

THE STATE PORT PILOT

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Imagination
Youthful exuberance in classroom and in Frank Park is a highlight of

Chucky Bro
North Brunswick g
Charlotte Hornet, b



MOSE LEWIS HONORED

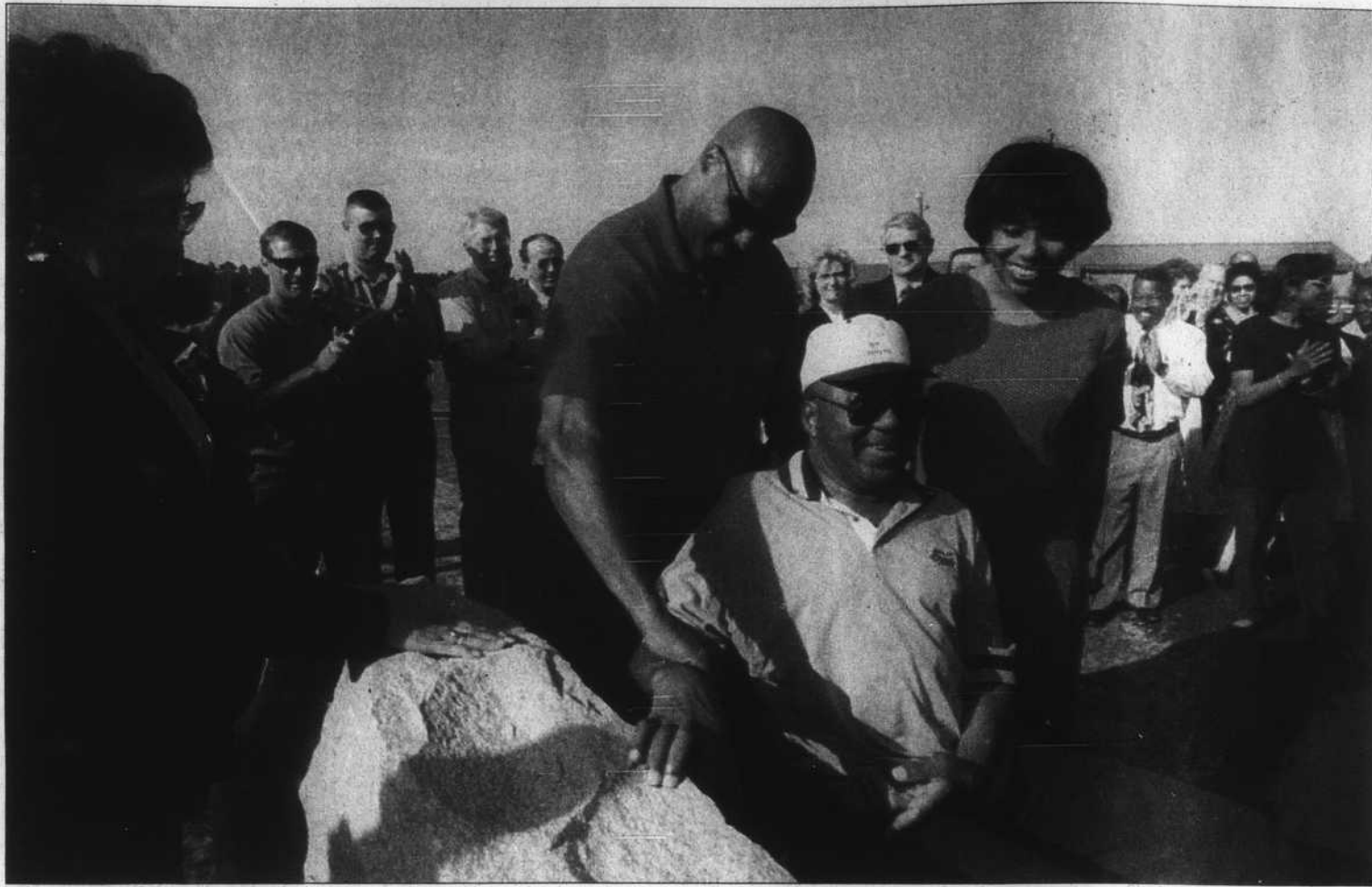


Photo by Jim Harper

Mose Lewis and his family — wife Doris, son Cliff and daughter Ola — give Lewis Rock its first rub, inaugurating a tradition to bring good Cougar fortunes and great memories of the former South Brunswick High School principal.

Solid like a rock

By Diana D'Abruzzo
Staff Writer

Cameras in hand and eyes wide with anticipation, scores of people waited for Mose Lewis to make his way toward the South Brunswick High School football stadium.

