, page 6) last Friday, honeymooners Stephanie and Michael Mellon of Shelby retrieved a few personal items from the vehicle, including the bride's wedding bouquet.

Photo by Jim Harper

Drain on pocketbook

Beach council testing waters of own system

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Will Long Beach remain a customer of the Brunswick County water system beyond this year?

Town council last week appropriated \$150,000 to answer that question. And if the answer is "no," Long Beach has about \$600,000 immediately available to invest in providing its citizens water from another source.

Mayor Joan Altman said this week the initial \$150,000 appropriation will go to fund an engineering study aimed at determining if it will be cheaper for Long Beach to dig its own wells and treat groundwater for customers than it is for the town to continue purchas-

'We don't see the kind of planning at Brunswick County, based on our experience, that will put us in a place of greater comfort ten years from now.'

Joan Altman
Long Beach mayor

See System, page 13

Martin Marietta

Temporary perhaps, but finally a 'win'

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Although the victory against Martin Marietta Aggregates might be temporary, it's what Southport-Oak Island area residents hope is one step toward eliminating the threat of a mining operation in their backyard.

"It feels great to win one," said Robert Quinn of Southport, spokesman for the Brunswick Mining Awareness Committee, as he stepped outside the hearing room where the N. C. Mining Commission dealt an unanimous blow to the company's permit to dig for limestone on 1,000 acres near Bethel Church Road. The vote caught him by surprise.

His committee's junket to Raleigh last week provided the first win in three years of battling the corporation through several permit hearings and in court.

"We have spent three years with our lives on hold," added Patricia Price, a school teacher from Southport.

Faced with setting a precedent on permit extensions, the mining commission instead followed the recommendation of Charles Gardner, director of the N. C. Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources, to pull the plug on Martin Marietta's pending permit filed in December, 1993. Assured of denial by the state since no new supporting data had been filed or questions answered that Gardner's office posed nearly two years ago, Martin Marietta officials withdrew the permit Thursday but indicated they plan to refile at a later date.

"It's embarrassing to note," said Quinn, "they had not informed the public nor (the mining commission) that they had not performed any of the studies."

Paxton Badham, Martin Marietta vice-president for land and environmental services, argued a pending court decision against Brunswick

'It isn't a matter of like or dislike. It is a matter of fact that you can't guarantee I won't lose my well water if they are allowed to operate 1,000 feet from my home.'

Suzanne Osborne
Bethel Church Road

Forecast

Hot and humid are what we have in store for the rest of the week and weekend. Temperatures will be in the upper 80's and low 90's with heat index readings up to 110.

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BALD HEAD ISLAND

Trust hopes effort gets 'the point'

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

Nobody who has visited Cape Fear -- on Bald Head Island it is known as "the point" -- has failed to imagine how it would be to preserve that prominence forever; to keep it as lonely and lovely, as fresh and fair as it is even today.

Development, though, has been underway on Bald Head for over two decades, moving inexorably closer to the cape, and plans have been laid to parcel out the tract at the island's tip for residential and recreational use, and the days of the unspoiled, pristine point seem numbered.

But now, a substantial group of citizens and property owners -- fired-up and focused by a come-lately from Washington, DC -- is making moves to acquire the 93-acre point tract, or as much of it as possible, to keep it in its natural woods-and-dune state and make manifest the dream that every visitor holds.

Nancy Maguire, the moving force, currently sits in the vice-president's chair of the Smith Island Land Trust, and while it is hard to find "wrong" people on the island, she has certainly affiliated herself with some of the right ones: Griff Weld, chairman of the

See Effort, page 9

BCAE drops suit

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

The Brunswick County Association of Educators has dropped its lawsuit challenging the board of education decision to eliminate weekly half-day planning sessions.

While the board of education called the Wednesday early-release policy academically disruptive, BCAE members maintained the time was needed for staff development and implementation of each school's Performance Based Accountability Plan (PBAP).

The early-release policy was part of each school's PBAP program. The BCAE asserted in its lawsuit that the

See BCAE, page 6



Nancy Maguire is spearheading the Smith Island Land Trust campaign to purchase development property and preserve the Cape Fear "point" in its present state.