

COASTAL OBSERVER

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TRADITIONS | Fourth of July

Spirits of '76

HURRICANES

State plan shows less time needed to evacuate

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The worst-case scenario for a hurricane evacuation in Georgetown and Horry counties shows it will take more than a day to get residents and visitors out of harm's way.

That's based on the peak number of visitors and 100 percent compliance with an evacuation order, said Brandon Ellis, director of Georgetown County Emergency Services. And it includes everyone in Zones A, B and C.

"It would have to be a pretty significant storm for us to evacuate Zone C," Ellis said. That includes areas west of the Waccamaw River.

The state Emergency
SEE "STORM," PAGE 2

ROADS

Planners hone strategies to cut traffic congestion

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

Two of the most congested roads in the region meet in Murrells Inlet.

A formula adopted by the regional agency that allocates money to road projects is intended to ensure funding is available for improvements.

Highway 707, which starts at Business 17, has the second highest level of congestion of 60 road segments reviewed by the Grand Strand Area
SEE "TRAFFIC," PAGE 2

SAFETY

Grand Strand hospital plans ER for inlet

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

A freestanding emergency room is a step closer to being built at the corner of Bypass 17 and Wesley Road.

Grand Strand Regional Medical Center wants to build a one-story, 11,000-square-foot facility on the 2.99-acre property, which is a "planned development" zoning district. "Medical facility" is not one of the uses allowed in that district.

The Georgetown County Planning Commission approved an amendment to the planned development last month.

Its impact will depend on whether the facility offers trauma care, said Brandon Ellis, the county's director of Emergency Services.

"Any level of trauma designation would be beneficial," he said.

Grand Strand said details will be forthcoming.

"Grand Strand Health is
SEE "ER," PAGE 2



NORTH LITCHFIELD

Parade for kids grows up to reach new generations

BY MADISON SHARROCK
COASTAL OBSERVER

What Eddie Clay described the Fourth of July parade as a "small contribution" to the North Litchfield community has become a cherished tradition for Richard Cobbs and his extended family.

Just about two blocks from the Clay house is where Cobbs' daughters, Katie Bretz and Ginny Astle, have spent
SEE "LITCHFIELD," PAGE 3



PAWLEYS ISLAND

Family tradition drives creativity in float designs

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

Annie Brownfield called for a tape measure and a level. This was her third year at the Pawleys Island Fourth of July Parade with the Marlow family, which took the top prize in 2023.

"We might as well do it right," Brownfield said as she helped assemble this year's entry.
SEE "PAWLEYS," PAGE 4



MURRELLS INLET

Creekfront dresses up for boat parade

BY MADISON SHARROCK
COASTAL OBSERVER

Beth Stedman remembers when she sat with her daughter, Elizabeth, who was six weeks old at the time, underneath a large oak in their creekfront yard to watch Elizabeth's first Murrells Inlet Fourth of July Boat Parade.

Warren and Beth Stedman's creekfront house, a prime spot to view the annual boat parade
SEE "INLET," PAGE 3

Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

A laser light show was postponed due to storms this week, but the forecast is clear for tonight, when fireworks will light the beachfront, as they did last year over Litchfield and Pawleys Creek.

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