

THE STATE PORT PILOT

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South vs. West

Cougars try to end Trojans' streak in fierce Brunswick County rivalry. Sports begin on page 1B.

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Floyd draws nearer

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

Most in the Southport-Oak Island area went to bed Tuesday night with some sort of action plan in mind.

Throughout the day, local residents watched as the warning area for Hurricane Floyd crept slowly up the coast. At first, Floyd would make landfall along the central coast of Florida, they were told. Next projection had Floyd striking Brunswick, Ga., and then it was Folly Beach, an island off Charleston, S. C.

Tuesday, Floyd was a strong Category 4 hurricane, packing winds of 140 miles per hour. He was situated 235 miles southeast of Cape Canaveral, Fla. Where Floyd had traveled almost due west for the previous two days, Tuesday afternoon he had begun to make that northwest turn so familiar to storm-weary North Carolinians. Floyd moved at about 12 miles per hour most of the day.

National Weather Service at 11 p.m. Tuesday issues a hurricane warning extending north to the Virginia state line.

Oak Island officials determined mandatory evacuation would begin at 8 a.m. this (Wednesday) morning. The Oak Island bridge would remain open until sustained winds reached 40 miles per hour.

Brunswick County also announced hurricane shelters at the three public high schools would open at 8 a.m. today.

"We will be very flexible with the bridge to facilitate traffic flow and to accommodate people's work schedules," Oak Island town manager Jerry Walters said.

National Weather Service said Southport-Oak Islanders could expect conditions to begin to deteriorate rapidly here by noon today.

News of the evacuation order was broadcast on the town's public information radio and television stations beginning around 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Southport city manager Rob Gandy said residents of flood-prone areas of Bay Street, Brunswick Street, Yacht Basin Drive and River Drive should also expect to evacuate Wednesday.

Early Tuesday Gandy, police chief Bob Gray, fire chief Greg Cumbee and public services director Ed Honeycutt conferred and checked emergency plans and equipment. A general staff

See Floyd, page 6

CAPE FEAR FLOUNDER



Photo by Jim Harper

Rumor of a \$10,000 tagged flounder on the Southport waterfront brought a host of anglers there over the weekend, but while participants caught many excellent fish in the Wildlife tournament the tag prize went unclaimed. More details in the sports section.

Caswell meeting Consolidation seems to hold little interest

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

When you compare the homeowner's cost of living in Caswell Beach to his cost of living if Caswell Beach were part of the Town of Oak Island, there really isn't much difference, Caswell Beach mayor Joe O'Brien and the town board of commissioners have concluded.

Announcing that conclusion Thursday at a first public information meeting devoted to examination of a possible consolidation of Caswell Beach and Oak Island, mayor O'Brien proclaimed the pressure for a quick decision on consolidation is off.

"On balance, it appears there is no compelling economic reason for Caswell Beach to rush into consolidation," mayor O'Brien said. "We can sit back and examine this thing."

That examination began Thursday when about 100 residents, second-home owners and rental home owners packed Caswell Beach Town Hall for a slide show presentation on the consolidation issue. Each was presented with a booklet of cost information compiled by commissioners and O'Brien. The booklet attempted to compare costs of supporting government of Oak Island to costs of supporting government of Caswell Beach on a department-by-department basis.

Mayor O'Brien said the presentation was to serve as a starting point for additional discussion of the consolidation issue. Commissioners are to discuss the issue further at an 8 a.m. meeting October 6 at the OceanGreens clubhouse and will conduct a second public information meeting on consolidation on November 10.

See Caswell, page 5

'... there is no compelling economic reason for Caswell Beach to rush into consolidation. We can sit back and examine this thing.'

Joe O'Brien
Caswell Beach mayor

Abbreviated Oak Island meeting Council opposes wetlands plan

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

Filling freshwater wetlands and flooding adjacent areas for development of a grocery store is inconsistent with the CAMA Land Use Plan approved for the Town of Long Beach and soon to be adopted as a policy document for the Town of Oak Island.

By consensus of Oak Island Town Council

Tuesday night, staff will send a letter of comment to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers noting a wetlands development request before it does not square with municipal land use policy.

In another matter to come before a hurricane-shortened session of town council Tuesday night, an assessment resolution to pay for the undergrounding of utility lines on southern portions of McGlamery, Sellers, Mercer, Norton, Trott and Keziah streets was approved. That \$250,000 project is expected to cost

homeowners along those streets between Yaupon Drive and Ocean Drive about \$187 each. Co-mayor Joan Altman said the town will do all it can to see that Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation and phone and cable providers bury lines at the same time, so yards will not be cut more than once.

Last week, the Corps of Engineers published notice that Block 5A Long Beach Properties, a South Carolina development firm, had filed a permit

See Wetlands, page 9

Raceway revs up neighbors

By Terry Pope
Staff Writer

Gentlemen, start your engines! It's the phrase that brings Olde Towne folks to their feet. They are hoping mad about noise from the Fireball Motor Speedway built near their homes, and have asked county commissioners to put a muffler on the race cars.

"The noise can be heard two miles from the track," said Olde Towne resident Stuart Smith, also a member of the Brunswick County Planning Board. He spoke to county commissioners last week and asked that someone quiet the roar.

"When is the county going to start enforcing a noise ordinance?" Smith asked.

Fireball Motor Speedway is built off Ploof Road in an industrial zone right behind the county's garbage transfer station. However, it is also adjacent to such developments as Birch Creek, River Run and Olde Towne.

It was built for the racing of small cars, especially the Legends cars, that also pack a powerful engine and which entertain fans prior to NASCAR racing events. Brunswick County planning director Leslie Bell said his department isn't about to pull onto pit row with this issue.

"We have ordered two noise meters," See Raceway, page 6



SMITH



Photo by Jim Harper

Brent Willett was installing storm window "L2" at his house on 35th Place East in Long Beach on Tuesday. He said some of the windows had gone up before Hurricane Dennis, and all were likely to remain up for a while.

Manager made permanent Agency manager referees SBSD board controversy

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

It took stern words from a USDA representative Monday morning to get Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District commissioners to put their differences aside.

When they eventually did, however, district manager Charles Smith's probationary employment period was ended and he was granted permanent employee status. Office manager Joy Davis also was granted permanent status and, at Smith's request, SBSD commissioners will develop employment contracts for the two, establishing levels of severance pay and benefits they will receive if they are terminated without cause.

The unanimous vote by commissioners marked the end of a turbulent two-hour

session at which commissioners bickered among themselves and with the manager.

In his report to the board, Smith cited some 255 errors in posting accounts that occurred during a period of time when commissioner Lucille Laster served as the district's office manager and secretary. He charged commissioner Laster had been "belligerent" to him since he was hired three months ago.

Smith said his relationship with commissioner James W. (Bubba) Smith was strained also and the two rarely spoke, but he asked that commissioner Laster be excluded from participation in his scheduled performance evaluation, charging she had told people she wanted his job.

"Lucille Laster is not qualified to be manager," Smith said.

"I'm not going to exclude myself," See SBSD, page 10

'Evidently, the board is not able to see that the manager is an arm of the board that is seeing the policies and rules and regulations are being handled.'

Willard Dean
USDA Rural Development