

# The State Port Pilot Opinion

## A good test

**It is essential now that the Brunswick Beaches Consortium be made strong by its solidarity**

Certainly the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers brought good news to Brunswick County this week: Some 7.75 million cubic yards of sand may be pumped from the Cape Fear River channel and placed on beaches from Bald Head Island to Holden Beach.

If all goes well, the sand could be moving from Jaybird Shoal to the beaches in time for tourists to enjoy 100- or 150-foot-wide beaches by tourist season of 2000, corps officials said Monday.

And this sand may be just the first made available to desperately needy area beaches in the next five years. Although there is no assurance that Congress and the administration will bless the project with money, the Brunswick County Beaches Shoreline Protection Project — an all-out nourishment project for Oak Island, Holden Beach, Ocean Isle Beach and Sunset Beach — may be soon a reality also. Ocean Isle Beach could get its nourishment project within the next two years. Oak Island beaches could receive a new blanket of sand from Kings Lynn to the N. C. Baptist Assembly by 2003. Holden Beach could get its nourishment in 2004.

But the sand available now through the corps' Wilmington Harbor Project will more than help tie the area over until the shoreline protection program can be set in motion. There are still some uncertainties about the shoreline protection program, like just where sand for nourishment of all Brunswick County beaches will come from.

And, the Wilmington Harbor Project Sand Management Plan will be a first good test of the efficiency of one of the county's newest institutions — the Brunswick Beaches Consortium, the coalition of seven beach communities and Brunswick County. It is likely now that the task of actually apportioning sand to five of its seven member governments will fall to the consortium. The consortium also will tackle local governments' administrative tasks, like securing local funding for the costly sand, negotiating easements so dredge equipment can be placed on area beaches and coordinating the delivery of letters of interest to the federal government.

This will be a big test of the new consortium. It will also be a big test of the local governments they represent. We will soon see if local leaders were serious when they said they would work as one to secure beach stabilization projects in Brunswick County.

And, it is essential now that the consortium be made strong by its solidarity. Consortium members Monday noted this, saying now more than ever Brunswick County needs to speak with one voice if it is to be successful in its effort to put sand back on its severely eroded beaches.

The consortium is impressive.

The corps sand management plan is impressive.

This is a good test of what promises to be a good new organization.

## Good investment

**The supplemental pay plan takes a necessary step to help our system recruit and keep good educators**

It's a smart business move for our schools to become more competitive in teacher supplements. The day is already here when teachers are in high demand, and they are choosing to sign contracts with school systems which offer better pay.

It makes sense. Increasing supplements also will reward teachers who have helped turn our school system around, raising test scores and securing exemplary status for our students.