When his car finally pulled up, the eager crowd swarmed. It was a battle of sorts as each person tried to catch their own glimpse, wave or smile from Lewis, a former principal of South Brunswick High.

The crowd was so thick it was difficult to weave his wheelchair through the mass of well-wishers, who gave hugs, blew kisses and would stop him to whisper sentiments in his ear.

Though the gathering on Wednesday was an opportunity to honor Lewis, who achieved success in the classroom and on the ballfield during his tenure as principal, the reunion of old friends and colleagues was more than that.

It was a chance to say "thank you" to the man who is a mentor, a friend, a cheering squad to everyone he meets. It was a chance to show support for their comrade who has been battling Lou Gehrig's disease for close to five years.

"During his tenure, he earned the utmost respect of his students, his faculty and members of the community," said Baxter Stirling, a member of South's Cougar Club. "South Brunswick became an institute of learning in which the students and community could take pride. The school rose to a level of competitiveness in the classrooms and on the athletic fields never seen before in its history.

"Mose was not afraid of conflict and would often take action, then get permission later, but he always did what he thought was right and fair."

Lewis came to South Brunswick High School as principal in 1982 and was at the helm for 11 years before being offered a job in Brunswick County schools' central office.

Friends, students and colleagues from past and

See Lewis, page 6

'(Mose Lewis) was a principal and a friend who cared about people down to the last person. He cares about everyone.'

Paul Faulk
Former baseball coach

Bright Ideas

District asks only BEMC to make offer

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District commissioners hope to have within 60 days enough information to decide whether or not to sell the district's \$11-million wastewater management system to Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation.

In contentious sessions Wednesday and Thursday, commissioners Lucille Laster, James W. (Bubba) Smith and Charles Welling voted to give BEMC alone that much time to complete a feasibility study and business plan for purchase and operation of the district facilities. The three commissioners voted Wednesday to conduct a Thursday meeting with BEMC officials only. The Wednesday special session, reconvened on Thursday, was called by commissioners Laster and Welling, who presented an agenda that listed a number of items tabled by the board one week earlier. Item two of that agenda said only "BEMC."

District chairman Gene Formy-Duval and commissioner Ginger Harper voted Thursday against offering BEMC the exclusive opportunity to bid for the district's wastewater management infrastructure. By the same 3-2 margin, commissioners refused to hear proposals to take over the sanitary district wastewater operation from the Town of Oak Island, the City of Southport, Brunswick County and a private development company based in the Charleston, S. C., area.

Commissioners' surprise renewal of interest in BEMC's January request to purchase district infrastructure came as the political rift among SBSB commissioners intensified. One week prior, Formy-Duval and Harper voted to demand Laster's resignation from the board, charging her with conflict of interest because her family business profited from work it did for the district. Smith and Welling voted against Harper's motion to demand Laster's resignation.

Welling also refused a Wednesday

'Our magnificent and major investment in the area is designed to fulfill growth. We are prepared for growth in this area regardless of its magnitude.'

David Batten
BEMC general manager

call for his resignation by district resident Jenny Austin, of Oakwood Glen. Austin asserted Welling had to look at Laster each time a vote was called for an indication as to how he should cast his vote.

"I feel your uncommitted attitude renders you ineffective," Austin told Welling, demanding he look at her as she spoke. "I talked to a lot of people," Welling said, one month after challenging Austin to get a petition to get him "kicked out" of office. "I've been acting in the interest of all of the people and I will not resign."

BEMC general manager David Batten told commissioners Thursday the 47,000-customer electric coop could bring a strong organization that already provides elements of the service needed to the district.

"Our good-faith offer places a very important role on customer service," Batten said in his pitch to win the 60 days necessary to complete a business plan. BEMC has about 1,800 electricity accounts in SBSB right now, he said.

Batten said a bill approved by a N. C. House of Representatives panel just

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Menhaden ban sinks in House

Commercial menhaden fishing will remain unregulated off the beaches of Brunswick County.

The N. C. House Environment and Natural Resources Committee last week voted decisively not to issue a favorable report of HB 571, an act which would have forced commercial menhaden boats 1.5 miles off the county's shore between May 1 and September 30 each year.

Opposition to the bill was overwhelming, said Bob Black, president of Oak Island Fishing Club. Black and other sports fishermen joined local elected officials in Raleigh on Wednesday to speak in support of the seasonal menhaden regulation.

"It was hard to tell if anyone really voted for it," Black said.

