

THE STATE PORT PILOT



Seeking
South's soccer
Waccamaw C

Blocka
Southport H
a cruise in C

cents

e
the
- 1C

ning
ety takes
tory - 1B



Phone 910-457-4568/Fax 910-457-9427/e-mail pilot@southport.net

Volume 68, Number 6

Published every Wednesday in Southport, NC

Town of Oak Island?

Yaupon, Long Beach officials will discuss consolidation plan Thursday



Welcome to Oak Island, indeed. This sign near the foot of the Oak Island Bridge takes on a new meaning this week as Yaupon Beach and Long Beach consider consolidation in a 7 p.m. Thursday meeting.

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

The Town of Oak Island. That is the working name of the new municipality that may be created if elected officials of the towns of Yaupon Beach and Long Beach decide to pursue consolidation of those two municipal corporations. The two governing bodies are expected to address that question at a special 7 p.m. joint meeting tomorrow (Thursday) at the Long Beach Recreation Center.

"I just have a gut feeling that the time is right for consolidation of the two towns and that it is the best course of action for the island and my citizens," Yaupon Beach mayor Dot Kelly said.

Both mayor Kelly and Long Beach mayor Joan Altman predict the two governing boards will make a commitment to a consolidation effort Thursday, then set in motion a process of public exploration of that possibility.

"I expect the outcome of the Thursday meet-

'It is not one taking over the other. It is consolidation; not merger.'

Long Beach mayor
Joan Altman

ing to be that both elected bodies will make a commitment to the process of consolidation and to pursue it as diligently as possible to make it work," Long Beach mayor Joan Altman said Monday. "We are definitely going into this thing as partners. It is not one taking over the other. It is consolidation; not merger."

Talk of consolidation grew out of recent joint ventures the two towns have undertaken as partners.

"Yaupon Beach and Long Beach have a lot in common and both can gain a lot by consolidating," mayor Altman said. "Yaupon Beach officials said they were interested and we are too. I can speak for Long Beach town council: We are all very enthusiastic and we are looking forward to the advantages of being able to consolidate the two towns. It's an opportunity we can't pass up."

Mayor Kelly too believes a formal resolution of support for consolidating Yaupon Beach and Long Beach as one municipality is possible Thursday.

"Hopefully the two boards will agree to sit down and consider consolidating and maybe even pass a resolution toward that end," mayor Kelly said. "We do at this point plan to have lots of meetings to get some input. We do need to hear from the people on this."

Since elected officials began talking about consolidation of Yaupon Beach and Long Beach as one municipal corporation, the working name Town of Oak Island has been

See Island, page 7C

It's Open season

King mackerel tournament turns 20

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Twenty years. As it has on the first weekend in October in every year since 1979, Southport-Oak Island this weekend will welcome an anticipated 500 or more boaters and their crews to the 20th Anniversary U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament.

The event Friday and Saturday marks two decades of the best saltwater fishing competition on the East Coast.

Is the 1998 U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament committee ready for to begin the tournament's third decade?

"It's all nailed down now," 1998 tournament chairman Bill Owens said Monday. "It's been a long time. In honor of the tournament's 20th anniversary we've tried to arrange things so even more is given back to the fishermen. That's what it's all about."

In 1998, U.S. Open anglers will vie for well over \$100,000 in prize money. Last year's tournament winner, Danny Gore of Wilmington, took-home more than \$42,000 in U.S. Open prize money for his first place, 40.5-pound entry. Over \$80,000 went to the top three prize winners last year.

Southport Marina Inc., joins the Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce as primary sponsor of the 1998 U.S. Open. The marina once again will serve as headquarters to the

Captain Charlie's event for the kids

Meanwhile, for the small fry Southport's Recreation Department and Southport Lions again sponsor the Captain Charlie's Kids Fishing Tournament beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday.

Fishing at the Southport city pier will continue through 4 p.m., with a variety of prizes awarded to keep youngsters eager in the competition.

More information is available from the recreation department at 457-7945.

two-day competition.

When originally conceived as the primary fundraiser for the chamber in 1978, the U.S. Open was given a three-pronged mission: To generate funds for the operation of the chamber; to promote Southport-Oak Island as an excellent fall fishing venue; and, to extend the summer tourist season into the fall of the year.