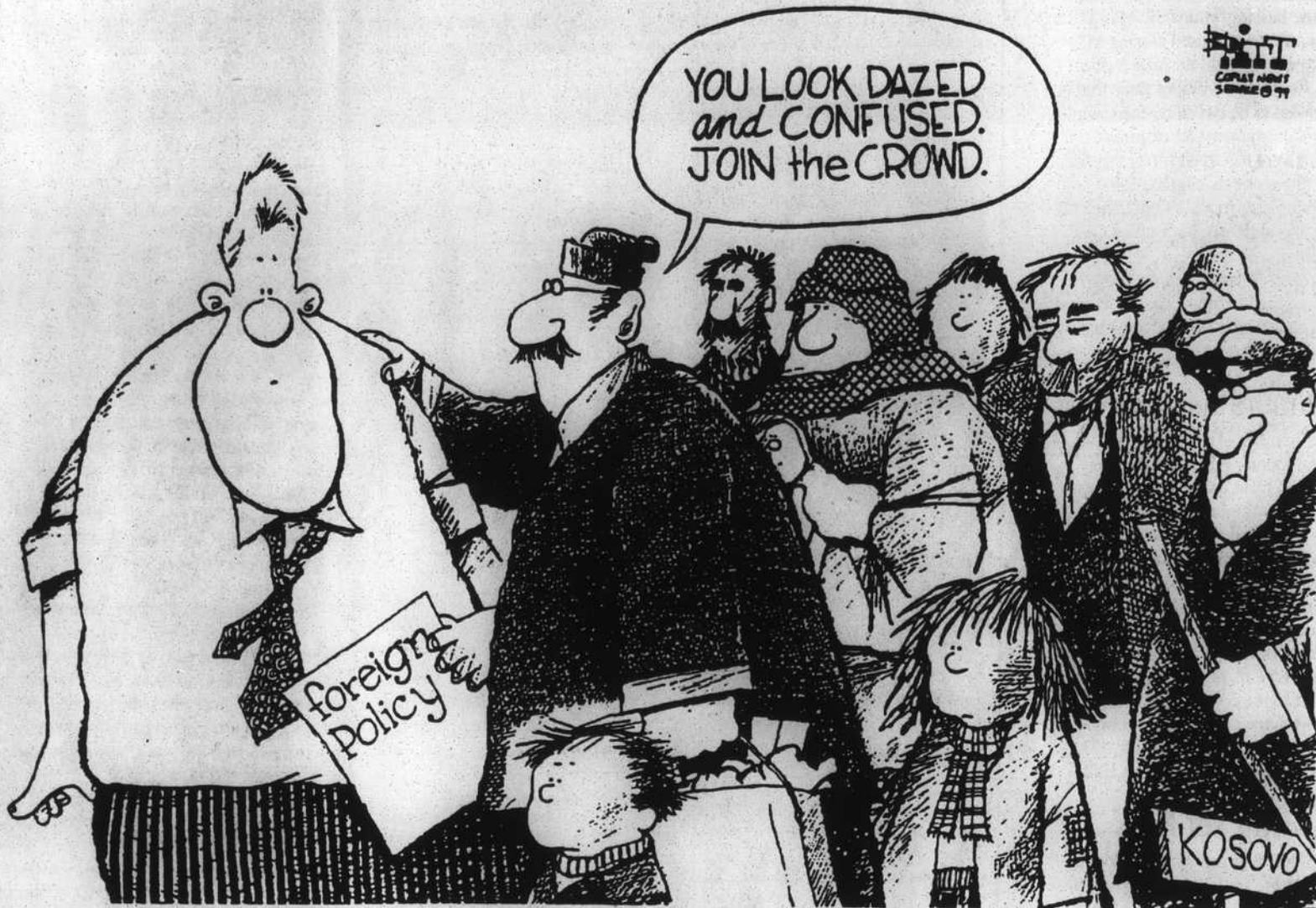
The budget proposal which will be presented to county commissioners for approval increases the supplemental pay plan, or bonuses given all full-time teachers and paid from local funds in addition to their state salaries.

Under superintendent Marion Wise's plan, county teachers with up to six years experience would practically double their local supplement next year. It takes a necessary step to help our system recruit and keep good educators. Previously, teachers with seven or more years experience received increases.

It is also a good step to keep neighboring school systems from stealing our best teachers, which sometimes now occurs in the middle of a school year.

Under the proposal, a beginning teacher with a bachelor's degree would receive a \$1,000 supplement compared to \$450 offered today. It still is not comparable to what some systems can offer, but then some offer nothing to lure good teachers into the classroom. We are a step ahead of them.

New Hanover County's teacher supplement is a flat \$2,500 for 1998-99, while the board there is proposing to increase the amount next year. They are aware of the need to stay out front in the recruiting game. We can't afford to lose good teachers, or the academic progress we've made will be affected, too.



## Not exactly news

With no small ado Tuesday Mrs. Lucy Freeman of Newtown, CT, was logged in as the 75,000th guest at the Southport Visitors Center since its Moore Street doors were opened on February 24, 1997. Almost becoming a celebrity was her husband, Dr. Joseph Freeman, who entered before her, and when center director Jim McKee learned there was someone else in the car he went out and asked Mrs. Freeman if she'd like to come in and make her mark in visitor center history. On hand to congratulate guest number 75,000 was alderman Paul Fisher... We all recall, of course, that the first to sign the guest book at the center was Tom Seaman. "And he's also from Connecticut," McKee noted. McKee said that at the going rate of interest, the center should entertain its 100,000th visitor sometime in August. You can almost hear them revving up their engines in Hartford now... Have you seen the IBM commercial where one guy is befuddled when a friend brings him to the middle of nowhere, until told the desolate land is an apparent steal at "four dollars a foot." By our calculation, that adds up to about \$170,000 per acre. We don't get it.

One man's trash is another man's front door, or such is the case for the aforementioned Jim McKee on East

Nash Street. We passed Jim on our Sunday afternoon stroll, he busy sanding down a glass-paned door he recovered from a pile of discarded housing material one property down. And, he was luckier than we first thought: "I got those, too," he said, pointing proudly to a stack of windows and doors in his side yard. The bounty was among throw-aways left at curbside in the city's annual large-item cleaning, done free of charge in cooperation with the county landfill department. City manager Rob Gandy said the response has been so great the city cannot complete its task in the allotted time but will continue its work 'til finished... Gandy and city crews completed a much needed hard-surfacing of the alley running from Moore Street to Waterfront Park. Pedestrian traffic, especially that on bikes or pushing baby carriages, will find the going much easier now... One of Southport's favorite authors, Jay Barnes, whose *North Carolina's Hurricanes* sits on many oceanfront coffee tables, will be at the North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher (Jay is director of the aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, near Morehead City) this Friday, 1:30 p.m., for a presentation, book signing and perhaps a reunion with some old Southport friends. Further information is available

by calling the aquarium at 458-8257.

