



Sports

Rec department's 'Hook a Kid on Golf' tees it up again for county youngsters -- 1C

The State Port PILOT

VOLUME 65/ NUMBER 49 SOUTHPORT, N.C. 50 CENTS

ors
full of gsters in land -- 1B

wn
ended Area ring true -- Page 2

The activi South

Bel Calli for a

Southport, N.C. 28587

Beach rescue

Officials say effort to save victim futile

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Strong riptides associated with approaching Hurricane Bertha claimed the life of a 39-year-old Spring Lake man who was swimming off the 4900 block of West Beach Drive July 10.

A Long Beach police officer, though powerless to save Charles Franklin Honey, put her life at risk to recover his body.

"In a situation like this one there is, unfortunately, not much that can be done," Long Beach police chief Danny Laughren said. "The first time our officers saw the man he was face down in the water. Riptides had been publicized on the radio for a couple of days. We had a hurricane coming up the coast. Apparently he got caught in the riptide."

Oak Island was ordered evacuated one day after the drowning as Hurricane Bertha bore down on Oak Island. Bertha's eye passed over the Southport-Oak Island area two days subsequent to Honey's drowning.

Long Beach police detective Janet Allen, also a trained lifeguard instructor, was the first officer to arrive when a call to police indicated a swimmer was in distress. The inability to locate Honey, the heavy surf and riptides rendered any rescue attempt impossible. But it was Allen, who swam into the surf when the Coast Guard boat could not reach the victim, who brought Honey's body ashore.

"I risked my life to bring this body in when I knew he was already dead," Allen wrote in a report of the incident. "I did this so the family would have a body to take home. I would do it again, if need be."

In letters to The State Port Pilot this week, one witness to Honey's drowning, and a family member of a witness to the tragedy, have raised two questions about Long Beach response to the swimmer-in-distress call: Did police do all they could to save Honey's life? and, Why isn't Long Beach better equipped to respond to swimmers in distress?

Charles F. Witt, of Crozet, VA, said he was on the beach at the time of the drowning.

"The police were called as soon as it was apparent that the individual was in trouble," Crozet wrote. "They arrived in ten or 15 minutes and joined the other spectators on the beach and

See Rescue, page 10

BRUNSWICK TUTOR



During the past six years, 90-year-old literacy tutor Larry Nielsen and student Albert Glenn-Huff have become close friends through their weekly reading sessions. Nielsen said Huff is a "very talented boy" and that a new world of opportunity will open to him when he learns to read.

Photo by Holly Edwards

Spreading the word

'I'd smell the paint to know if it went on the woodwork or on the wall.... Basically, that's what it is when you can't read. You're going through life on memory.'

Albert Glenn-Huff

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

By teaching a man to read, 90-year-old literacy tutor Larry Nielsen says he feels like he's helping a blind man see.

"I can't imagine how life would be without reading," he said. "I learned to read as a kid and from then on I read as many books as I could -- Tom Swift, Tom Sawyer, Horatio Alger, history books.

"You just feel like you become part of a book, you know. And to not be able to read and then to learn how, it would be like a blind man that could suddenly see again."

Nielsen and his student, Albert Glenn-Huff, come from very different backgrounds but they have some fundamental similarities -- both are dedicated volunteers and refuse to be restricted by personal challenges.

Despite his advanced age Nielsen is an avid walker, plays nine holes of golf a day and drives from his Boiling Spring Lakes home to Huff's home near Leland every Monday for an hour-long reading session.

"I've been a volunteer just about all my life, starting with the church when I was about 12 or 14," Nielsen said. "If somebody was in trouble I'd mow their lawn, or do any little chore they needed. I enjoy it, and it gives me something to do. No matter what, you can always do plenty for other people."

And, despite a physical disability and financial problems, Huff serves on the local board for Habitat for Humanity and volunteers to repair homes for the poor.

"I'm eligible to help myself," Huff said. "But I got the knowledge so I can help with the build-

See Word, page 13

Brunswick County

Delinquent taxes total \$4 million

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Time has expired for property owners who have been warned but still have not paid their delinquent county taxes.

Brunswick County attorney Huey Marshall will pursue foreclosure on those who still refuse to pay their bills dating back ten years. From 1995 listings alone, the county is still owed \$1,460,027 in back taxes with a collection rate that now stands at 96 percent. The amount due represents almost three cents on the county tax rate.

"We are doing better," said county tax collector Nancy Moore, "and I feel like the longer we work with foreclosure, we feel the people will realize that we are indeed working toward remedies. Then they will at least see the need to work out some sort of payment plan with the tax department."

Still, it marks a good response rate for the Brunswick County Tax Department which sent out notices on more than 1,000 delinquent accounts and has worked agreements with most property owners in this first batch to be processed thus far. As of July 27, there were 8,980 individual tax bills

If everyone was to pay what's past due dating back to 1985, it would add about \$4.08 million to the county's general fund

outstanding and left unpaid through 1985.

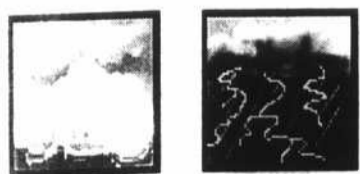
If everyone was to pay what's past due dating back to 1985, it would add about \$4.08 million to the county's general fund. That amount is what prompted the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners to resume foreclosure proceedings to force persons to pay. It is a policy that had been scrapped by an earlier board.

Under North Carolina state statutes, counties have the right to foreclose on property for which taxes have not been paid. The county claims title to the home or lot and can auction it off to pay for back taxes. Also, counties

See Taxes, page 6



Joshua and Jacob Sincoskie, great-grandsons of Mr. and Mrs. DeArmond Swain of Southport, met First Lady Hillary Clinton during her recent tour of Europe to promote children's rights. The boys are spending the summer in Tallinn, Estonia, with their grandparents, Richard and Valerie Boera, who are posted at the American Embassy there.



Forecast

A chance of showers and severe thunderstorms can be expected for the rest of the week. Temperatures will reach the upper 80's.

INSIDE

- Opinion 4
- Police report 10
- District Court .. 12
- Business 14
- Obituaries 15
- Church 5B
- TV schedule 6B

Improvement noted

New finance officer employed by schools

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

The accounting supervisor and internal auditor for New Hanover County schools will become finance officer for Brunswick County schools effective August 12.

Upon recommendation of superintendent of schools Marion Wise, the Brunswick County school board voted unanimously Friday to hire Ann Hardy to fill the position. She will be paid \$45,000 per year.

Former finance officer Mary Hazel Small resigned last month to accept a

position as finance officer for New Hanover County schools.

When Small came to work in Brunswick County in August, 1995, the school system finance department was plagued by a number of serious management problems. School officials say Small implemented changes that got the finance department back in order.

Hardy is a certified public accountant and is a member of the American Institute of CPAs and the North Carolina Association of CPAs.

Prior to her employment with New

Hanover County schools in November, 1995, Hardy served as senior accountant for Earl Swinson CPA in Wilmington and Shelton Hawley CPA in Angier, as a seasonal tax accountant for Edmundson & Company in Cary and as a staff accountant for Nunn Rouse & Associates in Cary.

She received a bachelor of arts degree in economics and management from Salem College in 1981, and has completed further accounting courses at North Carolina State University.

Hardy obtained her CPA license in 1989.