



Spirit Gamble, in front at right, leads about 50 marchers along Highway 17 in a call for better gun-control laws.

Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

GUN CONTROL | March for Our Lives

WHS student leads protest along highway

BY JOSHUA FORD
FOR THE OBSERVER

Spirit Gamble made up 50 signs for a gun-control march through the Pawleys Island business district. She was surprised that about that many people showed up Tuesday for the protest that covered just over a mile from the Publix to Fresh Market grocery stores on Highway 17.

"I didn't expect so many

people to come and honestly, I almost cried," said Gamble, a senior at Waccamaw High School. "Everything went so much better than I could've ever imagined. I met so many cool people and was exposed to so many new groups that I didn't even know existed."

She was prompted to organize the march by recent mass shootings in Texas and Ohio. Gamble said she wanted to highlight the need for change.

The walk under the noonday sun was peaceful. Horns were honked in encouragement. Some spectators waved and cheered. One woman hopped out of her car to tell the marchers that was the kind of action she's used to back in Washington, D.C.

Most in the crowd were adults, but some youth turned out. One young person ran out of Habaneros restaurant to join.

Karen Yaniga, the leader of

a 400-member women's group called Club 142 United, said she wanted to show support for the youth on behalf of her members. "We came here to support the students," she said. "Our job today was to support this march so that they know that there are people in the community who care about it as much as anybody else."

"It's important for young

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BUDGETS

Business license plan draws muted response

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A proposal to create a business license to help balance Georgetown County's budget has stirred little comment, area business groups say. County Council is due to discuss the idea at a workshop next week.

"I haven't really heard anything," Council Chairman John Thomas said.

The Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce had planned to poll members after the business license was proposed last month. That hasn't gone out yet. "I'm waiting to get more information," Beth Stedman, the chamber CEO, said. "We have not had any calls from members."

The Pawleys Island-Litchfield Business Association was scheduled to meet this morning with Council Member Steve Goggans and state Rep. Lee

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LAND USE

First public input session scheduled for twin studies

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The public will finally get a chance to offer comments on future development of the Waccamaw Neck next month at a joint forum on traffic and land use. It will bring together two teams of consultants to work on studies first proposed in 2015.

At the same time, the Georgetown County Planning Commission is due to get its first look at a future land-use maps for the area as part of a 10-year update to the county's state-mandated comprehensive plan.

A \$100,000 traffic study of the Highway 17 corridor was funded by the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study. AECOM.

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EDUCATION

School board member questions work being done in 'work sessions'

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

The Georgetown County School Board met for its monthly work session this week, but a question of how much work actually gets done sparked a lively debate.

"What work did you see tonight?" Mike Cafaro asked his fellow board members. "We're supposed to be a policy-making board, we're not."

Cafaro was elected to the board last year and said many times during his cam-



Cafaro

paign that he didn't understand why the board's second meeting every month was called a work session.

"I don't see any work going on," Cafaro said last October. "The only work I see is [people] bobbing their head up and down and sitting there. What committees have these folks served on? I have no clue."

Cafaro raised the issue again earlier this month and suggested creating committees so board members could interact more closely with district staff.

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Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

Back to school | Tymeek Gibbs, 5, meets Caroline Temple, the guidance counselor, during open house at Waccamaw Elementary Monday. Classes resumed Wednesday with 7,153 students registered online and more expected.

ELECTION 2020 | Democratic primary

Visit from high-profile candidate has party expecting more

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

In the last few months, four people who want to be the Democratic Party nominee for president in 2020 made campaign stops in Georgetown County, looking for votes in one of the reddest parts of a red state.

Deb Smith, chairman of the county Democrats, said volunteers and activists have been working hard to get all the candidates to visit the county.

"I want us to be able to make an informed choice," Smith said. "I want all our people to hear what the choices are."

Pete Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Ind., attended Sunday services at Bethel AME Church in Georgetown. Although Buttigieg's campaign downplayed the event and didn't even list it on his website, more than a dozen people were waiting outside while the service was taking place hoping to see the 37-year-old mayor and hear what he had to say during a meet-and-greet.

After the service, Buttigieg and the Rev. Dr. Betty Deas Clark, Bethel's pastor, shook hands with the parishioners as they filed out of the church. Many stopped for a hug or a photo with "Mayor Pete," the best known of the Democratic candidates to visit the county.

Buttigieg kicked off the meet-and-greet by saying that he is worried about the trajectory of the country and feels like time is running out to do something about things like the violence that is "ravaging" the country, the climate and racial injustice.

"We cannot continue repeating the same conversations and the same 'never agains' that we utter every year, and have been for as long as I've been alive," Buttigieg said. "We have got to do something different."

In response to a question about offshore drilling, Buttigieg said he does not support it, preferring jobs that create an economy he would be proud to leave to the next generation.

"We need to hear the voice of people, especially in coastal communities and respond to them," Buttigieg said. "In my administration our energy strategy will move away from offshore drilling."

Strengthening infrastructure was also a concern.

"Without that we will not be able to grow our economy,"

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The Rev. Dr. Betty Deas Clark introduces Mayor Pete Buttigieg to members of Bethel AME.

Tanya Ackerman/
Coastal Observer

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