Lavada Bevel of Southport reminds us that Doshier Memorial Hospital was served by volunteers before Doshier Volunteers was formed, and even before Pink Ladies. The earlier volunteers were known as Gray Lady Volunteer Hospital Workers, she said, a branch of the Red Cross sponsored locally by the Junior Woman's Club of Southport. Mrs. Bevel as evidence presented a newspaper clipping, without a date, that featured a picture of herself receiving a five-year Red Cross Volunteer Button from William Cupit, administrator of Doshier Memorial Hospital at the time... En route home from upstate last Friday we missed our I-40 curve past Raleigh and instead passed the new Entertainment and Sports Arena complex that will provide 19,000-plus seats for N. C. State basketball and Carolina Hurricanes ice hockey games. We don't know when ice hockey practice begins, but contractors have a ways to go before the huge facility next to the Carter-Finley football stadium is ready for play. There must be a better name for this "ESA;" if it were exclusively a N. C. State project the choice of naming it after Everett Case would be a simple one.

## Public opinion

### Sudden impact

To the Editor:  
In 1988, I bought a lot in Ocean Lakes subdivision. At the time of purchase I had a valid permit to install a septic tank. Later, when I wanted to set up a mobile home, the rules had changed. I could not get a permit. The lot sat there useless.

Then, in the mid-1990s I heard that possibly a sewer system might be installed. I called the county office at Bolivia; no one could verify anything. I have paid taxes on the lot each year (so I know I am on record as being owner of said lot).

When I finally heard the sewer line was being installed down Long Beach Road, I called the SBSB office. I was told there were no immediate plans to run any lateral lines into subdivisions. Later (early August, 1998) I was informed that the lines were being installed into the subdivision and that, since I had not responded earlier, my cost would be \$700 for a tap fee and \$3,000 for an impact fee. No one sent me anything — no notice, no nothing.

Then, I read (chairman Gene Formy-Duval's) remarks in *The State Port Pilot* dated Wednesday, April 14, 1999. In his remarks he stated that letters were sent to all property owners on record. This is in error, when the facts are some of the tax records were found

on a shelf in the office of SBSB on Long Beach Road. Those records were subsequently turned back to the county tax office and they in turn were able to send a second tax bill to the property owners on these "misplaced" records. These "misplaced" tax records are the reason we were not notified.

In all fairness, I ask (SBSB) to reconsider the impact fee and, in the name of justice and goodwill, to drop it entirely since I have paid the \$700 tap fee.

James T. Hussey  
Thomasville

### Roadside litter

To the Editor:  
My work as executive director of North Carolina's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development takes me across our state on a weekly basis. Too often I find myself appalled at the litter strewn on our roadsides. What's

worse is that the 40 million-plus visitors to North Carolina each year are starting to notice as well, as evidenced by letters to the editor that are being written to our newspapers when these visitors return home.

These travelers are bringing \$10.8 billion to our state each year and are responsible for more than 170,000 North Carolina jobs. Our marketing research shows that vacationers and travelers come to North Carolina largely to experience rest and relaxation in a clean, unspoiled environment. Mounting litter on our roadsides could easily send these visitors — and their dollars — to neighboring states.

Unfortunately, we can't point the collective finger at tourists for littering in North Carolina. According to research conducted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Office of Beautification Programs, more than 50 percent of roadside litter can be attributed to uncovered trucks, despite

laws requiring that all truckloads over a certain height be secured with proper covering.

And it's not just the tourism industry which is jeopardized. Clean communities also have a better chance of attracting new businesses than those where litter is common. Business leaders from around the globe will travel these roads when they visit North Carolina for the U. S. Open and the Special Olympics this year.

Finally, keeping North Carolina litter-free is simply a matter of civic pride. Good work is being done. More than 6,000 groups totaling 150,000 volunteers participate in the state's Adopt-a-Highway program. These citizens picked up 8.6 million pounds of litter in 1998, and the state spent more than \$4.6 million to pick up litter on 54,000 miles of state roads.

This is a great beginning. But like all good work, there's always room for improvement, increased community involvement and a genuine effort to come together for the common good. I challenge every citizen, civic group and business in North Carolina to do what it can to keep our state beautiful. And our division stands ready to support that effort in every way possible.

Gordon W. Clapp, Executive Director, N. C. Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development  
See Letters, next page

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