

# COASTAL OBSERVER

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Sand covers Springs Avenue after the storm, left. State Transportation Secretary Christy Hall inspects the cleanup a day later.

## HURRICANE DORIAN

# Island's south end bears brunt of storm

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

The narrow south end of Pawleys Island has seen its beach erode, its houses sluiced by storm surge and its street buried in sand by a succession of storms.

Hurricane Dorian last week brought a new problem: red tags. "That's something we haven't dealt with in the past," Town Administrator Ryan Fabbri said.

The island's south end suffered the most damage of any place along the coast from the passage of Dorian last week, according to state officials.

Gov. Henry McMaster and Transportation Secretary Christy Hall flew over the coast on Friday afternoon.

Hall put her boots on the ground the next day to visit the four DOT crews that scraped the sand from Springs Avenue so it could be returned to the beach.

"This is by far the worst," Hall told Mayor Jimmy Braswell. "You guys are our priority."

DOT cleared sand from the road after two other hurricanes, but Fabbri said this week's effort involved more equipment, including a scraper that loaded sand into six dump trucks via a conveyor belt.

In the past, the work was done with a front-end loader, he said.

"The response they made this time was over the top," Braswell said. He took the opportunity during Hall's visit to ask for DOT's help in clearing sand from storm drains along the entire island.

"They made a promise to start taking care of those," he said.

As DOT crews worked over the weekend, property owners parked and walked to their

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The storm scoured sand from under the foundation of a house on the south end of Pawleys.

Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

## Record sea turtle season hits 'screeching halt'

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Hurricane Dorian took its toll on sea turtle nests in the area, washing away about 45 from DeBordieu to North Myrtle Beach.

"The season is coming to a screeching halt," said Jeff McClary, co-founder of South Carolina United Turtle Enthusiasts.

Despite the loss, it has been a record-setting year for SCUTE, with 357 nests. The previous re-



Sea turtle nests were lost with the dunes.

Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

cord for nests was 226 in 2017. Last year there were only 65.

"It was a remarkable season," McClary said.

Before Dorian passed by, 81 percent of the nests had already hatched and been inventoried. Of the 67 that were left, about 45 were lost.

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## LAND USE

# Latest plan for shuttered racquet club proposes larger lots

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

The newest plan for the former Litchfield Racquet Club calls for 19 single-family lots in the place of 17 empty clay courts. At 10,000 square feet, the lots are more than twice the size of 32 lots proposed for the 8.5 acres in June.

The property is owned by Founders National Golf, which closed the racquet club on Halloween in 2018. A change from tennis courts to another use requires zoning approval from Georgetown County.

Redevelopment plans have drawn opposition from a group of former racquet club members who want to buy the property and reopen it for play. Neighbors who oppose converting the courts into homesites have found allies in other communities that border Founders Group golf courses and fear similar redevelopment.

Trey Smith had a contract to buy the property. In March, he proposed 108 one-bedroom condos in nine buildings. He withdrew that plan and submitted one calling for 32 lots of 4,600 square feet, a smaller area than the county allows in its zoning ordinance.

Smith withdrew that plan. Ameri-Built Homes entered into contract to buy the tennis courts. The Myrtle Beach company is building 14 duplex units on an

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Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Fixing a flawed sewer line would impact 17 trees along Waverly Road.

## ENVIRONMENT

# Utility offers two alternatives to save trees from sewer line

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

There are two options for connecting a new residential development on Waverly Road to public sewer that don't involve cutting 17 trees in the right-of-way. Georgetown County Water and Sewer District is waiting to hear whether the developers of the Porches at Waverly will accept them.

The 13-lot subdivision drew attention in July when a trackhoe appeared under the trees and the contractor said he was preparing to clear the road side to repair a gravity sewer line. The line was installed by boring under the trees, but it had dips along the 400-foot-long route to a sewer lift station. The water and sewer district said it would not accept the line because it would have to be repaired at customers expense.

State Sen. Stephen Goldfinch intervened and an encroachment permit from the state Department of Transportation for the right-of-way work was put on hold. Goldfinch then pressed the

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## RECREATION | JB's Celebration Park

# Private donations will fund project on land leased from county

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Property across from Waccamaw Middle School will become a site for celebration and reflection under a plan envisioned by the late Jim Bindner and being completed by his wife Cindy. Georgetown County Council this week agreed to lease about 7.5 acres to JB's Celebration Park.

The property is part of 47 acres owned by the county that includes Retreat Park on the east side of Wildcat Way. The land is part of a larger tract that was acquired from Brookgreen Gardens in 1998 through a "friendly condemnation" that allowed construction of the middle school



Cindy Bindner outlines the plan to County Council.

Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

and Waccamaw Intermediate.

Jim Bindner, who was a real estate agent, wanted to create a community park. "He wanted to have a place where people could meet, gather, have all sorts of activities like art festivals, music festivals, after-school programs. Just a central gathering place," Cindy Bindner said.

After Jim's father died about 10 years ago, he had thought the park would be an ideal place for memorials, too. "A beautiful,

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