"The U.S. Open has come a long way to meeting those goals and continues to build on its solid foundation each year," said Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce Executive

See Open, page 7C



No one knows what week this is better than George Scone, who was touching up the U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament leader-board at Signgraphics on Monday. All eyes will be on his work as the 20th Open is held this Friday and Saturday.

Yaupon annexation opposed

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

An attorney for Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District Monday morning will likely advise district commissioners what steps may be taken to block a planned annexation by Yaupon Beach of 554 acres abutting Long Beach Road, Airport Road and Fish Factory Road.

District chairman James W. "Bubba" Smith said SBSD commissioners September 23 told Wilmington attorney John Newton they wanted Yaupon Beach's annexation into the district blocked at any cost.

Annexation is the legal process by which municipalities expand their boundaries, taking in additional territory.

"We authorized him to take whatever action is necessary to counteract the annexation," chairman Smith said. "He's going to take a look at it and get back with us."

Yaupon Beach commissioners adopted an ordinance of annexation on September 14, after conduct of a public hearing on its annexation plan. If it is not successfully challenged, actual annexation is to take effect September 1, 1999.

If SBSD is to take action to challenge the Yaupon Beach annexation, it must act quickly. According to the N.C. League of Municipalities' publication Mechanics of Annexation for Municipalities Under 5,000, a challenge of the annexation must be filed with the N.C. Superior Court within 30 days of the adoption of an ordinance of annexation, or before October 14. That petition to the court may be filed by "any person owning property in the annexed area."

The person seeking review must, within five days of petitioning the court, the League of Municipalities' annexation manual says, serve notice of the action on the annexing municipality.

Yaupon Beach town clerk Nancy Wilson Tuesday said no such notice had yet been served on the town or its officials.

After receiving notice, the town must file a copy of its annexation

See District, page 7A

Vote of confidence

New machines ordered by county

Brunswick County commissioners have approved spending \$686,000 on new voting machines that residents last spring favored when tested at Oak Island precincts.

The units will eliminate marked ballots as voters go the booths and press a button beside the name of the candidate they wish to vote for.

"Once the people try it and see how easy it is, they're going to like it," said Lynda Britt, Brunswick County Board of Elections supervisor. "If they can go to an automatic teller machine and get \$20, they can vote on this machine with ease."

A growing number of voters in the county has forced officials to meet the demand at the polling places. Election Products Inc. of Urbana, VA, was awarded the bid to provide 180 booths at a cost of \$3,295 each. The old voting counters currently in use are no longer manufactured, so a replacement model had to be found.

Elections officials will demonstrate the units at shopping centers in Southport, Leland and Seaside prior to the November election so voters won't be nervous in the fall. The units are also capable of connecting to the board of elections office by modem to record results.

"We appreciate the fact that our county commissioners are willing to spend this money to bring our voters up to standards," said Ms. Britt. "They have always been pretty generous with trying to keep Brunswick County up to standards."

Dosher project studied

Hospital estimates construction at \$5 million

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Five contractors are set to receive bid specifications for Dosher Hospital's planned long-term care and dietary facilities Tuesday, hospital trustees learned Monday afternoon. The hospital appears on track to begin construction of the project on, or slightly before, the first of the year.

Hospital administrator Edgar Haywood told trustees financial arrangements could be completed when bids are returned and actual construction costs are known. The hospital has estimated the cost of building the two new facilities on the present hospital site to be about

\$5 million.

"Bid documents are ready to go to the printers and will be given to five contractors tomorrow," Haywood said. "All contractors are good, known companies."

Both single-prime and multi-prime bids will be sought from contractors, meaning some companies will bid to become general contractor from the job and some -- electrical, mechanical and plumbing contractors -- will bid elements of the job. Trustees may select a general contractor who will then select subcontractors or may select a contractor for each element of construction.

As trustees prepared to accept construction bids Monday, they

adopted a resolution setting out a goal of ten percent participation by minority construction firms. Haywood said he and hospital finance officer Jim Shomaker would attend a pre-closing conference with representatives of the N.C. Local Government Commission and the state Medical Care Commission on October 8.

"This will be a kind of last attempt to get everybody on the same page -- to put everything together," Haywood explained.

He said he hoped to have construction bids returned in time to close financing on November 12.

In an effort to help trustees plan for future Dosher facility needs, the

See Dosher, page 7A