

The State Port

PILOT

VOLUME 67/ NUMBER 7 SOUTHPORT, N.C. 50 CENTS



Sports

The Cougars are on a roll, outscoring the opposition 85-8 in last two games - 1C

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Southport aldermen will be asked to refund money paid for marina service - Page 2

Teen court

Experimental program put on trial here

By Holly Edwards Feature Editor

Juvenile recidivism and the backlog of juvenile court cases in Brunswick County could be reduced through a Teen Court program funded by a \$20,000 allocation to Communities in Schools.

CIS director Cynthia Tart said Teen Court will provide a means of holding accountable for their actions more than 200 juveniles charged with crimes each year, while providing teens who serve on the jury and as attorneys with hands-on experience in the legal and judicial systems.

If used in the school system, the program also could provide teachers with an alternative to suspension in dealing with students who chronically misbehave.

Juvenile court counselor and Brunswick County school board member Bud Thorsen said Teen Court could be beneficial in resolving criminal charges resulting from school-related incidents.

"About 50 percent of the referrals we get are school-related," he said. "Things like truancy, fighting in school, disrupting class. There are a lot of difficult kids in Brunswick County that need a little stroking to get back on track again, and hopefully Teen Court will help. It's worth trying anything."

A task force of law enforcement, judiciary and school system representatives appointed Tuesday night will use Teen Court models already in place to design a program for Brunswick County, Tart said. The \$20,000 allocation was made by the 1997 N. C. General Assembly.

Juveniles charged with criminal offenses will face a jury of their peers and be sentenced to community service, fines and restitution just like the county court system, she explained. The jury will be composed of middle and high school volunteers as well as teens who previously were defendants.

By admitting their guilt in Teen Court and following through with the jury's sentence, teen defendants are able to avoid a criminal record.

The planning phase is expected to continue for approximately two months and the program will be implemented in early 1998.

"We don't really know what it's going to look like yet," Tart said. "We See Court, page 8

WHOLLY MACKEREL



David Gore, Danny Gore and Josh Gore of Wilmington are congratulated by U. S. Open chairman Bill Owen for their winning catch -- a 40.5-pound king taken east of the shoals on Saturday.

Photo by Jim Harper

U.S. Open: 504 boats and a king-size prize

By Richard Nubel News Editor

Though three boats shy of a record registration, the 504 skippers and crews who participated in the 1997 U. S. Open King Mackerel Tournament under clear skies, on flat seas, in 85-degree temperatures made the weekend event at Southport Marina, by most other measures, the biggest and best yet.

The annual U. S. Open is held to benefit the Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce.

"I never thought it would happen," were the first words spoken by tournament winner Danny Gore of Wilmington as he was handed a check for \$45,205 by tournament chairman Bill Owen Saturday night. "I thank the Lord. I thank my father and my son."

The three generations of Gores made up the fishing team which took the tournament-winning, 40.5-pound king mackerel aboard Toppin on Saturday morning. The winning fish was brought dockside at 12:30 p.m. Saturday and held the lead throughout the afternoon.

The first \$25,000 of the Gore team's winnings were for See U. S. Open, page 9



COMPLETE TOURNAMENT RESULTS, PAGE 5C

Long Beach Incumbents run strong in primary

By Richard Nubel News Editor

Results of Tuesday's non-partisan primary election in Long Beach indicate residents of the town are fairly satisfied with decisions made by town council in the last several years, mayor Joan Altman and two incumbent commissioners said.

Slightly less than 35 percent of all registered voters came to two separate polling places to cast 1,310 ballots in the Long Beach non-partisan primary election of 1997. Candidates Don (Red) Smith and M. E. (Mark) Sharpe collected the fewest votes and will not be on the ballot November 4. The purpose of the primary election is to narrow the field of candidates to two per available council seat.

Results of Tuesday night's balloting were unofficial. Totals announced at the polls did not include absentee ballots cast or transfer votes. Votes will be canvassed Thursday and the election will be certified by the Brunswick County Board of Elections.

Incumbents Kevin Bell, Horace Collier and Mary Snead all finished in the top six in the 14-candidate field. Also finishing in the top six were candidates J. K. Somers and

Tuesday results

Bell	688
Somers	631
Locke	627
Oxford	619
Collier	617
Snead	593
Cashwell	566
Allen	535
Oxentine	489
Newton	323
Smith	258
Sharpe	205

Mike Oxford, who have said their positions on most issues are similar to those of the three incumbents.

"I think it's pretty clear," top vote-getter Bell said. "People are satisfied with what's going on. They're not going to put up with the negative

See Incumbents, page 11

SBSD papers may be signed by month's end

By Richard Nubel News Editor

Contracts for construction of the long-awaited Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District wastewater management system could be signed by the end of this month and digging could begin nearly as soon, a consulting engineer told commissioners Monday.

A preconstruction conference with the project's three major contractors was held Monday afternoon, said John McLaughlin of W. K. Dickson Inc. That meeting was to include representatives of state regulatory agencies with oversight responsibilities in wastewater matters. As soon as the federal Rural Economic Development Commission -- a major project lender and grantor -- reviews construction contracts, work can begin, he said.

"We're getting ready to start digging here by the end of the month," McLaughlin told commissioners. "This is what it's all about. This is the good stuff."

When ground is broken for the district's proposed 500,000-gallon-per-day wastewater treatment plant and the collection system that will feed it, it will be the first visual evidence of more than seven years of work that has gone into planning a

See Papers, page 14

'We're getting ready to start digging here by the end of the month. This is what it's all about. This is the good stuff.'

John McLaughlin Consulting engineer

Rental tax effective Jan. 1

Travel and tourism promotion will benefit

By Richard Nubel News Editor

With language suggested by the two county chambers of commerce in place, county commissioners Monday night formally approved a one-percent tax on lodging.

Hotels, motels, inns, tourist camps and "similar" places throughout Brunswick County will be required to charge the new occupancy tax beginning January 1, 1998, under terms of the ordinance adopted by commissioners. Renters of beach cottages and private homes not subject to sales taxes also will pay the occupancy tax.

In February of this year, the Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce and the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce began a campaign to create the new one-percent tax on short-term lodgings. The two chambers

said the \$70,000 commissioners annually gave Brunswick County Travel Package -- the chambers' joint marketing and promotion venture -- was not enough to allow Brunswick County to compete for tourist dollars with other coastal areas.

The new one-percent tax, authorized by the 1997 General Assembly after considerable reckoning with travel and tourism lobbies, is expected to generate about \$450,000 per year. Proceeds from the tax are to go to the Brunswick Tourism Development Authority, also created by commissioners' ordinance and authorized by the General Assembly.

It was only the mechanism for making appointments to this body that prevented adoption of the occupancy tax ordinance last month. Chamber members objected in September to an initial draft of the occupancy tax ordinance, saying it did not clearly enough specify the two chambers would nominate See Rental tax, page 11

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