Chief among opponents of the bill, sponsored by Rep. E. David Redwine of Brunswick County, were Jule Wheat-ley, owner of Beaufort Fisheries Inc., and Jerry Schill, executive director of the N. C. Fisheries Association. A huge lobbying effort was successful in sinking the Redwine bill.

Consortium facing tough task

Corps may shift sand to beaches

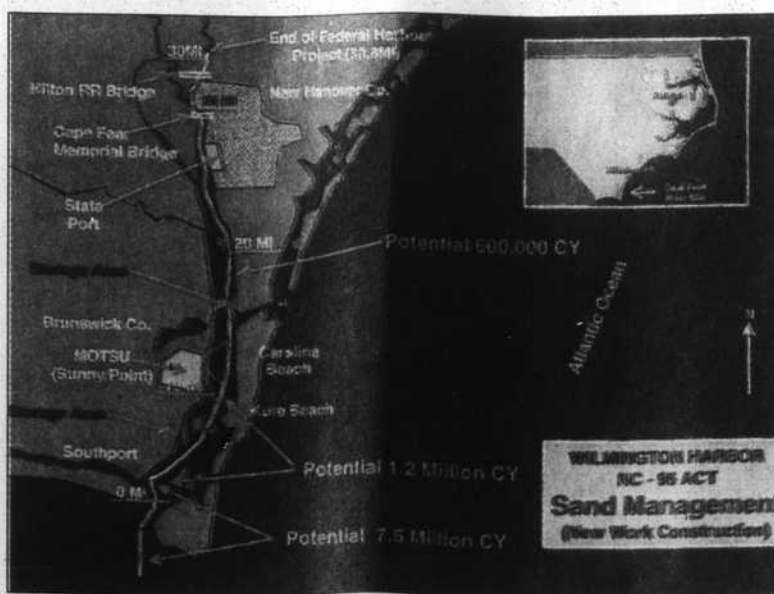
By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

Nearly eight million cubic yards of sand suitable for beach stabilization will be pumped from the mouth of the Cape Fear River during the Wilmington Harbor Project beginning in April, 2000.

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers officials Monday told members of the Brunswick Beaches Consortium that sand could be theirs to place on Bald Head Island, Caswell Beach, Yaupon Beach, Long Beach and Holden Beach, if they can figure out how to divide it, commit to paying a local cost share and provide the corps with a letter of interest by June 30 of this year.

"A year from April, we want to produce sand," said Col. Terry Youngbluth of the corps' Wilmington District office. "What we need from you is a plan on how to divide the 7.75 million cubic yards up."

D. Wayne Bissette, chief of the corps' project management branch, told representatives of the eight local governments comprising the Brunswick Beaches Consortium the quantity of



Wilmington Harbor Project involves stretch of Cape Fear.

sand was sufficient to create a 150-foot-wide berm over ten miles of beachfront. The five towns which stand to benefit feature about 18 linear miles of sandy beaches, so sections of beachfront suffering most critically from erosion in each of these towns may be targeted to

receive sand.

Placement of the sand, and the rate at which sand is placed, will be left to members of the Brunswick Beaches Consortium. Consortium members may also decide to place less sand per linear foot and cover a more lengthy

section of beachfront in the five towns. Bissette said the corps could place the dredged sand at widths of 150 feet, 100 feet or 50 feet per linear foot.

"The consortium is going to have to decide where we are going to put it," said Holden Beach town manager Mike Morgan. He and Long Beach town manager Jerry Walters have served as interim staff to the consortium. The coalition, which also includes Ocean Isle Beach, Sunset Beach and Brunswick County, which will not receive sand from the Wilmington Harbor Project, is preparing to move to phase II of its new operation. This new phase of development will include hiring or contracting for professional staff.

"The group is going to say, 'Where are the areas on the island that we want it?'" Morgan said. "It's not a matter of starting at Bald Head Island and when we're out, we're out. It's going to be tough. It's going to be tough when you go to your elected officials and try to sell this."

Funds for construction of the \$329-million Wilmington Harbor Project will be contained in President Clinton's fis-

See Dredging, page 10

SCHOOLS

Tragedy is chance for action

By Terry Pope
Staff Writer

As the nation voices its concern about school safety after the Colorado shooting incident, the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department is seeking a state grant to better equip its resource officers in local schools.

If the grant from the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission is approved, Brunswick County will chip-in \$49,656 as its portion to help match what is projected to be a \$198,625 deal in state and federal funds to improve equipment for county school officers.

Deputies assigned to provide protection and security at the schools often receive "hand-me-down equipment" from the patrol division because of the lack of funding to purchase new vehicles, radios and gear.

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