



Sports

If you're good enough to be best in the state you win school honors too -- 1C

The State Port

PILOT

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

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Bald Head SILT meets goal

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

Bald Head Island property owners were on the verge Monday of attaining their million-dollar goal to help preserve developable dune and woodland at Cape Fear.

Smith Island Land Trust chairman Nancy Maguire said that \$961,000 in donations and pledges had been accumulated by mid-afternoon, and that telephoning volunteers would be working New Year's Eve to gather the most possible donations by the year-end deadline.

A million-dollar-by-December 31 requirement had been set by the island's developer for continued life of the project, which a year ago few had envisioned and which even weeks ago seemed liable to fail.

With a million dollars in pledges and funds, Maguire said, the developer will extend the SILT option by two years, and has also agreed to sell the block of developable land at Cape Fear in increments, with the first such increment priced at \$1.5 million.

"The donations have been coming in so fast I can't put them in my computer," Maguire said Monday. "The closer we get to the deadline, the more

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Photo by Jim Harper

Unseasonably warm weather over the weekend brought unseasonably short views for waterfront visitors in Southport. Fog rising from chilled waters for several days gave an aspect of early spring to the scene, but December is a little soon for that hope to blossom.

The year in quotes

By Terry Pope
County Editor

It was a year of near disasters, of attempts to solve government crises.

Two hurricanes and two tropical storms visited our coast, but when all was said and done Brunswick was spared the worst from Arthur, Bertha, Fran and Josephine.

Government officials both opened the new year and ended the holiday season with visions of garbage, water and sewer dancing in their heads.

Rapid growth continued, as in previous years, and the struggle to manage it produced our most notable quotes from 1996:

January 10 -- "I think the future looks bright. Most people in Brunswick County right now are talking, in some fashion, about sewer."

Former county public utilities director Robert Tucker on regional

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Library turns to 'high-tech'

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Free public Internet access, an automated card catalog and a computerized system that matches readers' interests with works of fiction are among improvements coming to the Brunswick County library system in 1997.

Access to the Internet is available to the public at the G. V. Barbee Sr. branch on Oak Island, and will be available at the Southport branch sometime in January, said library director Reecie Tate. Brunswick Computers will provide free Internet access to Southport-Oak Island library branches, she said, but the Leland and Shallotte branches do

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County makes move to list mobile homes

By Terry Pope
County Editor

There are hundreds of mobile homes that slip through the system and avoid county taxes each year.

But 1997 is the year of the crackdown as special emphasis has been placed on finding the singlewide units that are not listed on tax scrolls.

"All we want is for people to pay taxes on what they own," said Brunswick County tax supervisor Boyd Williamson. "Mobile home owners are citizens of the county, and they utilize the services of the county, so they need to list their property and pay taxes like everybody else."

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'Mobile home owners are citizens of the county, and they utilize the services of the county, so they need to list their property and pay taxes like everybody else.'

Boyd Williamson
Tax supervisor

The ten biggest

	Values	Taxes
Carolina Power & Light	\$ 881,734,734	\$ 6,386,751.81
Dupont	280,868,699	1,923,950.53
N.C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency	231,916,633	1,681,395.59
Archer Daniels Midland Co.	138,052,637	1,000,881.63
Brunswick Electric Membership	47,733,767	329,013.28
Bald Head Island Ltd.	39,738,927	282,742.38
Odell Williamson	40,142,310	281,789.10
Sea Trail Corporation	28,189,952	193,835.43
Cogentrix of N.C. Inc.	25,792,789	186,997.72
Federal Paper Board	24,870,207	170,374.57
Totals	\$ 1,739,040,655	\$ 12,437,732.04

LOOKING AHEAD TO '97

Southport weathered storms in good shape

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

The dawn of 1997 finds the City of Southport in a mid-budget year transition from dealing with the repercussions of an unprecedented six months of natural disaster to a renewed commitment to excellence in city services and infrastructure.

As the municipal fiscal year begins in July, the calendar New Year is actually mid-year for local governments -- a good time to look back on the year's beginning and to plan for its successful conclusion.

By all accounts 1996, with its two hurricanes and

one devastating tropical storm, was among the most challenging Southport ever has faced.

"This is by far the most challenging year I have ever spent as a city manager," Rob Gandy said at his City Hall office Monday. "I look back on it now and it is all like a blur. Little did I know when I attended a hurricane conference in May that I would have to put into action what I had learned so soon."

Hurricane Bertha struck Southport-Oak Island early in the Atlantic tropical storm season on July 12. The city had just completed its successful N. C. Fourth of July Festival a week earlier and Gandy was forced to

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Long Beach decision is to build consensus

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

New Year 1997 marks the beginning of what may become known as the year of the big decisions for Long Beach.

Though some work was slowed by two 1996 hurricanes and one tropical storm in rapid succession, public improvement projects continued throughout the year at seemingly break-neck speed. Sidewalks were poured on Oak Island Drive from 46th Street to Schuster Park. The new fire station was completed and a new water storage tank was erected. Mini-parks were developed

and improved and experimental breakwaters were installed at points along the Intracoastal Waterway.

But Long Beach is only halfway through its current fiscal year now. The first half of that year saw the town challenged by nature, but Long Beach was only blown slightly off course.

"In terms of looking at the year, the budget is council's blueprint," mayor Joan Altman said Monday. "The storms, and recuperating from them, has put us behind schedule on getting some of those things addressed in the budget. Looking at that blueprint, I guess we're about halfway finished."

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