

# THE STATE PORT PILOT

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

Volume 68, Number 25

Published ev



Ah, Spring  
and our fancy tur  
sneezing and othe  
time. What a mix

Hoop hop  
North looks for  
South just looks

## Y2K has its price

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

It will cost Brunswick County an additional \$132,555 to avoid the Y2K computer crisis next year, when hardware that isn't in compliance when year 2000 arrives may crash or stall from the millennium change.

A steering committee of county employees from a number of departments developed a county plan for dealing with the Y2K problem that could affect delivery of services to the public. The tax department, central permitting, 911 emergency services and sheriff's department operate from computers that will need to be upgraded to avoid what has become a national fear -- that services will essentially come to a halt as computers fail to read dateline digits ending in 00.

But assistant county manager Robert Hyatt remains hopeful that a recent budget amendment the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners approved should cover costs of bringing the county departments into a safety zone.

"The main equipment that will need replacement will be the older PCs (personal computers)," said Hyatt.

Funds were included in the 1998-99 county budget for hardware, software and programming necessary to bring the county's main computer system into Y2K compliance. However, funds were not included to deal with computers which are used in offices that serve the public. An in-depth inventory had to be done of non-compliant hardware which will either need year 2000 microchips, or replacement.

Hyatt said the county had the option to include the costs in the upcoming 1999-2000 budget instead of appropriating additional funds from the current budget, a practice the board of commissioners does not like, but it would have pushed the county six months short of meeting the Y2K deadline by January 1, 2000.

"I think the cost to the county will be basically the same," said Hyatt. "I do believe that there is a significant benefit to the county, other than money, in replacing the necessary equipment as soon as possible. The benefit is time."

To wait for the next budget cycle would have given the county just six months to purchase the new equipment, have it installed and tested to ensure it would work without interruptions when January 1, 2000, arrives. Counties operate on fiscal year budgets that start July 1 and end June 30, rather than on a calendar year.

"I feel that this is too close for See Y2K, page 6



William Smith and Frankie Stephenson enjoyed a pleasant -- but for them perhaps a bit too peaceful -- afternoon recently bass fishing on Town Creek. Photo by Jim Harper

### TOWN CREEK

## Yaupon wades in Towns, county seek to erode CRC expansion

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Yaupon Beach Monday night joined the growing number of coastal municipalities which oppose a major expansion of the N. C. Coastal Resources Commission's authority over land development.

Mayor Jim Lowell of Holden Beach recently told county commissioners that, if enacted, "most of Long Beach and Holden Beach could not be 100-percent replaced under new regulations" if they were significantly storm-damaged.

Yaupon Beach commissioners Monday night adopted a resolution opposing the CRC's proposed Estuarine Shoreline Regulation changes. Long Beach Town Council adopted a similar resolution of opposition last week.

The CRC is a nine-member panel appointed by the governor to regulate development along the shoreline in 20 coastal counties. It was formed with adoption of the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) of

Several proposed changes which would drastically affect development along the state's coastline, specifically on Oak Island and in other Brunswick County beach towns

1974 -- ostensibly to balance the competing forces of development and preservation -- and has broad power to enact development regulations in its area of jurisdiction.

CRC proposes several changes See CRC, page 8

## Wal-Mart proposed City shopping for right deal

By Richard Nubel  
Municipal Editor

Will the City of Southport continue to pave the way for Wal-Mart?

If annexation of land for the retail giant is to proceed, aldermen Thursday will call for a public hearing on the matter to be held February 25.

Thursday night, city officials will be asked to take the next step in the process that will bring 31.7 acres near Carolina Power and Light Co.'s canal into the city by the process of satellite annexation. The would-be developer of that property is said to be courting Wal-Mart as anchor to a \$12.5-million "upscale" retail complex.

Meeting last month, aldermen agreed to a request from Wyatt Development Company to rezone for commercial use two 16-acre parcels lying between the CP&L

canal and Sandfiddler Restaurant. Wyatt Development spokesman Howard Hill said the company planned to purchase the land for development of a shopping center featuring an anchor store of 150,000 square feet. Retailers, and possibly a restaurant, would fill another ten units in the shopping complex of between 1,500 square feet and 4,500 square feet each.

Hill refused to identify the anchor store for the complex, but said its "executive committee" had met and had committed to the Southport site.

In addition to rezoning the property last month, aldermen accepted from Hill the two parcel owners' petitions for annexation to the city. One of the two parcels is owned by E. J. and Amaretta Prevatte and the other is owned by Robert Lowe.

Although both parcels lie outside city limits, both are in Southport's See Wal-Mart, page 11

## McAdams will move to South

By Laura Kimball  
Feature Editor

South Brunswick High School will have a new principal next year.

James McAdams, the current principal of Bolivia Elementary, will move to South Brunswick for the 1999-2000 school year.

"I'm excited about the change," he said, adding that he already knows many of the teachers since he used to work

See McAdams, page 11

## Northern schools Year-round plan gets mixed grade

By Laura Kimball  
Feature Editor

The year-round school format in three Brunswick County schools was the cause of grumbling Monday night at the monthly board of education meeting.

Jean Sidbury of Leland told the school board it is difficult for families to go on vacation, for parents to further their education, for divorced parents to divide custody and for families to get into a routine when

their schedule is always changing. "There are a lot of us who have tried the year-round system, and we're not happy with it," she said. "It's been really hard."

Schools that have adopted a year-round schedule are Belville Elementary, Lincoln Primary and Leland Middle. The first year-round school year was the 1997-98 term.

Faye Burckhalter of Leland is not unhappy with the format, but she feels the community has had no say See Schools, page 11

## County zoning ordinance Changes affect roads, open space

By Terry Pope  
County Editor

A new ordinance that requires developers to build roads to state standards and set aside ten percent of each project as open space for recreation has taken effect in Brunswick County.

The Brunswick County Board of Commissioners last week approved a resolution that repealed the former county subdivision ordinance adopt-

ed in October, 1991, and replaced it with one the county planning department and planning board has been working on the past six months.

Most of the changes affect the way major subdivisions must be designed before they gain approval of the planning board. Developers must post a bond, letter of credit, or a combination of both, guaranteeing 125 percent of the cost for infrastructure for tracts that are subdiv-

ed into more than five lots.

That is to ensure the utility lines, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, water or sewer taps and roads built to N. C. Department of Transportation standards are not ignored by developers, resulting in problems for homeowners in the future. There are numerous subdivisions with sub-standard roads built in the past where school buses and mail carriers now cannot reach homes and where DOT officials cannot legally

provide road maintenance to help those in need.

The old ordinance allowed a developer to delay construction of roads until 25 percent of the subdivision property had been sold. That also led to questions about who is enforcing the improvements and looking out for the homeowners.

"We've got a mess in Brunswick County with these subdivision roads," said JoAnn Bellamy See Zoning, page 8

## Redwine bets against casino

Casino boats would be banned from berthing in North Carolina, under terms of a bill introduced before the N. C. General Assembly by Rep. E. David Redwine of Brunswick County.

As South Carolina officials move to tighten lax gambling laws that have given rise to gambling "cruises to nowhere," gaming boat operators have begun to look north to Brunswick County for possible ports. Calabash and Southport are mentioned as possible home bases for gambling boats.

"The bill's language will accommodate the large cruise ships that sometimes dock in Wilmington or Morehead City as a port of call, but hinder casino boats looking for a quick cruise," Redwine said.

The legislation introduced by Rep. Redwine would not only establish See Casino, page 6