

THE STATE PORT PILOT

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

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St. James becomes new town

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

It isn't quite clear yet when residents will celebrate Founders Day, but one thing was abundantly clear Tuesday:

The Town of St. James had become Brunswick County's newest municipality.

It appears the bill incorporating the town cleared the N. C. Senate on July 1 and was ratified by the House that date. A General Assembly website indicates the Senate ratified the bill Monday, July 5. With holiday confusion, neither Rep. E. David Redwine nor Sen. R. C. Soles was quite sure when St. James actually became a town, but were quite sure it did.

"We're not sure whether it's July 1 or July 5," mayor Earl Dye said Tuesday. "We'll have to sort that out."

Right now, mayor Dye said, the newly designated St. James Town Council has its plate full trying to enact interlocal agreements with Brunswick County to keep services flowing to the community until the new municipal government can stand on its own feet.

And Tuesday, the sense of elation at transforming St. James Plantation, a private, gated golf course development, into the Town of St. James, a North Carolina municipal corporation, was staggering.

"We really started this process two year ago..." mayor Dye said.

The process was started with an approach to the General Assembly's Joint Commission on Incorporation, a body formed by both chambers to screen requests to form towns and cities.

"I'm glad we took that route," mayor See St. James, page 6



Bombs burst in mid-air to the delight of thousands of spectators on Southport's waterfront Monday night.

Photo by Jim Harper

Wal-Mart concern City studies commercial site control

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

Reacting to residents' dismay at Southport's inability to more closely control construction of the Tidewater Plaza shopping center and the Wal-Mart Supercenter that will anchor it, city aldermen will conduct a public hearing Thursday night on a draft "Commercial Design Guidelines" amendment to the city's zoning ordinance.

The draft commercial design guidelines are the product of a special task force appointed by aldermen earlier this year. It is to apply to new commercial development both inside city limits and outside city limits, but in Southport's extraterritorial planning jurisdiction.

"The intent of this document is to establish guidelines for the control of commercial development while maintaining natural resources areas, historic areas and the protection of the corridors of town," an introduction to the amendment says. "New structures should be appropriate in scale and appearance to avoid contrast with the small town character of Southport."

The three development "zones" set out in the proposed amendment are:
■ Zone 3, which begins at the N. C.

211 junction with N. C. 87 and N. C. 133 and extends northwest along N. C. 211 to the Carolina Power and Light Co. canal. Guidelines apply to new developments of 10,000 square feet or more and include single structures and combinations of buildings in a single development. This is the area in which Tidewater Plaza now is situated.

■ Zone 2, which includes the area of N. C. 211 lying between Sawdust Trail intersection and Leonard Street. Again, attempting to avoid development "in sharp contrast with the small town character of Southport," the amendment prohibits development of "projects" larger than 10,000 square feet. This is the area of Howe Street coming into the city.

"This entrance into the city has a mixture of residential and commercial development. Attention must be given to maintaining the live oak canopy of this main corridor while protecting the residential neighborhood," the amendment says.

Those wishing to establish new uses of property in this "zone" must seek a conditional use permit in most instances.

■ Zone 1, which includes all portions of the city south of Leonard Street to See Southport, page 6

BRUNSWICK SCHOOLS

Technology club wins in nationals

By Diana D'Abruzzo
Staff Writer

Building bridges, designing business logos and showing off dynamic leadership skills catapulted students in South Brunswick Middle School's Technology Club into the national spotlight last week.

South Brunswick Middle, competing against schools from 44 other states at the National Technology Student Association competition in Tulsa, Okla., walked away with three first-place trophies and six other top-ten awards.

"I was thrilled, the kids were thrilled," said technology teacher and adviser Al Bishop, who attended the competition with 15 of his students. "It was beyond anything we expected. We did not preach winning — we didn't go into it saying, 'You gotta win, you gotta win.' We just focused on doing the best we could."

And the best they did. With three first-place and one third-place finishes, the school outperformed all others in the nation.

Katie Almirall placed first in Communication Challenge, where she had to design a See Technology, page 6

McGee is hired as new assistant superintendent

By Diana D'Abruzzo
Staff Writer

Though she has been out of the classroom for more than a decade, Brunswick County's new assistant superintendent Katie McGee still considers herself a teacher. "I'm a teacher first," said McGee, who will oversee curriculum and instruction. "I'm just a teacher of teachers now."

The Brunswick County Board of Education approved McGee's appointment following an hour-long closed session last Wednesday. She replaces Mary McDuffie, who took a job as superintendent of Northampton County schools.

McGee's salary will be \$77,250.

"She comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and experience," said Marion Wise, Brunswick County schools superintendent. "Her leadership style will blend in well with the central office administration and, just as importantly, with the administrators and teachers in the field."

McGee comes from the Nash-Rocky Mount school system, where she has spent her See Schools, page 6

ADM values will increase

By Terry Pope
Staff Editor

The State Property Tax Commission has assessed the property value of the Archer Daniels Midland Corp. citric acid plant near Southport at \$24.3 million, much higher than the \$19 million the county was willing to accept before the dispute went to a commission hearing in May.

County officials were more than pleased with the outcome Tuesday. It Continued on page 6

\$15 million for county

Sewer grants expected

By Terry Pope
County Editor

State grants totaling more than \$15.5 million are expected to be awarded Thursday to Brunswick County agencies to help build sewer and wastewater treatment facilities, including \$12 million toward a northern regional project.

The towns of Leland and Navassa, North Brunswick Sanitary District and Brunswick County stand to receive \$3 million each to help build a regional system that will serve the northern communities.

Another \$3 million will go to the Town of Calabash as part of the South Brunswick Water and Sewer Authority project for a new collection system and pump station. Plus, Oak Island will get \$563,000 to modify its wastewater treatment plant to add storage ponds and irrigation fields.

That grant actually was awarded Yaupon Beach, which merged last week with Long Beach to form the Town of Oak Island.

"That's \$15.563 million Thursday for wastewater projects in our county," state Rep. David Redwine (D) See Grant, page 6

Our newest American citizens

Naturalization ceremony first festival event

By Diana D'Abruzzo
Staff Writer

While their daddies were taking an oath, promising to support and defend the United States of America as its newest citizens, two children played together on the lawn of Fort Johnston.

One's father was from Costa Rica, the other's from Vietnam. They shared Ritz crackers and smiled at one another.

Then a blonde tyke wearing a red, white and blue Mickey Mouse shirt joined them. He offered his yellow toy car to his new friends to play with.

It was only a moment at the Naturalization Ceremony last Thursday, and it certainly wasn't the moment to which most folks were paying attention. But it was a moment that signified what it meant for the 35 immigrants to become See Ceremony, page 6



Thirty-five new American citizens recited their oaths in ceremonies here Thursday evening.