

SCHOOLS | No Hate Tour

Stunt riders deliver message

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

Usually it is basketballs or volleyballs flying through the air inside the gymnasium at Waccamaw High School.

But this week it was men riding BMX bikes doing tricks as part of the No Hate Tour.

The messages of the tour is don't be a bully and don't stand by if you see someone being bullied.

"In this day and age that's a very important message, especially with social media and the texting that goes back and forth between our students," Waccamaw principal Hunter Eddy said. "It's important for them to hear from somebody else besides the officials at the school."

"We're thankful for the schools and we're thankful that we can bring our message and maybe for that short hour of our show brighten someone's day," said Zach Newman, announcer for the event.

Newman is a Kentucky native and BMX rider who won a bronze medal in the X Games. He has worked for the No Hate Tour for 10 years.

Whether he's riding or talking, Newman feeds off the energy of the crowd. The other riders do too, Newman said.

Eddy said the event was "outstanding" for his students.

"That's probably the most we've had in an assembly of students all year," he added.

Eddy was "volunteered" by his staff to be part of one of the BMX tricks. Eddy and Marine Sgt. Jordan Wilson sat in chairs on top of the ramp while Russell Summerville rode up the ramp and did a backflip over them.

Once the show was over the students got a chance to chat and take pictures with the riders. Many students asked for autographs.

The U.S. Marines are the sponsors of the tours and there were four Marines inside the gym giving students an opportunity to show how many pull-ups they could do.

Since it started 25 years ago the No Hate Tour has visited 3,000 schools across the

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Photos by Chris Sokoloski/Coastal Observer



Waccamaw High School principal Hunter Eddy, above, watches as Russell Summerville starts a backflip. At left, Eddy pretends to pray before the stunt.

LAND USE

One house on 5 acres?
How about no houses,
golf course residents ask

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A proposal to create a new zoning district for the area's two oldest golf courses has drawn questions from residents and members of the Georgetown County Planning Commission.

"This has been a struggle. How do you make sure the golf courses are protected," said Elizabeth Krauss, who chairs the commission.

County Council Member Stella Mercado asked planning staff last month to change the zoning for Litchfield Country Club and the Founders Club in Hagley Estates, which were both developed in the 1960s. The current zoning matches the neighborhoods: "R-10," which is limited to single-family homes on lots no smaller

than 10,000 square feet.

Residents are concerned how the property could be redeveloped if the courses close.

A proposed "neighborhood amenity" zoning district would allow one house for every five acres although houses could be built on acre lots. It could also contain parks, recreation facilities or "other recreational amenities."

Any new lots would have to front on existing roads.

Litchfield residents told the commission last week they would prefer no development.

"Please make it clean and simple," said Andrea Berkeley, who lives on the golf course. "Delete residential. Delete commercial."

She estimated the proposal would allow another 30 homes

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Magistrate appointment creates
vacancy on Planning Commission

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A retired forester will join the Georgetown County Planning Commission following the resignation of David Roper, who was confirmed last week by the state Senate as the Murrells Inlet magistrate.

County Council this week approved Bill Hills to the seat representing District 1.

"Mr. Hills has got a long history of representing District 1. He has some ideas I know some people don't agree with, however, he is a very solid person and will give his expert opinion and also will be fair and just," Council Chairman Clint Elliott, who represents District 1, said in making the nomination.

Council Member Bob Anderson, who represents District 2, made a point of seconding the nomination.

He said afterward that Hills had supported him on some unpopular decisions early in his



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Bill Hills

council career. He also thinks it was a good choice.

"He's like Marla Jean. He'll take his courses, his continuing education. He'll go out in the field and look at places," Anderson said, referring to his appointee Marla Jean Hamby. Her nomination for a second term on the commission was

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ENVIRONMENT | Midway Inlet

Agency schedules hearing on sand dredging permit

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A hearing next month will solicit public comments on a plan to dig sand from Midway Inlet to help renourish a portion of Litchfield Beach.

The Peninsula at Inlet Point South Homeowners Association is seeking state and federal permits to dredge up to 75,000 cubic yards of sand from the shoals along Midway Inlet in two projects over five years.

The sand will be placed along the beach in front of the gated community, which completed a renourishment project using offshore sand in 2022.

The state Department of Environmental Services received 49 comments on the project, including a request for a public hearing from the town of Pawleys Island. Some were also sent to the Army Corps of Engineers. Environmental Services will



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

A proposal to dredge a new channel through the shoals has raised concerns.

hold a hearing April 7 at 6 p.m. in Georgetown County Council chambers in the old county courthouse.

The public comment period

has been extended to April 21. Comments can be sent at des.sc.gov by clicking on the "public notices" link.

Comments included several

from property owners at McKenzie Beach, a former black resort in the segregation era, that stretches from Highway 17

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BUDGETS

County foresees
no rise in tax rate
with reassessment

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

Georgetown County doesn't plan to raise its property tax rate this year, but officials are keeping an eye on state legislation that could limit its ability to increase the rate next year.

State law limits the amount that local government can raise property taxes each year to a combination of the federal Consumer Price Index and population growth. But local government can "look back" three years if it doesn't use the full amount of that increase in the current year.

"They're trying to change that to say you can only look back one year," Karis Langston, the finance director, told County Council this week.

The county could raise its

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