

COASTAL OBSERVER

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ENVIRONMENT | DeBordieu renourishment

Judge upholds state permit for new groins

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

An environmental group is considering its next step after a state Administrative Law Court judge upheld a permit to build three rock and concrete groins as part of a beach renourishment project at DeBordieu.

The Coastal Conservation League and the Belle W. Baruch Foundation challenged the 2018 permit from the state Department of Health and Environmen-



The three groins will help trap sand in front of a seawall that is failing.

Chris Sokoloski/
Coastal Observer

tal Control to allow the groins as part of a plan to place up to 650,000 cubic yards of offshore sand on 1.5 miles of beach, starting at the boundary of DeBordieu and Hobcaw Barony.

The Baruch Foundation agreed to settle the case last April when the DeBordieu Colony Community Association agreed to reduce the length and location of the southernmost groin and increase the threshold for mitigation if the groins accelerate

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CORONAVIRUS

Lawmakers press feds for more vaccine

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

There is one thing that most people can agree on when it comes to the COVID-19 vaccine: the state is not getting enough of it.

"The flow of vaccine from the federal government is not sufficient to meet the growing demand," said Dr. Brannon Traxler, interim public health director for the state Department of Health and Environmental Control.

The national average is 46 doses per 1,000 residents, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. South Carolina is only getting 28 doses per thousand.

"I don't want to get more than everybody else, just treat us fairly," said state Rep. Lee Hewitt, who sent a letter seeking help from Sen. Lindsey Graham, Sen. Tim Scott and Rep. Tom Rice. "This is not acceptable, and it will continue to cause our vaccine supply to be gridlocked."

Hewitt's letter was also signed by 15 other state legislators from Georgetown and Horry counties, including Sen. Stephen Goldfinch, Sen. Ronnie Sabb and Rep. Carl Anderson.

Gov. Henry McMaster is also worried that the vaccine supply the state is getting is not getting into people's arms fast enough.

"Hospital shelves must be empty. When that new shipment comes in, the old shipment ought to be in somebody's arm," said

SEE "VIRUS," PAGE 3

PAWLEYS ISLAND

After easement bid quashed, town asks court to disqualify lawyer

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The town of Pawleys Island wants the Circuit Court to disqualify the attorney representing oceanfront property owners in suits challenging an easement that the town wants for beach renourishment. It says that Barry Stanton can't represent the owners because he listed himself as a witness in the case.

Stanton is representing himself, Frank Beattie and Sunset Lodge LLC in suits that seek to block the town's effort to condemn an easement on their oceanfront lots on the south end of the island. The town obtained easements from 110 other owners that will allow the Army Corps of Engineers to repair storm damage to the beach and share in the future cost of renourishment on 1.4 miles of beach on the south end. The town completed a \$14.8 million renourishment on 2.6 miles of beach last March, but left sand fencing and dune planting on the southern end for the Corps so the agency could participate in the project.

Town Council voted last summer to condemn the three outstanding easements, which are required by the Corps. The property owners filed suit saying the easements were unnecessary since the project was completed and overreaching in their language. They also said the town failed to follow state law in the condemnation process.

A Circuit Court judge granted the owners' motions for summary judgment in the case this

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Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

The path forward | The opening of a new phase of the Bike the Neck route provides an opportunity for the county to unveil its new Parks and Recreation mascot, Forrest the Squirrel. See stories, Page 12.

GEORGETOWN COUNTY

Council returns to virtual meetings with members questioning proposed rules

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A rise in coronavirus cases will send Georgetown County Council back to virtual meetings just as the members are about to adopt procedures that will govern the form of electronic meetings.

Not everyone is happy with the change.

"I'm taking issue with that,"

Council Member Bob Anderson said. "What's the reason for doing that?"

Council Member John Thomas said he got a call from Administrator Angela Christian asking about the move. He was chairman when the council held its first virtual meeting of the pandemic last spring.

"The next six to eight weeks are going to be really bad for the virus," Thomas said. "It's better

not to put people at risk."

Anderson said he didn't get a call before the county staff announced the virtual meeting plan Tuesday morning and wasn't sure how the decision was made.

Council Member Steve Goggans said there was "informal" talk about virtual meetings last week. "I said, sure. That was the extent of it."

Goggans added, "I have

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Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

Joe Biden campaigning in Georgetown before last year's primary.

CRIME

Murder victim's family questions bail for teen accused of shooting

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

Carrie Williams fears for her life, and the lives of her family members.

Thirteen months after her grandson Deondré Brown was gunned down outside of her Parkersville home, the accused shooter, Aiden Marshall Zasmovitch, is free on bail and has contacted Brown's younger brother on social media.

"It's as though he was taunting us to say 'hey I'm out,'" Williams said. "That was showing me

that this guy has a mental issue. He has problems. He shouldn't be out."

Williams said her grandson was terrified and thought Zasmovitch might come after him.

"Aiden is out free and he has no remorse," Williams said. "He can contact my grandson and put fear into his heart. It's not fair. This is not right."

Ronald Hazzard, the attorney who represents Zasmovitch, denied his client was a threat and said bail was appropriate.

The 15th Circuit Solicitor's

SEE "SHOOTING," PAGE 2



Chris Sokoloski/Coastal Observer

Carrie Williams, right, and Ethel Gibbs, her sister, with photos of Deondré Brown, who was shot and killed outside Williams' home in December 2019.

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Hybrid-plus: Schools prepare for return of students four days a week.

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INAUGURATION

After salvaging Biden's campaign, Democrats hope he'll return favor

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

When Joe Biden won the state's Democratic primary last February, it re-energized his campaign.

When Biden was elected president, it re-energized local Democrats.

"We worked hard this year," said Marianne Mackey, chair of the Georgetown County Democratic Party. "We're quite excited about it."

Biden took the oath of office on Wednesday.

Mackey, a DeBordieu resident who was elected to lead the party last week, said if the COVID-19 pandemic wasn't already going to keep local Democrats from attending, the added level of security would have.

"We wish we could be there," Mackey said.

More than 20,000 National Guard troops, some from as far away as Hawaii, were brought into Washington, D.C., to provide security.

Sen. Lindsey Graham said

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