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Waccamaw 2A Conference teams studying more than playbooks this week -- 1C

**The State Port**

# PILOT

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SOUTHPORT, N.C.

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## Audit report Schools show improvement

By Holly Edwards  
Feature Editor

Financial management within the Brunswick County school system has improved but is not problem-free, school board members agreed after unanimously accepting a financial audit report Monday night.

The audit revealed one material, reportable condition as well as several internal control weaknesses, but indicated that overall the school system is in good financial shape.

"It's a lot better than I thought it would be," board member Billy Carter said of the report. "We've set some foundations but we still need to make some improvements."

The material condition found by the New York-based auditing firm McGladrey and Pullen was failure of accounting personnel to reconcile general ledger accounts with subsidiary ledgers on a timely basis, thus increasing the risk of error.

"We recommend that the board's accounting personnel perform these reconciliations on a timely basis to

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## King march Sunday

By Holly Edwards  
Feature Editor

A two-day Martin Luther King Jr. celebration will begin Sunday, January 19, 2 p.m., with a community march through Southport beginning and ending at the ILA Hall.

Following the march, clergymen will read from King's "Letter from Birmingham City Jail." King wrote the famous essay in the form of an open letter to the community on April 16, 1963, while serving a jail term for participating in peaceful civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, AL.

Earlier that month, eight prominent Alabama clergymen published an open letter that warned King's philosophy of non-violent resistance would incite civil disturbance. In response, King urged Christian ministers to understand that the meaning of Christian discipleship was at the heart of his struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

Local leaders will comment on the letter after readings by the clergymen.

Southport-Brunswick County NAACP president Nat Parker pointed out that racial segregation remains most pronounced in houses of wor-  
See March, page 6

## Long-range committee studies service funding

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

Protection of the Castle Hayne aquifer from mining and heavy industry was a key issue that helped establish the Brunswick County Long-Range Planning Oversight Committee.

At a meeting Friday, the committee began digging into another important issue citizens say they want county officials to address -- funding for local fire and rescue departments.

Committee chairman Mike Royal said his members are just  
See Funding, page 6



Blooming in the sun like so many white-and-gold flowers along the waterside, the head feathers of these mature pelicans indicate that they are eligible for consideration in the mating season to come -- and tell us all that spring is not nearly so far away as it sometimes seems.

Photo by Jim Harper

## Caswell Beach

# Assembly reconsiders removal of town foxes

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

In the parlance of N. C. Wildlife Resources Commission personnel, "remove" actually means to "kill."

Discussion of "removing" foxes from Caswell Beach Thursday came to a sudden halt when North Carolina Baptist Assembly director Rick Holbrook learned of that euphemism for the first time.

"Somewhere in the conversation I had not picked up on that meaning of 'remove,'" Holbrook said Tuesday. "I took it at its face value -- 'remove.'" For several weeks Caswell Beach -- which has a state permit to kill foxes -- has struggled with what to do with the town's fox population. Last year, 78 percent of all loggerhead sea turtle nests were invaded by foxes. Wildlife officials say in other years, turtle nest depredation by foxes has been as high as 86 percent. Members of the local Turtle Watch association -- volunteers who protect nests and assist emerging hatchlings to the waterskirt -- have pushed for a fox eradication program. Caswell Beach commissioners, generally, have been reluctant to kill foxes.

After meeting with town officials December 19, David H. Allen, coastal non-game project leader for the N. C. Wildlife Commission, proposed a  
See Foxes, page 7

"I don't know what over-population means. If we have an over-population of four-legged potential rabies carriers, that would be of concern...."

Rick Holbrook  
Assembly director

## 131-acre tract Developer accepts city annexation

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Ending several weeks of negotiations between the City of Southport and Oleander Development Company, city aldermen Thursday night accepted a petition from the developer asking Southport to annex a 131-acre tract abutting the city's northeast boundary.

The tract, straddling Prices Creek between Moore and Leonard streets opposite Ferry Road, is the proposed site for development of Harbor Oaks subdivision, which could eventually be the site of up to 200 single-family homes. A representative of the developer said Phase I of development plans call for making the first 30 to 40 lots west of Prices Creek available for purchase this spring.

Oleander, which now will appar-

Southport must provide all services to the newly annexed area that are provided elsewhere in the city within one year

ently exercise its option to purchase the tract from Pfizer, Inc., had in December asked aldermen only to re-zone the parcel from designation for light and heavy industrial use to R-1 designation, for residential use, and  
See Annexation, page 9

## Caution urged Rabies threat major concern for Southport

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

One confirmed and four suspected cases of rabies have been reported in the City of Southport -- circumstances one alderman said placed the city in a near "state of emergency."

"We're almost in a state of emergency," alderman Bill Delaney told fellow aldermen Thursday night. "I think this threat is the greatest since World War II."

City animal control officer Charles Drew appeared before the board to update members on the rabies outbreak. He said the city's only confirmed case of rabies was found in a raccoon that had tangled with a dog on Holly Drive last week. The rac-

coon was beheaded and its brain sent to a laboratory in Raleigh where the disease was confirmed.

The dog, belonging to a Holly Drive resident, was impounded as prescribed by law, but had been vaccinated against rabies and has shown no signs of having contracted the disease.

Since that initial incident, four other raccoons suspected of having the disease have been killed in the city. As they did not come into contact with pets or humans, however, state officials will not do the required examination to confirm rabies, Drew said.

"We couldn't send those animals off, but they were acting in such a way  
See Rabies, page 7

## UOB treads water

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

No one seemed willing to dive into the debate over whether Long Beach will remain a county water customer at the Brunswick County Utility Operations Board meeting on Monday.

The controversial issue was placed on the board's agenda for discussion, but members sat silently as county public utilities director Lee Smith briefed them on what has happened  
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### Forecast

The Artic blast we've been feeling will give way to slightly warmer temperatures with highs reaching in the 50's on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

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