



**Sports**

Quinton McCracken has hit his stride as a member of the Colorado Rockies --1C

The State Port

**PILOT**

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

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**Festival begins**

Fair skies and temperatures in the low-90s greeted early visitors to the N. C. Fourth of July Festival in Southport Monday and Tuesday.

Opening ceremonies for the state's official celebration of Independence Day were conducted Monday evening at the festival's traditional headquarters building on West Moore Street. Actual operations this year, however, have been shifted to a temporary headquarters in a commercial building on South Howe Street as the Moore Street building continues to undergo renovation. Programs and other material are available to festival visitors at the South Howe Street location near the food booths.

"We're off," 1996 N. C. Fourth of July Festival president Karen Sphar-Hope said enthusiastically Monday. Already this weekend Yaupon Beach volunteer firefighters emerged victorious in the festival's annual Firemen's Competition. A community worship service was conducted Sunday night at Southport Baptist Church under sponsorship of the

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Program on page 7

**'Smart start' finish?**

By Holly Edwards  
Feature Editor

Brunswick County children and families will lose nearly \$1 million a year if the N. C. General Assembly takes no action to expand the Smart Start program, said Lori Bates, Brunswick County Partnership for Children director.

State legislators adjourned last week without action on the budget and Bates said she is pessimistic about Smart Start's future funding.

"Right now, it's a dead issue," she said. "We still have a prayer of a chance, but I'm not optimistic."

Brunswick County Partnership for Children was one of 12 new Smart Start programs selected by the North Carolina Partnership for Children to receive \$100,000 for planning this year and \$995,000 annually in future

See Finish, page 5

**FOURTH OF JULY**



Festival visitors enjoy the arts and crafts exhibits in Franklin Square

*The darnedest questions*

**Can we get here...?**

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor



"Can you get seafood here?"  
Duh...

Ah, the tourists. You've gotta love 'em.

Without those wonderful thousands who flock here to Southport-Oak Island each summer, the rest of us just couldn't afford to live here in Para-

dise year-round.

But, let's face it. When you've faced the hassle of packing up half of all your worldly belongings, loaded two or three kids into the back of the station wagon, dug out the map and made sure everyone has made his last visit to the potty, it's understandable

that you may have accidentally left your brain somewhere in a pile of scrap iron back in Sandusky.

We love them, but tourists ask some of the darnedest questions when they get here.

"We get them all," said Long Beach police dispatcher Nancy Sanders. "I like this one: 'We rented this house on the oceanfront. Does the beach in

See Visitors, page 6

*Zoning overlay*

**'Second chance' may not be first county priority**

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

Protecting the Castle Hayne underground aquifer from mines and other heavy manufacturers is just one item on a long list of objectives the Brunswick County Planning Department faces in the new 1996-97 county budget.

Last week's call for quick attention to the Southport-Oak Island area's water supply by Brunswick Mining Awareness Committee spokesman Robert Quinn of Southport may not have fallen on deaf ears.

But county planning director Wade Horne says the issue may have to take a number and get in line.

"I think Bob's right in that this is an open window in addressing concerns for that aquifer," said Horne. "We need to look at the issue and determine the best mechanism for re-

'We're going to sit down and see how much funding is in the budget and prioritize our goals and objectives.'

solving it. Maybe a zoning overlay is the best method. I'm not so sure that it is."

The withdrawal of Martin Marietta Aggregates' mining permit application June 21 on a tract north of Southport opens the door for county action to guard against future permits or other companies that want to drain

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**School transfer balances figure for '97 budget**

By Holly Edwards  
Feature Editor

Although the Brunswick County school board came up \$280,066 shy of its original budget request, the shortfall won't be felt in county classrooms.

School board members made up much of the difference by allocating an additional \$51,825 from fund balance and deleting a \$150,000 transportation department contingency fund, anticipating that increased efficiency in that department next year will result in lower costs to operate the school transportation system.

In a special meeting Monday afternoon, school board members also voted unanimously to cut \$35,000 from the project to network county schools with the central office via computers, \$36,500 from the vocational education department and \$3,969 from the exceptional children's department.

School finance officer Mary Hazel Small said deductions in the vocational education and exceptional children's departments will be com-

pensated by state funding.

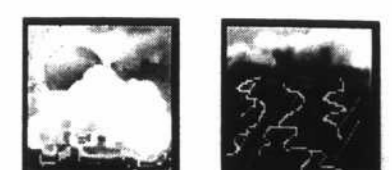
Also deducted was \$2,772 for Job Ready coordinator fringe benefits that had been erroneously budgeted twice in the first budget proposal.

The school board is expected to approve the final \$13,125,424 local budget resolution during its regular monthly meeting Monday, 6:30 p.m., at South Brunswick Middle School.

The final figure includes an additional, one-time \$200,000 allocation approved by county commissioners.

School board member Billy Carter asked superintendent of schools Marion Wise to develop a list of one-time expenditures totaling \$200,000 in the 1996-97 budget so school system personnel can be informed that future funding in those areas is uncertain.

Carter stressed that "one-time" allocations should be used only for "one-time" expenditures.



**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.

*On the November ballot*

**County voters to decide term limit**

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

As expected, a special bill which calls for a referendum on changing terms for Brunswick County commissioners and school board members from two years to four years was approved by the N. C. General Assembly on June 21.

Voters will head to the polls November 5 to decide whether to revert back to staggered, four-year terms for county officials or keep electing all five board members every two years. Both boards are composed of five members each which represent their individual electoral districts, but all seats are elected by the entire county voter population.

The system was changed by special legislation after a 1991

Voters will decide whether to revert back to staggered, four-year terms for county officials or keep electing all five board members every two years

vote that called for two-year terms. In 1994, all five seats for the school board and commission were up for election to two-year terms.

House Bill 1385, introduced by 14th District representatives David Redwine (D-Ocean Isle Beach) and Dewey Hill (D-Lake Waccamaw), would change that but only if approved by voters in November. It was approved by the House with no opposition.

The language stipulates that the three highest vote-getters on the school board and commission shall receive four-year terms and the remaining two will get two-year terms. Those two will face re-election in 1998 while the other three won't face re-election until the year 2000.

In the year 2000, and quadrennially thereafter, those three seats on the board will be four-year terms. If voters don't approve the referendum, the term limits will stay as they are.

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