

The State Port PILOT

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Sports

Football season comes to a close for North, West; hoops underway this week -- 1C

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Southport City audit report not shocking

By Richard Nubel
 News Editor

With a greater than 1.5 percent increase in tax collections over the prior fiscal year, independent auditors' chief complaint about the financial accounts of the City of Southport in the year completed June 30 was the much-debated electric fund deficit.

In an October 2 management letter to mayor Bill Crowe and the Southport Board of Aldermen, Brock, Padgett and Chandler, the city's auditors, found little of which to be critical outside of the cash-poor city electric fund.

Aldermen have been provided complete copies of the audit of city accounts for the fiscal year 1996-97 and a formal presentation by auditor Menton Padgett has been scheduled for the board's meeting on December 11.

City manager Rob Gandy said this year's audit shows solid improvement in other accounts.

"Outside of our well-publicized and well-discussed electric fund deficit, everything looks good," Gandy said of the audit report. The full report is to be released to the public when it is placed before the board of aldermen in December.

"Our other enterprise funds appear strong and our general fund is healthy," Gandy said. Enterprise funds, like the electric fund, are funds of city government that are self-sustaining by the sale of a product or service. The city also has a water and sewer enterprise fund and a solid waste enterprise fund. The general fund gets its revenues from a variety of taxes and fees, including the city property tax and sales and use taxes collected by the state.

Gandy said he is particularly proud of the finding at audit of a 1.53-percent increase in property tax collections over fiscal year 1995-96. Southport collected 93.72 percent of property taxes, according to the audit report. That number is lowered somewhat by motor vehicle taxes collected by Brunswick County. If real property tax collections were calculated alone, the collection rate would be higher, the

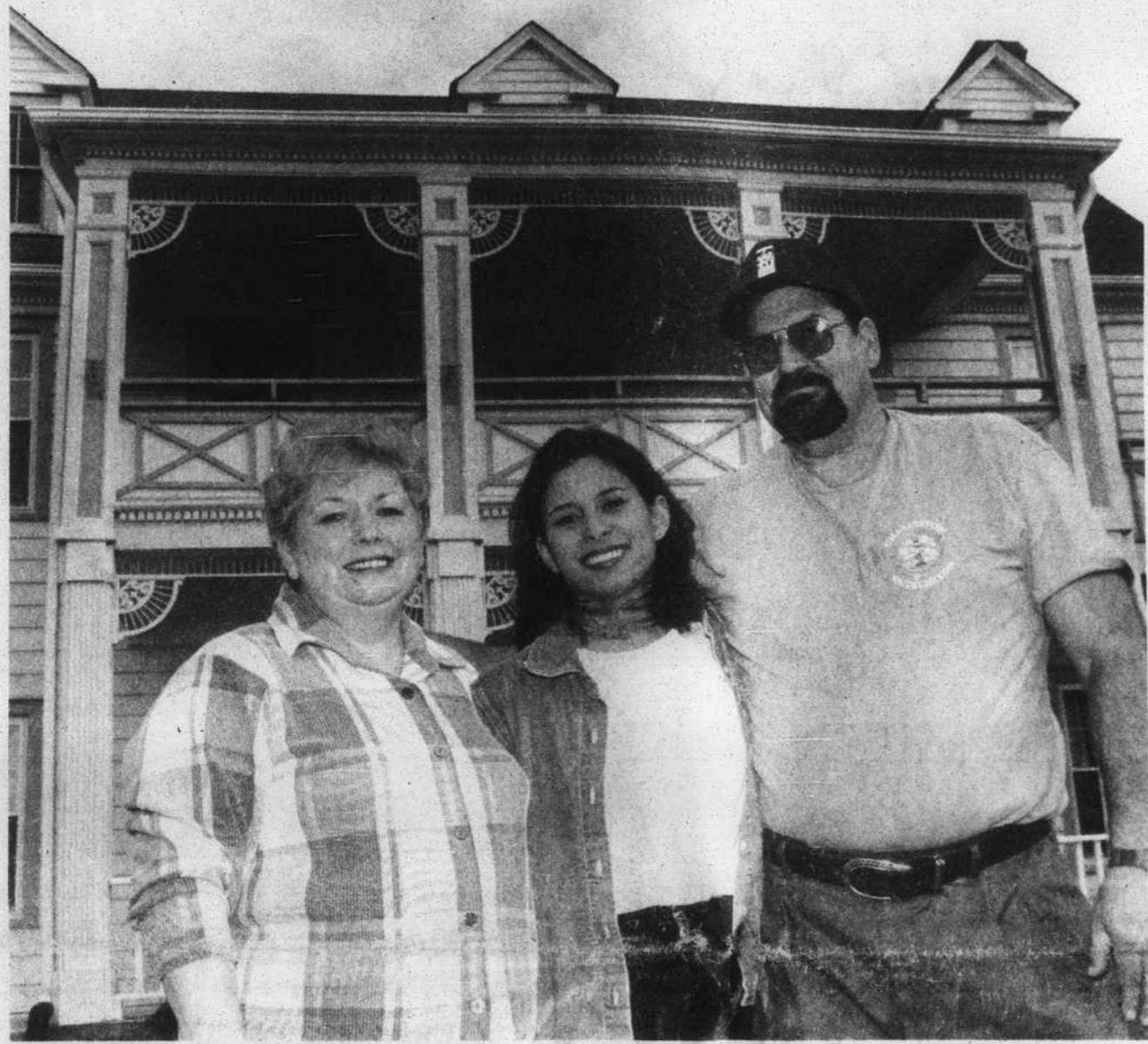
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Early printing

This week's edition of The State Port Pilot is being printed on Tuesday to allow delivery to area subscribers and counter sale outlets prior to the Thanksgiving holiday.

