

# COASTAL OBSERVER

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50 cents



SCHOOLS | Waccamaw Elementary

## Christmas tradition finds a new holiday

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Amy Kitowicz believes kids are never too young to work on community service projects.

That's why every year she takes her first-grade class from Waccamaw Elementary School to Father Pat's Lunch Kitchen at Precious Blood of Christ Catholic Church.

"Our goal is to go and use our time and talents to serve others,"

Kitowicz said.

"I think [Kitowicz] is teaching them that service is important and that everybody is not as fortunate as they are," said Laurie Richards, who oversees Father Pat's volunteers on Wednesdays. "They see all walks of life here. It's really good for them. And it's good for us too. It makes us happy when we see them."

The class visited the lunch kitchen on Wednesday to sing, **SEE "KITCHEN," PAGE 6**

From left, Ashley Charles Moore, Annie Gallup, Kilian Dawson, and Mccall Grugan sing the "Bunny Boogie" on a visit to Father Pat's Kitchen.

Tanya Ackerman/  
Coastal Observer

LAND USE | Litchfield Racquet Club

## Developer withdraws plan for 108 apartments as staff urges denial

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

A developer has asked to withdraw a request to rezone the former Litchfield Racquet Club to allow 108 one-bedroom apartments. A public hearing on the project was scheduled today before the county Planning Commission.

The request from Trey Smith follows a recommendation to the commission from the county planning staff that it should be denied because the high-density development is not compatible with the nearby medium-density neighborhoods.

In a report to the commission, Boyd Johnson, the county planning director, cites four reasons for denial of a change to the current "planned development" zoning that is needed for the project:

- the plan lacks "useable, open space" to mitigate the increased density;
- the stormwater pond required by the higher density would require 30 protected oak trees to be cut;
- a traffic study was not provided to show how the additional 751 daily car trips will impact the nearby intersection of Highway 17 and Country Club Drive;
- the future land-use map shows the area as "public/semi-public, which does not support high-density development."

The property is owned by Founders National Club, which closed the racquet club in October. Smith, a developer who also lives next to the site, has an option to



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

The developer is now looking at single-family options for the site.

buy the 8.8 acres.

The project has generated opposition from residents in Litchfield Country Club and the Bridges at Litchfield, which border the site. A group of former club members wants to buy the facility and reopen the 17 clay tennis courts for play.

In asking to withdraw the rezoning request, Smith wrote the commission that, "After reviewing multiple letters from neighbors in opposition to condos as well **SEE "CLUB," PAGE 3**

MURRELLS INLET | Taking the long view

## County starts work on master dredging plan

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Georgetown County has started work on a master plan for dredging the channels through Murrells Inlet using state funds that were intended to help a maintenance project voted down last spring.

The goal is "to determine what could be dredged within the whole basin," County Council Chairman John Thomas said. His district includes Murrells Inlet. "This is sort of a feasibility study."

The council last week approved a \$142,700 contract with GEL Engineering of Charleston to survey the existing channels, docks, marsh and "significant oyster beds" and come up with a recommendation on the best way to make the areas navigable at all stages of the tide.

The county wants to look at the entire inlet, rather than specific areas which have been the focus of ongoing public and private dredging projects. "It's part of an effort to determine what it would take to dredge the many parts of Murrells Inlet, and begin

to make a plan," Thomas said.

The funding will come from \$300,000 included in the state Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism budget last year, County Administrator Sel Hemingway said.

The funds were requested by state Sen. Stephen Goldfinch to help a local project. A group of property owners at Garden City wanted to dredge 2.2 miles of a canal that runs from Atlantic Avenue south to the main creek near Marlin Quay Marina. The project was estimated to cost \$7 million and proponents wanted

the county to create a special tax district so they could borrow the money and repay it through property taxes.

A referendum on the district was defeated by a vote of 20-9, but the PRT funds were already in the budget. Gov. Henry McMaster vetoed the request. It was overridden.

Both Goldfinch and state Rep. Lee Hewitt say they support the dredging master plan.

GEL Engineering worked on the most recent county project, funded through a 1-cent **SEE "INLET," PAGE 3**

PAWLEYS ISLAND

## Town faces first deadline for beach work

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Before the federal government will put 850,000 cubic yards of sand on the beach at Pawleys Island, 113 property owners have to put signatures on an easement. The town is racing against the calendar to get those signatures by the end of the month so the project can start in the fall.

Town Administrator Ryan Fabbri said he has about 70 signed easements, which will provide access to the Army Corps of Engineers to do the work along the island's south end. "Others have made arrangements to stop in and sign," he said. "I'm optimistic."

The town has a meeting with property owners scheduled for Saturday in the Pawleys Island Chapel to give them an update on the beach nourishment project and options for funding future projects that are required under the town's agreement with the Corps.

But there will be no project until the town acquires the easements. "A lot of people don't think that's possible," Fabbri said. That includes Corps officials, who questioned the town's timetable. **SEE "PAWLEYS," PAGE 3**



Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

Repairs were made this winter to 22 groins that will be covered when sand is pumped onto the beach this fall.

VETERANS | The Greatest Generation

## Last man standing

### Dalton Paschal, 100, never thought he would leave France alive in 1945

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Dalton Paschal turned 100 last week. He was lucky to make it out of his 20s and still has the shrapnel as a reminder. It's lodged in his left leg.

He has been reading up lately about the battles that took place 75 years ago along the German border as Allied troops made their final push to defeat the Nazis. "I was right in the middle of it," Paschal said.

He still sports the mustache he wore in the Army as a 25-year-old draftee in 1944. It's a little fuller, but he's had a full life. Most of it was spent in Georgetown, in the Maryville neighborhood along Winyah Bay. He spent 30 years working for the Coca-Cola bottling plant, then took a job as



Dalton Paschal returns a salute from Gary Group at his 100th birthday party.

Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

an electrician for the Georgetown County School District. He attended Screven Baptist Church every Sunday. His wife Nell was the church secretary. They raised two daughters.

Paschal left his wife and oldest daughter in March 1944.

"I was inducted at Ft. Jackson. I went from there to armored basic at Ft. Knox, Ky. When I finished armor, they said they had too many tankers and they moved us into the infantry," he recalled, sitting on the edge of his bed at Arbor Landing while the **SEE "VET," PAGE 4**

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**The elite fish:** Stetson Blaylock found \$100,000 worth of bass along the Waccamaw River.

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**Arts:** Well-versed students rise to the top in Friends of the Library poetry contest. **PAGE 12**



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