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Sewer District's long wait near end

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

After more than nine years in the planning and construction stages, Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District's 500,000-gallon-per-day wastewater treatment plant will be operational within weeks, a consulting engineer told district commissioners Monday morning.

"The plant will be able to accept flow before Christmas," engineer John McLaughlin said.

Nearing start-up, commissioners announced plans to contract with a Greensboro firm to manage the district's sewer operation. After SBSB's attorney Jim Prevatte reviews final provisions, Water Technology and Controls Inc. will become the contract-manager of the SBSB wastewater treatment plant.

Engineers planned to conduct their final construction progress meeting with sewer system contractors Monday afternoon. McLaughlin said the general construction and electrical contractors for the plant and pump stations have only "punch list" items left to complete. The third contractor, the firm which has been charged with construction of the system's collection system, has substantially completed its work. McLaughlin said Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation has only to connect power to two pump stations to complete work on the collection system. That work is to be done this week, he said.

"Then we can send out notices that sewer will be available," McLaughlin said. When those notices are sent to district residents and commercial interests, they can begin tapping to the new wastewater management system. Upon receiving notice, customers of SBSB will have 90 days to tap to the sewer system, under terms of the district's ordinance.

"I assume there are those who are ready to go now," McLaughlin said.

In fact, there are more than enough residents, potential residents and business operators standing in line to tap to the SBSB wastewater treatment plant. Twice Monday, commissioners had to tell developers to place plans on hold until the district could assure them sewer flow.

Although nearing completion, contractors still have some clean-up work to be done. Grassing and landscaping have to be done at the site of the wastewater treatment plant. Both the general construction contractor and electrical contractor have asked for extensions on their contracts, McLaughlin said. See District, page 11

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Photo by Jim Harper

Marchers had a lot to smile about Saturday as they opened holiday celebrations with the Christmas-by-the-Sea parade on Oak Island. Many get to do it all over again this Saturday morning with the parade in Leland and in the December 19 Bolivia procession.

Few hear schools report

Officials outline \$77-million plan for improvement

By Laura Kimball
Feature Editor

Empty chairs filled the South Brunswick High School cafeteria

Thursday during a community meeting to discuss proposed improvements to Brunswick County schools.

The meeting was the third in the county to discuss almost \$77 million worth of modifications that may make up the county's ten-year plan. Fewer than ten persons, excluding district staff and board members, attended the meeting.

Leonard Pellicier, educational consultant, explained the school conditions and the recommended changes. Overcrowding and outdated facilities were the two most pressing problems cited in the study.

The district is expected to grow about ten percent, or 950 students, over the next ten years, he said, with the greatest growth being at the mid-

See Schools, page 12

Oak Island bridge EPA to insist western route be considered

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Whether glancing or crushing, proponents of a second bridge to Oak Island and roadway corridor between North Middleton Street and N. C. 211 at Midway Road were dealt a blow Thursday when that siting was again panned by the first of 17 environmental agencies afforded project review.

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency in a December 3 letter affirmed its opposition to a bridge and road between North Middleton Street and N. C. 211 at Midway Road. EPA reasserted its position of last summer that a roadway corridor following Sunset Harbor Road should be explored by N. C. Department of Transportation.

"EPA continues to be concerned about the potential impacts to approximately 3,500 acres of relatively undeveloped area north of the

'Earlier EPA comments were inaccurate and some of these assertions remain inaccurate. I have no assurance these decisions are made on any basis of fact.'

Joan Altman
Long Beach mayor

Intracoastal Waterway to N. C. 211 that (three other roadway alternatives) See Bridge, page 12

State TIP list

County, towns work together on road needs

By Terry Pope
County Editor

Municipal and county officials will get together next week to map their priorities for the state's Transportation Improvement Program for 2000-2006.

Local leaders are angry that the draft proposed by the N. C. Department of Transportation includes a five-year delay of the second bridge to Oak Island and setbacks for the Wilmington Outer Loop connector in northern Brunswick County.