The newspaper office will be closed Thursday and Friday, except for the period 9 a.m. to noon on Friday.

TEEN SHELTER



Providence Home youth shelter opened last week on Doshier Cutoff Road and is currently housing three local teens. Shelter director Debra Ing (center) and house parents David and Derinda Thrift will operate the facility. Ing stressed that services provided at the shelter are confidential and that the facility is closed to the general public.

Photo by Holly Edwards

Southport-Oak Island Christmas-by-the-Sea plans are unwrapped

By Holly Edwards
 Feature Editor

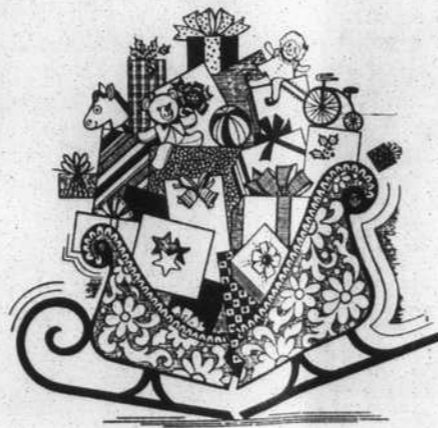
Holiday activities will flourish in the Southport-Oak Island area in December as the annual Christmas-by-the-Sea Festival gets underway.

The celebration begins Friday, December 5, 7 p.m., when the Town of Long Beach lights the holiday tree at Middleton Park. The Brunswick Concert Band Brass Ensemble will perform holiday classics and light refreshments will be served.

On Saturday, December 6, 3 p.m., the Christmas-by-the-Sea Parade will proceed through Yaupon Beach and Long Beach. Highlights of the parade include Shrine units, the South Brunswick High School marching band, homemade floats, beauty queens, horses and police, fire and rescue units.

Parade applications are still available at the Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce office on Long Beach Road.

Also Saturday, the Oak Island Elks Lodge will hold its annual fund-raising barbecue



at Middleton Park beginning at 11 a.m. and continuing as long as supplies last.

Six of Oak Island's most attractive homes will be showcased in the Oak Island Tour of Homes on Sunday, December 7, 1 to 5 p.m. Tickets cost \$5 and proceeds will be used throughout the year to fund projects sponsored by the Oak Island Beautification

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Board trims some items from school

By Holly Edwards
 Feature Editor

Facing a possible \$1.2-million budget shortfall, the Brunswick County Board of Education reviewed a list of project reductions Monday to reduce the estimated \$9.3-million price tag on the new elementary school at Winding River Plantation.

The school site is located just off N. C. 211 and is bordered by Zion Hill Road and the Winding River Plantation golf course development.

Four project reductions have thus far been approved: Reducing the size of the entrance canopy, using vinyl flooring rather than carpeting in the classrooms, deleting additional parking spaces and reducing the size of perimeter fencing.

The school system has \$8.1 million in state construction bond funds available and will likely seek

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Geologist: Dewatering jeopardizes area supply

By Richard Nubel
 News Editor

A quarrying effort like the one proposed by Martin Marietta Aggregates north of Southport could have far-reaching effects on the well-being of the Castle Hayne Aquifer, a North Carolina State University hydrogeologist told county commissioners last week.

Borrow pits, like the one dug in the Sunny Point buffer zone in apparent contravention of state regulations, can also cause contamination of the huge body of groundwater beneath Brunswick County, Dr. Ralph Heath said in his comments before commissioners.

Heath appeared before county commissioners to present an aquifer sensitivity map, developed in conjunction with the Brunswick County Planning

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'People concerned about the effect of that project on the Castle Hayne Aquifer -- their concern was well-placed.'

Long Beach Dune project may enhance land values

By Richard Nubel
 News Editor

Should the sea turtle habitat restoration project proposed at Long Beach be funded and completed, the taxable value of the nourished beachfront property it would create would more than double its present taxable value.

Long Beach commissioners learned that last week in the third of a series of presentations by Long Beach Preservation Trust board member Dara Royal, who, with the Long Beach Erosion Control Committee, recently completed an assessment of the impact of erosion on oceanfront land values.

Today, Royal said, the roughly two miles between 19th and 61st streets, which include the tapers of the

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The state has offered slightly under \$1 million to match a federal contribution to the project, but the federal government has not committed funds for construction

Bradshaw resigns as Bald Head mayor

By Richard Nubel
 News Editor

Reorganization of the Bald Head Island Village Council on December 6 may include naming a replacement for mayor Thomas Bradshaw, whose resignation from office is to become effective that day.

Bradshaw surprised those attending council's November 15 meeting with his resignation, an action for which he gave no explanation.

tion.

"He announced it at the end of the meeting," said Bald Head Island village clerk Josann Campanello. "There wasn't a reason stated. He just highlighted some of the accomplishments made during the years leading up to the first election in 1995 and some since that time."

Bradshaw, also a former Raleigh mayor, was the first mayor to serve the village since Bald Head Island began electing village council

members directly. Prior to 1995, members of village council and the mayor were appointed either by the Bald Head Island Property Owners Association or by Bald Head Island Management Inc., under terms of an initial bill of incorporation.

Ms. Campanello said it is likely a replacement for Bradshaw will be elected by village council after newly elected members are seated December 6 at the board's biennial reorganizational meeting. Peter T. Taussig and Andy

Sayre, who each captured 62 votes in the November 4 election, are to be seated at that meeting. Kathryn (Kitty) Henson, who garnered 79 votes in the election, is to be seated to fill the two-year unexpired portion of a vacated term of office.

With other council members, those three will choose a new mayor and mayor pro-tem. Members will also have the opportunity that

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