

# THE STATE PORT PILOT



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## Taking the hit ... again

### Bonnie lingers awhile

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Oh, was she slow. Hurricane Bonnie failed to take her predicted northward turn Tuesday night and made landfall in the Cape Fear region early Wednesday morning. Though damage apparently is light in both Southport and on Oak Island, residents of the area sweated through more than five hours of relative stillness Wednesday afternoon and evening as Bonnie's eye moved over the region and the hurricane -- which once packed winds of 120 miles per hour -- stalled. About 7 p.m. Wednesday, Bonnie again began to move slowly northward at about five miles per hour, and Southport-Oak Island and Brunswick County were subjected to the back side of a somewhat weakened storm. Winds on the back side of the storm were only calculated to be between 45 and 55 miles per hour. Power was restored to Southport residents just after 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and police chief Bob Gray said reentry to the city would be unrestricted as long as power remained available. Long Beach mayor Joan Altman, who returned to Oak Island Wednesday afternoon, characterized damage there as minor. She said damage to structures on Oak Island was slight. Debris volume was about as great as that downed by Hurricane Bertha in July, 1996, she said. Oak Island mayors were to meet at 8 a.m. Thursday to discuss reentry. Brunswick County would order the Oak Island bridge opened only with the mayors' okay. "With damage as light as it apparently is, I am hopeful reentry can be ordered very quickly," mayor Altman said Wednesday night, as the back side of

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At the height of Wednesday's storm Freddie Smartley rushed into Howe Street to wrestle a limb from a power line -- and succeeded. Damage in Southport was less than in either of the 1996 hurricanes, which also dragged their eyes directly over town.

Photo by Jim Harper

## Yaupon annexation Triple threat of taxation still concern

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Much as they had done at a first public hearing June 23, residents and property owners in the area surrounding southern Long Beach Road Wednesday night asked Yaupon Beach commissioners not to annex them. Annexation is the legal process by which municipalities expand their boundaries to take in new areas. Speaker after speaker told commissioners they already enjoyed most of the services Yaupon Beach could offer. Speaker after speaker noted the potential burden of triple property taxation -- by Brunswick County, by Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District and by Yaupon Beach. Barbara Willis, owner of Barb's Seafood, said the tax burden would be enough to send small businesses reeling. "I'm seeing triple taxation," Ms. Willis said. "I don't see that the sanitary district is going to rescind any of its tax. We have the added cost by Brunswick County of \$120 a month

"I see ten businesses in (existing) Yaupon Beach that are totally empty. Maybe this needs to be concentrated on in Yaupon Beach. I don't want to become an empty business."

Barbara Willis  
Long Beach Road

for solid waste. We will have a sewer bill. How much can a business stand?"  
"I can't pass that cost on to you  
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## Hampton Inn? Airport board has reservations

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Prospects for a hotel and restaurant complex on the Intracoastal Waterway near the Oak Island bridge may not be enough incentive for Brunswick County Airport commissioners to give away publicly owned land. Representatives of C3 Investment Co., of Charleston, SC, appeared before the county airport commission last week seeking an easement across airport property to facilitate access to a Hampton Inn and Perkins' Family Restaurant they said are planned on a parcel just south of the airport and west of the bridge. The parcel of land is now owned by three local individuals.

The potential developers of the restaurant and hotel, in seeking the easement to allow an exit from the southbound lane of Long Beach Road to the property, apparently have rejected the option to direct traffic down Bridge Point Road off the northbound side of the road and under the bridge to the planned complex. "That doesn't give them a front-end access," airport commission chairman Ken Stewart said of the Bridge Point Road option. "They want a permanent easement that would take some of the airport parking lot, which they would replace further on down the ramp." Members of the Brunswick County Airport Commission will consider the easement request fur-

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### Late edition

Hurricane Bonnie's pounding of southeastern North Carolina, including Whiteville where *The State Port Pilot* is printed, caused delay in delivery of this week's edition. "Most content was prepared in advance of the storm but printing of the newspaper on the normal schedule was impossible," said *Pilot* editor Ed Harper.

### Land use policies

## Protection for aquifer has several approaches

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

Three sides have emerged in the effort to protect the underground Castle Hayne aquifer from mining and other disturbances through Brunswick County land use policies. A citizens group wants stronger measures in place, including drafting of special protective overlay zoning maps as recommended by a county long-range planning committee two years ago. A consultant preparing the land use plan update has advised no change to reflect special protection of Carolina Power and Light Co.'s Brunswick Nuclear Plant, its rail

lines and power transmission lines north of Southport and the Walden Creek estuarine system, all of which could be damaged by sinkholes if the aquifer were disturbed. Somewhere in between are county commissioners, who refused last week to endorse the planning document until the Brunswick County Planning Board and consultant Glenn Harbeck consider input from the Brunswick Environmental Action Team (BEAT). At question is how far should the county land use plan go to protect the underground aquifer which is also threatened with possible mining activities north of Southport and intrusion of salt water from draining the mine to

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"We need to make sure that the same ordinance passed three boards ago applies to the same restrictions now in that specific area."

Bill Sue  
District 5 commissioner

## Redwine to weigh new incorporations

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

St. James Plantation's recently expressed interest in becoming a town or city may trigger a hold on new municipal incorporations in Brunswick County while government structure and urban service delivery here is studied further. Rep. E. David Redwine of Ocean Isle Beach this week said he shortly expects Brunswick County commissioners to present him with a resolution calling for establishment of a blue-ribbon panel to examine the proliferation of municipal corporations here and to study ways to provide urban services to areas wanting and needing them. New incorporations, and possibly annexations by existing municipali-

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