The Brunswick County Planning Department has organized a meeting of all towns and county commissioners for Wednesday, December 16, at 1:30 p.m. at Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation's district office near Supply.

"This is a starting point," said

Brunswick County commissioners have blasted DOT officials for delays and have invited secretary Tolson here to witness traffic conditions in the county

county planner Don Eggert, who said the TIP has generated a lot of discussion among towns since it See Roads, page 12

It's Christmas time in the city Activities move to Southport this weekend

The Christmas-by-the-Sea Festival continues this weekend with home tours, band concerts, caroling, a flotilla -- and a "sit-stilla."

On Saturday, December 12, from 5 to 9 p.m. the Southport Home Tour will feature eight Southport homes, including the historic Brunswick Inn and the Garrison House at Fort Johnston.

The downtown area tour begins at Southport Visitor Center, 113 West Moore Street, and concludes at Franklin Square Art Gallery. Participants on the tour will be treated to entertainment from 5 to 9 p.m. in each of the homes on the tour, caroling with the Sea Notes Choral

Society at St. Philip's Episcopal Church from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m., and Civil War activities throughout the day and evening.

Cost is \$8 per ticket before the tour, \$10 the day of the tour. Proceeds benefit community projects of Southport 2000 Inc., a downtown revitalization organization.

Also on Saturday the Cape Fear Yacht Club and The Landing community will sponsor a Parade of Lights flotilla at 7:30 p.m. on the waterfront. Judges for the flotilla will be students from Southport Elementary School.

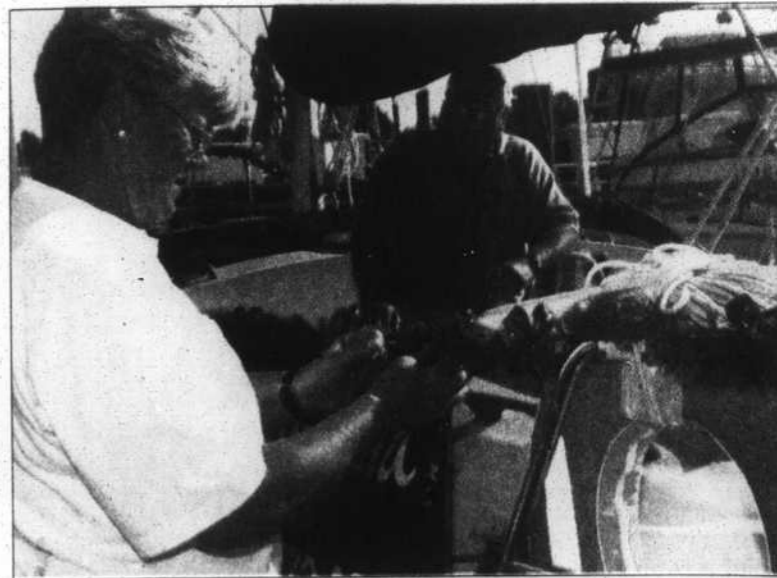
Boat owners are encouraged to decorate their vessels and join in the festivities, which begin

with a captain's meeting at 10 a.m. at Southport Marina, and conclude with awards, entertainment and food at Fish Tales' Tiki Hut at 9 p.m.

The Cape Fear Yacht Club also has encouraged boat and dock owners to decorate for the holidays in the Southport Waterfront Sit-Stilla December 12-25.

On Sunday, December 13, Brunswick Concert Band will help residents and visitors catch the Christmas spirit in a 3 p.m. concert in Hatch Auditorium at the N. C. Baptist Assembly.

Other upcoming events include Santa Calling, Santa's PJ Party, various youth crafts and sports challenges and Breakfast with Santa.



Boaters took advantage of last weekend's fine weather to decorate their craft for the Christmas-by-the-Sea flotilla this Saturday.