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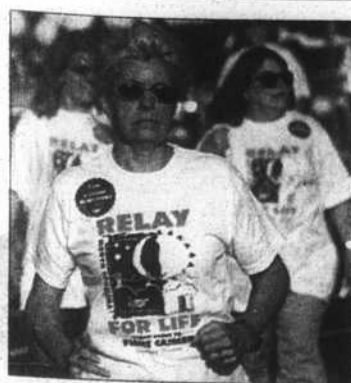
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Relay for Life
Hundreds of walkers
of dollars for cancer
Legion play
With high school
close, area comp

SCHOOL'S OUT



... a Happy Summer ... a Nice Holiday ... a Wonderful Vacation ... a Good Life. Actually having a couple months' rest was probably foremost in the minds of Southport Elementary School teachers as they waved goodbye to students at the beginning of summer break on Tuesday.

Photo by Jim Harper

Town of Oak Island Some savings, some increases in first budget

Administration, public safety, maintenance will cost less in consolidation of Yaupon, Long beaches

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

Town manager Jerry Walters last week submitted a \$9.1-million first budget proposal for the new Town of Oak Island, for which residents of the towns of Long Beach and Yaupon Beach will be taxed at a rate of 36 cents per \$100 assessed property valuation in the fiscal year to begin July 1.

The budget proposal for fiscal year 1999-2000 also anticipates an increase in solid waste costs and sewer rates. Water rates do not increase in the staff proposal.

The Town of Oak Island will be created July 1 by consolidation of the towns of Long Beach and Yaupon Beach. A bill consolidating the two towns was ratified by the General Assembly on May 19.

In consolidation of Long Beach and

Yaupon Beach as the Town of Oak Island a sound investment?

Including provision of services to the nearly 500-acre mainland annexation area that will become part of Oak Island on September 30, the manager's budget proposal — all funds included — suggests Oak Island will spend \$124,392 more next year than Yaupon Beach and Long Beach spent together this year. Oak Island is projected to spend \$9,121,301 for all government services next year. Yaupon Beach and Long Beach together this current year will spend an estimated \$8,996,909.

The property tax is expected to account for \$2,557,589, or 46 percent of a general fund budget totaling \$5,543,203. The general fund budget is based on an estimated tax base — total property valuation — of \$749,131,882 and a collection rate of 96.2 percent.

The proposed 36-cent Oak Island property tax rate for the coming year is lower than the 38.5-cent rate charged in Yaupon Beach or the 42-cent rate charged in Long Beach this year. But, the rates charged last year in the two towns were based on lower property

— See Budget, page 16

Y2K

Can we stand test of time when clock strikes midnight December 31?

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

Leaders of Brunswick County institutions say they are ready to face the millennium, Y2K, the year 2000.

Representatives of seven of those institutions Thursday reported on their states of readiness at a forum on the "Y2K problem" sponsored by Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce.

"Y2K?" joked Doshier Memorial Hospital administrator Edgar Haywood. "Because one K is not enough and three K is too many."

Joking aside, Haywood, as facilitator for the panel discussion, said the seven institutions reporting controlled the "infrastructure" of Smithville Township, from its governments to banking and utilities.

"While the problem has been approaching, the folks at the helm have not been asleep," Haywood said.

The Y2K problem came to light in the early 1990s. Many first generation computer systems have been designed to operate only when recognizing dates. Many of the date functions on these computers had been programmed with only two digits. The year 1999 is recognized as 99, but what happens on January 1, 2000, when the digits turn to 00?

Computers, embedded micro-chips, and all the things run by them, from guidance systems to microwave ovens, would fail to recognize 00 as the year 2000 if not specially altered and would shut down, it was determined.

Leaders at every level of government and industry have been working for years to alter computers and the things they control to become "Y2K compliant."

"Those of us who are sitting here living everyday lives don't realize the complexity of our society," Haywood noted. Indeed, speakers Thursday night spoke of the interdependence of one institution on others. All had to work in concert for Y2K compliance.

Utility companies have been at the
See Y2K, page 6

\$76.7-million proposal School bond vote pros, cons weighed by board

By Diana D'Abruzzo
Staff Writer

Determined to move forward with seeking a \$76.7-million bond to pay for construction and renovation of Brunswick County schools, the board of education consulted an expert on school bonds last week to see what it needs to do in order to successfully hold and pass a referendum.

The board met in an information session during its retreat Friday with Brunswick Community College officials, who also are seeking a bond to pay for its \$22 million in facilities needs.

Though the two boards have not formally decided when to seek a bond, or how much to push for, they will likely go forward together in selling the bond idea to Brunswick County voters.

Needing a bit of guidance on the whole practice, the school board and representatives from the community college listened to words of advice from Sissy Henry

See Bond issue, page 13

'It is the side issues that will kill you. It is important you be prepared to address issues and neutralize them up-front.'

Sissy Henry



Henry Williams, a veteran of the Normandy Invasion, has put his memoirs in print. He and other veterans will be celebrated Monday on Memorial Day.

Photo by Laura Kimball

Memorial Day is Monday WWII veteran puts memories in writing

By Laura Kimball
Staff Writer

On June 5, 1944, Henry Williams was surrounded by more ships than he'd ever seen.

It was the day before the D-Day Invasion of Normandy, France, and Williams was about to begin his first combat mission during World War II.

"There were ships as far as the eye could see — big ones, little ones, all shapes and sizes," he said. "They told us we didn't have to come up to the deck of the ship, but I wanted to see."

He and the 90th Infantry Division, of which he was part, had been sitting in Liverpool, England, since April 6, doing nothing but studying maps of the French coast and eating whatever they wanted.

"It was like we were being fattened for the slaughter," he said.

Soon everyone on his ship was called to the

'Only the men that were there are the ones that realize what it was like.'

Henry Williams

mess hall, and two letters were read. One was from Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, expressing confidence that the American troops could handle the situation. The President wished them good luck.

Then a letter from Dwight Eisenhower, commander of Western Allied Forces, was read.

"You are facing a well-trained, well-equipped
See Memorial, page 10

Initial review held Monday

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

In terms of dollars and cents, Yaupon Beach commissioners and Long Beach councilors did little at a workshop Monday night to alter town manager Jerry Walters' \$9.1-million first budget proposal for the new Town of Oak Island.

But, commissioners and councilors signaled the formation of early policy decisions for law enforcement, communications and personnel matters in this first of six scheduled budget workshops.

Under terms of a bill which cleared the N. C. General Assembly on May 17, Long Beach and Yaupon Beach will be consolidated as the Town of Oak Island on July 1. Under terms of the bill of incorporation, all presently-seated Yaupon Beach commissioners and Long Beach town councilors will serve Oak Island's first governing board until elections are held in November. Mayors Dot Kelly of Yaupon Beach

See Review, page 7

Development moves in on residential

By Terry Pope
Staff Writer

Commercial zones are edging closer to the Dutchman Acres residential community west of Southport.

A deal worked out between property owner Gene Pinkerton and county planners may leave open a 50-foot strip of land to better protect homes from encroaching commercial development there.

Pinkerton's tract that lies just west of Dutchman Acres was recommended for rezoning from low-density residential (R-7500) to commercial low-density (C-LD) by the Brunswick County Planning Board last week. Planners also will recommend that county commissioners, who have the final say after holding a public hearing, require the 50-foot buffer zone come out of the Pinkerton parcel.

"We feel like it would be adequate to protect the integrity of the subdivi-
See Development, page 9