



Sports

Brunswick Post 68 beats Wilmington in Legion play-offs, meets Whiteville -- 1C

The State Port PILOT

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

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Long Beach Bertha reaction reviewed

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

While the efforts of town staff, elected officials and volunteers before, during and after Hurricane Bertha won high praise from most attending Tuesday night's meeting of Long Beach Town Council, councilor Helen Cashwell said the "dissatisfaction of citizens" warranted a council "post-mortem" review of civil preparedness plans.

Specifically, Cashwell said the town should devise ways to keep citizens better informed of conditions at home if they evacuate and find a way to facilitate reentry for Long Beach residents and property owners.

"What I am most concerned about is everyone has said they will not leave next time," Cashwell told fellow councilors. "The reason for that was the time it took to get back on."

Several told council of being caught in traffic backed up as far as Sunny Point intersection as an estimated 20,000 persons awaited the reopening of Oak Island bridge at noon Saturday.

"The first thing is letting the property owners back on first and tourists last," Cashwell said.

Mayor Joan Altman said the reopening of the Oak Island bridge to all traffic less than 24 hours after Bertha struck was "remarkable." She said county and municipal officials managing hurricane response efforts handled their responsibilities well.

"Certainly evacuation and reentry is very stressful," Altman said. "It took the storm longer to get here and left us coming back on the worst day possible, a Saturday" when rental cottages traditionally change occupants.

Altman said Brunswick County officials make the decisions as to when the bridge will be closed to traffic and when it will reopen based on the time emergency managers feel it will take to accommodate traffic.

"In the final analysis, everyone was allowed back on the island, with full services, less than 24 hours after the storm hit, which I think is remarkable," Altman said.

But, Cashwell said the town's civil preparedness plan had not been updated since 1994 and did not address communications with evac-

See Long Beach, Page 9

'We were lucky'

Big Bertha shift spares area

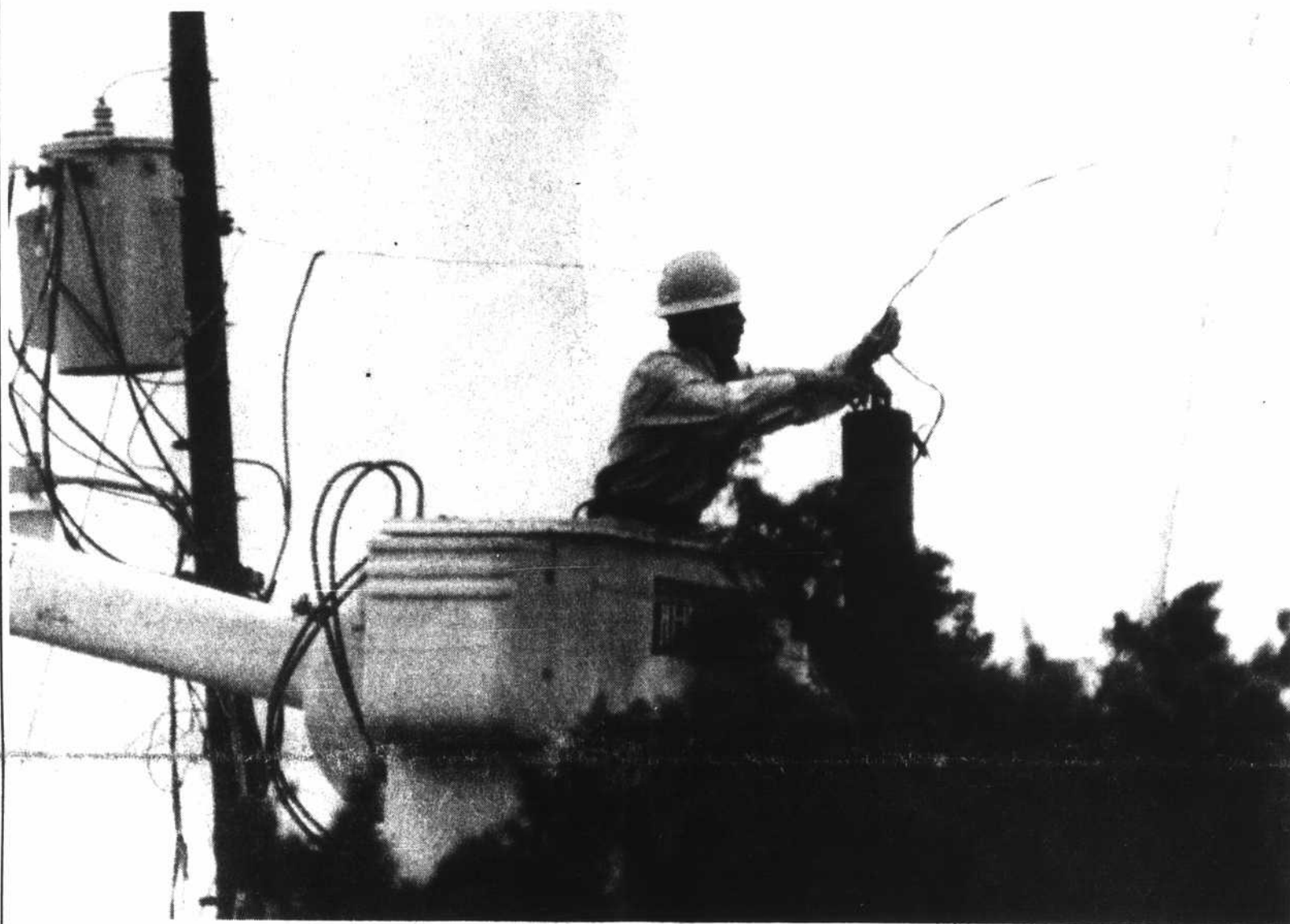


Photo by Jim Harper

City electrician Lou Cabral disengages wiring at Southport's Whittlers Bench near the peak of Hurricane Bertha's visit here Friday. City officials were concerned that high winds might drop electric lines,

the aluminum pole and street light onto gawker traffic which circled the bench during much of the blow. The storm ultimately destroyed the tree (see related photo, second section; "The Way It Was").

