

Sports

Play Ball! is the call across Brunswick County as high schools open season -- 1C

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Ocean debris

Corps accepts responsibility

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has accepted responsibility for the wood debris that has cluttered the mouth of the Cape Fear River for months, fouling a prime shrimp harvesting ground and tearing local shrimpers' nets to shreds.

The corps last Tuesday said it would pay a contractor to clean the debris from the Cape Fear River mouth, would change its dredging practices and would seek alternative dredge spoil disposal sites.

"The corps has finally accepted responsibility," said Sandy Semans, vice-president of communications for the N. C. Fisheries Association. The association teamed with Brunswick County shrimpers to persuade the Army to review its dredge operation on the Cape Fear.

Last fall local shrimpers, led by Bill Hickman of Bolivia, appeared before municipal governing bodies in Southport-Oak Island to warn of the debris floating off a two-square-mile corps Ocean Dredge Material Disposal Site (ODMDS) about three miles off Bald Head Island and Yaupon Beach. Dredge material taken from a project to create additional

See Debris, page 6

Brunswick developers on course

By Terry Pope
County Editor

The company developing the 1,100-acre Winding River Plantation golf course community near Supply has an excellent track record in Brunswick County.

It recently sold out Winding Creek, a 95-homesite project north of Southport off Bethel Church Road, in less than a year. Now Bluegreen Carolina Land Inc. will focus its attention on the 1,000-home community off Zion Hill Road between Southport and Supply.

"The land where the homesites will be used to be a timber tract, so it was loaded with trees," said Winding River Plantation general manager David Dickey. "We have taken every precaution to leave as many trees as possible. Most of the trees are beautiful magnolia, bay, live oak and tall pines."

The Bluegreen Corp., one of the few land companies to hold a position on the New York Stock Exchange, has teamed with one of the country's best-known golf course designers to create the project. The Carolina National Golf Club, designed by Fred Couples, borders and partially surrounds the Winding River Plantation along the Lockwood Folly River.

Golf course construction is already underway. A clubhouse will provide golf pros for lessons, a pro shop and men's and women's locker suites.

Teamwork created by two entities, the Bluegreen Corp. and the Couples-Bates design team, has been very productive, said Dickey. "It has resulted in the type community people will admire for many years to come," he added.

Bluegreen has come up with an unusual first event for persons inter-

See Developer, page 7



Photo by Jim Harper

Miss Brunswick County Dawn Baldwin sings "Someone to Watch Over Me" during Saturday night's pageant at the Brunswick Community College Odell Williamson Auditorium. Baldwin is an orthodontist's assistant in Wilmington and plans to return to college to pursue a master's degree in psychology.

Northern area schools

Parents' input invited on year-round schools

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

A decision to implement year-round school schedules at Lincoln Primary, Belville Elementary and Leland Middle schools could come as early as Monday night, said Brunswick County Board of Education chairman Glenda Browning.

"I think we need to make a deci-

sion as soon as possible so the principals can start planning," Browning said.

However, Browning stressed that the school board will not vote to implement year-round schools if a majority of parents in the northern area of the county are opposed to the plan.

Surveys will be sent home with students at all three schools this week

and parents will be asked to state whether they are in favor of or oppose the year-round school plan. Results will be consolidated prior to the school board meeting Monday night.

"The board is quite familiar with the benefits of year-round schools, but the main thing is we're going to let parents make the decision," Browning said.

See Year-round, page 7

Yacht Drive wreck Saturday kills man

A Long Beach man succumbed to injuries he sustained in a one-vehicle accident on Yacht Drive in Long Beach early Saturday morning.

Charles Harold (Sonny) Houser Jr., 45, of 130-19th Street NW died at Doshier Memorial Hospital shortly after the 2:37 a.m. accident.

A police report of the accident indicates Houser was driving a 1990 Toyota pickup truck west on Yacht Drive. As he rounded a slight bend in the road, the truck ran off the left side of the street into a ditch, sending the truck airborne for a distance of 39 feet.

See Wreck, page 6

"The board is quite familiar with the benefits of year-round schools, but the main thing is we're going to let parents make the decision."

Glenda Browning
Board chairman

Same as last

County board calls for 68.5¢ rate this year

By Terry Pope
County Editor

It's only March, but already county officials are preparing for another budget year with just one demand placed on county manager Jim Varner.

"I will not vote for an increase in the tax rate," said District 3 Brunswick County commissioner Leslie Collier of Long Beach.

At commissioners' annual retreat last month, holding the line on taxes appeared to be the consensus of the three Democrat and two Republican board members. They want a recommended budget which doesn't raise the current property tax rate of 68.5 cents per \$100 of value.

Ms. Collier said she left the retreat without a good feel for what a majority of board members want by way of capital projects and staff additions for the 1997-98 fiscal year. Budget forms and instructions were distributed to

Keeping the tax rate at 68.5 cents is one item on which all commissioners seem to be in agreement

department heads on February 14, and requests must be in the hands of Varner and fiscal operations director Lithia Horne by next Friday, March 14.

"Some departments do need some new people," said Ms. Collier. "But you have to look at the staff and realize that while they may not need positions over here, others may. It's not an easy decision."

During the week of March 17-21, See County, page 6

GOVERNMENT CENTER

Cafeteria menu special: cost cuts

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Restaurants that market their hamburgers, pizza and chicken attract the most customers.

The Brunswick County cafeteria will spice up its menu and hopes to reduce its production costs under a marketing plan which is expected to save the department \$89,000 per year.

Under supervisor Robert Smith, the cafeteria located at the public assembly building at the government center near Bolivia serves approximately 140,000 meals per year, of which 114,000 go to inmates at the Brunswick County jail or congregate and homebound meals programs operated by the department of social services.

The rest are purchased by county employees who work at the government center, visitors or persons on lunch break from court sessions.

"We are expecting an increase because of construction activity here at the complex," said county manager Jim Varner.

Construction workers are building a new schools central office, cooperative extension service building and retention ponds on the property. With no large restaurants in the Bolivia area, the cafeteria has potential to grow. A survey of county employees in December indicated they want a salad bar and more carry-out items.

An agreement signed last week with Robert Segal of High Point, an expense reduction and consultant accountant, will put his plan in action to reduce the cost of meals while leaving customers more satisfied. He will receive half of what is actually saved the first year with a cap of 140,000 meals. If there are no savings, he will not be paid.

Segal says the county is feeding its prisoners at the Brunswick County jail at a cost of \$1.70 per meal while the N. C. Department of Corrections can feed its inmates at a cost of 68 cents to 73 cents per meal. A check

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with two other county cafeterias show they produce meals for prisoners for under \$1 each. The county will spend \$14,000 on two pieces of equipment needed in the kitchen in order to cut

See Cafeteria, page 6



Forecast

The extended forecast calls for mostly sunny skies Thursday through Saturday with highs in the 60's.

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