

# COASTAL OBSERVER

Vol. XLII No. 44

Pawleys Island, South Carolina ~ April 11, 2024

\$1.00

## Even with less to see, Pawleys remains popular with viewers

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Connor and Selena Gould came from Burlington, Vt.

David and Cathy Whitehouse came from Rochester, N.Y. So did Dave and Patti Crean.

They watched through protective glasses as the moon edged across the face of the sun and the light over the south end of Pawleys Island became tinged with amber. In their mind's eye, they could envision the same scene up north.

"We could be in the path of the whole thing," David Whitehouse said.

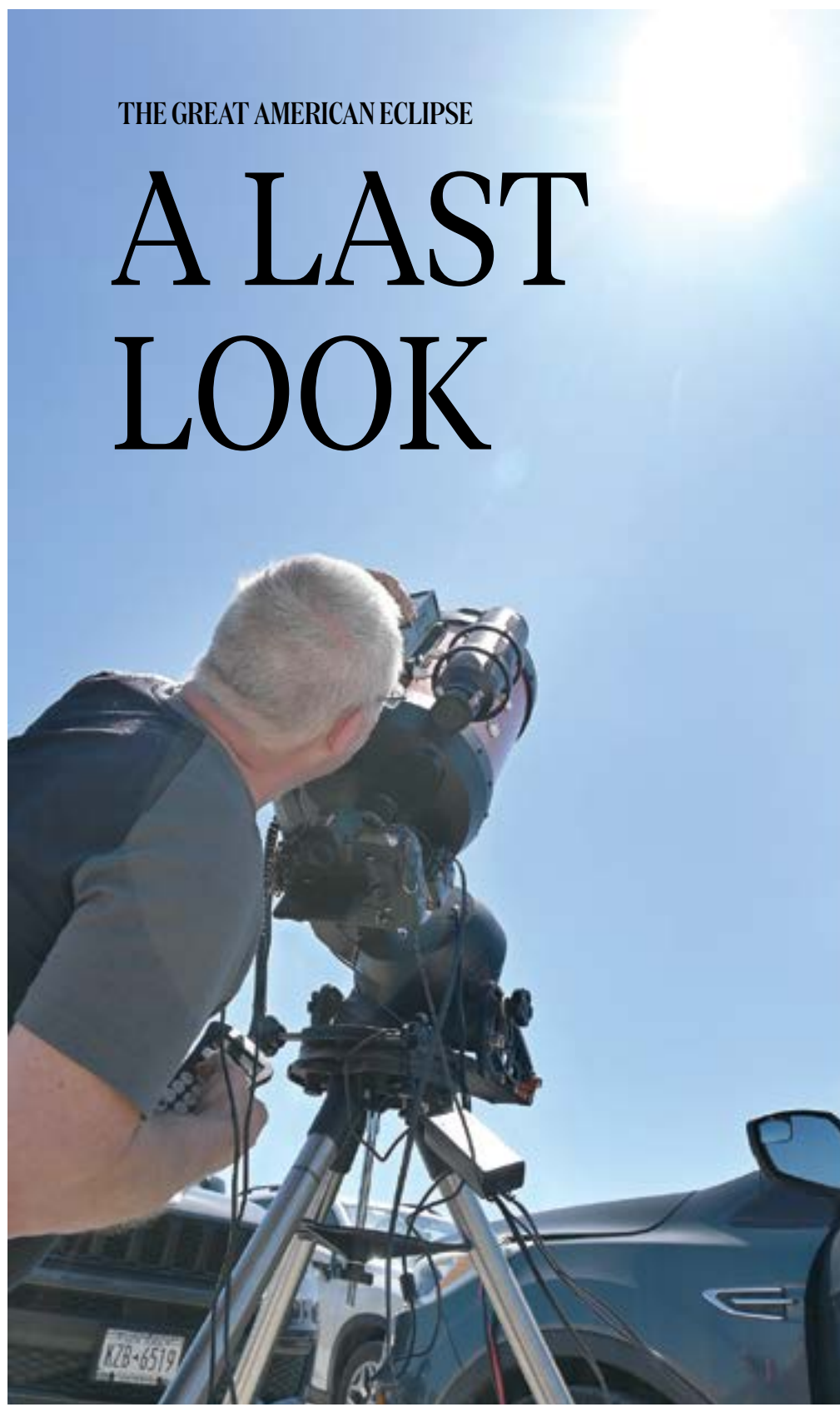
Instead, they were enjoying spring at their condo at Pawleys Plantation, as were the Creans. They didn't even consider swapping that for a look at Monday's total eclipse that was visible to the folks back home. The 70 percent view from Pawleys Island would do.