Highest winds just off coast of Bald Head

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

You couldn't buy a lot and build a beachfront cottage for the dollar-damage done to any one of the Oak Island towns by Hurricane Bertha last Friday.

You couldn't touch one of the stately historic district homes on Bay Street for what it will cost to replace Bertha-born structural damage in Southport.

Not only was structural damage attributable to Bertha light, the Oak Island beaches actually benefited in a way. Long Beach, Yaupon Beach and Caswell Beach officials all report Bertha brought with her a fresh and sorely needed new blanket of sand. Ecretion, not erosion, was Bertha's legacy to the beachfront.

Southport-Oak Island was lucky. Bertha barreled her way squarely toward the Cape Fear coast at midday Friday, jogging eastwardly at the last moment, projecting most of her irregularly shaped fury just north of Wilmington. While an area of the wide eye of the Category 2 hurricane passed over Southport-Oak Island, sections of Pleasure Island, Surf City and Topsail Island took Bertha's best 105-mile-per-hour punches.

"It could have been different," said Long Beach public works director Charles Derrick, a veteran of Hurricane Diana in 1984 and one of those detailed to Homestead, FL, after Hurricane Andrew in 1994. "Had that storm not moved at the last moment, we'd be like Topsail Beach and Surf City are today."

As it happened, Southport-Oak Island caught the much weaker side of Bertha's soft underbelly.

And damage was, thankfully, light. Where damage estimates at Long Beach after Hurricane Diana rose to around \$16 million, structural damage at Long Beach Saturday morning was estimated at a mere \$167,000, code enforcement officer David Clemmons said.

Structural damage at Yaupon Beach was estimated at under \$80,000 and at Caswell Beach the damage estimate was \$226,300 -- all of it along Caswell Beach Road. No structural damage was reported at Bertha's hand

See Bertha, page 6

SOME STAYED HOME

Storm became serious threat

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Hurricane Bertha didn't appear to be much of a threat Thursday when a mandatory evacuation was ordered for Oak Island.

Although most island residents and visitors headed inland, an estimated 500 to 1,000 people remained in Long Beach, about 150 people remained in Yaupon Beach and fewer than 100 people remained in Caswell Beach.

However, those who weathered the storm said that by late Friday

See Threat, page 6

BRUNSWICK COUNTY

Major damage to county crops

By Terry Pope
County Editor

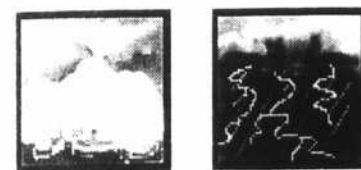
Hurricane Bertha's zigzag behavior kept county officials guessing, but they are glad the moody storm zigged instead of zagged when it finally reached the Brunswick coast.

"We are lucky," said Cecil Logan, Brunswick County emergency management coordinator.

"We survived extremely well considering the type of storm we were dealing with."

Bertha's northward route chosen just miles before reaching the Brunswick shoreline sent the less-volatile western edge of the category 2 hurricane bullying its way across the county. That portion of the storm still packed enough hurricane-strength winds to rape farm crops to

See Crops, page 6



Forecast

While clean-up from the hurricane continues we can expect a chance of showers and thunderstorms for the rest of the week. Temperatures will reach the upper 80's.

INSIDE

- Opinion 4
- Obituaries 11
- Business 12
- District Court .. 13
- Police report ... 14
- Church 4B
- TV schedule 6B
- Plant Doctor ... 8B

'Zoning for special projects

Leland develops new approach

By Terry Pope
County Editor

The rezoning of more than 1,500 acres at Jackey's Creek near Belville signals a growing trend for new housing in northern Brunswick County.

Golf course communities and planned unit developments are on the way; the number of mobile homes may dwindle.

"Leland is on the verge of undergoing major change," said Don Eggert, planner II with the Brunswick County Planning Department. "If this is built at Jackey's Creek, you're looking at several hundreds of housing units initially. The whole Leland area, what I call the Northwest Township, is growing."

The Brunswick County Board of Commissioners has approved the rezoning of Jackey's Creek from Rural designation to Site-Built Residential 6000 (SBR-6000), which will allow greater density of houses where sewer and water is available. But it also prohibits mobile homes.

SBR-6000 is a new zoning designation which also accom-

modates planned unit developments like those now found at St. James Plantation, Sea Trail Plantation and Ocean Ridge Plantation. It allows a mixture of recreational areas, wooded areas, multi-family housing and single-family units.

Jackey's Creek is the second large tract near Belville rezoned to SBR-6000 this year. Another 800-acre tract next to Lincoln Industrial Park was rezoned earlier from Heavy Manufacturing (HM) to make way for another proposed golf course and housing community there. Jackey's Creek extends from U. S. 17 to N. C. 133 (River Road).

"I know that entire area is really, really growing," said Judy Russell, zoning administrator with the Brunswick County Planning Department. "It has to do with sewer being available. In these large projects, the developers have indicated they plan to tap onto the Belville sewer plant."

A third Leland area community also wants to take advantage of SBR-6000 zoning but for a different reason. Residents of Home Place Estates and the Ira D. Butler subdivisions, along

See Leland, page 10

'I remember all during the planning board meetings and at the public hearing, the comment from the people is that Leland wants that kind of development. I think that entire area is getting ready to explode.'

Judy Russell
Zoning administrator