The south end parking lot started to fill up as the eclipse began a little after 2 p.m. Scott Murphy had been there since noon, setting up his Celestron NexStar telescope and tracking the sun's path.

"This is the most important part," he said, holding up the solar filter that fits on the end of the telescope.

Murphy had heard of do-it-yourself filters made from the plastic lining of snack food bags. They weren't worth the risk to

SEE "ECLIPSE," PAGE 4



## THE GREAT AMERICAN ECLIPSE A LAST LOOK

Photos by Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer (above and below right) and Scott Murphy (below left) on camera. Connor and Selena Gould are among the spectators on Pawleys Island.

### LAND USE

## Creekfront project draws new scrutiny with approval

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

A tax break that reduced the value of property on Pawleys Creek by \$3.6 million has cast doubt on a request to change the zoning for a proposed residential development.

But the property owner's attorney said the tax credit has no impact on the development of a portion of the 16 acres.

"He took advantage of a state law to qualify for an agricultural tax exemption, and that's all there is to it. There's nothing more here," said Dan Stacy, attorney for David Tanner.

County Council this week gave the second of three readings to the rezoning over the objections of neighbors, area residents and one council member who has questioned the tax breaks state wide. Opponents also wanted the county to conduct its own survey of wetlands on the site, which is shown as "conservation preservation" on future land use maps.

The developer and his engineers said the project to construct 27 homes on the property between the creek and Highway 17 is allowed under the current zoning.

SEE "LAND USE," PAGE 2

### SALES TAX

## Commission weighs impact of road project

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

A million dollars is a mere rounding error among the more than \$250 million worth of projects seeking a share of a proposed capital projects sales tax. The city of Georgetown is seeking the money to move electric lines in order to widen Black River Road in front of Georgetown Memorial Hospital.

The project got a close look this week from the Georgetown County Capital Project Sales Tax Commission as it works its way through a list of more than 60 requests. It showed how the six-member commission is wrestling to prioritize needs to fund through the 1-cent tax that is estimated to raise \$80 million over eight years. It also showed the pressure the commission will face to fund projects that applicants say are needed but can't be funded any other way.

The \$6.5 million road project is being funded through the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study, which allocates

SEE "SALES TAX," PAGE 2



### PALMETTO GIVING DAY | Mingo Creek Academy

## Former home for boys makes fresh start in early childhood education

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI  
COASTAL OBSERVER

For decades, Tara Hall Home for Boys helped thousands of abused and neglected boys through some of the worst times in their lives.

When the Department of Social Services started to move away from group homes and it was clear that the facility was going to close, the Tara Hall board came up with the idea of opening a preschool.

Mingo Creek Academy



The Mingo Creek Academy principal, Comeletia Pyatt, spends some time with, from left, Laila Reed, Sanaa LeSane and Azi Drayton.

Chris Sokoloski/Coastal Observer

opened on the Tara Hall campus in the western part of the county in August of 2021.

"This is a blessing for these communities," said Comeletia Pyatt, founding principal

and executive director of the school. "It is absolutely imperative that parents learn that the earlier you start, long-term the better it is for parents and for children."

The board struggled with the decision to start a school during the global pandemic.

"What happened was, it was very necessary," Pyatt said. "It was important that Mingo Creek Academy opened because Tara Hall Home for Boys closed in the fall of 2020. It was

SEE "EDUCATION," PAGE 3

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE



**History:** Drone helps archaeologists expand search for Spanish shipwreck. **SECOND FRONT**



**Festivals:** Vibe Time returns with new twist: one-wheelers. **PAGE 8**



**Sports:** Swim Across America raises money for cancer research. **PAGE 13**

Obituaries .....	2
Crime.....	5
Opinion.....	6
Crossword .....	10
Classifieds.....	11
Property transfers .....	12
Sports .....	13
<b>Online</b> coastalobserver.com	

