

COASTAL OBSERVER

Vol. XLIV No. 7

Pawleys Island, South Carolina ~ July 24, 2025

\$1.50

Incorporation group makes its case to homeowners

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A group that is promoting a plan to create a new town on the Waccamaw Neck is on track toward its goal of collecting the necessary signatures this summer to trigger a referendum.

The Pawleys Island Litch-

field Municipal Study Group held five meetings last week with property owners groups that it said drew over 400 people.

"We're over halfway to our goal," said Jim Register, the member of the study group who created a financial plan for the town. The group wants to col-

lect 2,500 signatures to submit to the S.C. Secretary of State's Office along with its plan to provide services for the town. That will be reviewed by a joint legislative committee before the secretary of state calls for an election.

The town will cover the 29585 ZIP code from the south

side of Brookgreen Gardens to the north side of DeBordieu, an area with a population of 16,400.

"We're only looking to take over one municipal service," Register said.

That's planning and zoning. He said there were "audible gasps" from the audiences last

week when the group showed visuals of the development it says will be possible under the county's future land use plan. The meetings were not open to the press.

The group announced its goal of bringing the issue to a vote last summer after
SEE "TOWN," PAGE 4

EDUCATION

District focuses on attendance as students return to class

BY MADISON SHARROCK
COASTAL OBSERVER

Georgetown County School District high school students who come late and leave early may end up with a loss of class credit.

Any student may not miss any more than 10 days during the school year in accordance with state law.

All absences in district high schools, lawful or unlawful, count toward a loss of seat time. Seat time is a state requirement that states high school students must attend a minimum of 120 minutes per credited course. However there are ways to make up seat time 30 days before the course ends.

Students who don't meet seat time requirements will receive a failure due to absences in the course regardless of their final grade.

"An accumulation of late sign-ins or early sign-outs can also lead to a loss of credit. Parents have to be mindful of signing students out early from classes or signing in late," Superintendent Bethany Giles told the board last week.

Giles presented updates to attendance policies that will be in effect when students start the new school year on Aug. 1. Students may only miss five days in a block schedule, 10 days in a year-long course and three days in a nine-week class.

SEE "SCHOOLS," PAGE 2

POLITICS | Blue Thursday

'Blue dot from red state' draws crowd for county Democrats

BY MADISON SHARROCK
COASTAL OBSERVER

The arrival of Gov. Andy Beshear of Kentucky for a local party fundraiser in Litchfield drew national attention to the Georgetown County Democratic Party rarely seen outside a presidential primary.

The sold out Blue Thursday benefit brought in journalists from Washington, D.C., along with a sea of local party members to hear one of the people who is considered a potential Democratic candidate in 2028.

Joan Doré, a local at the event, was looking forward to what Beshear could teach the room full of Democrats.

"To have somebody of Andy Beshear's stature coming to our

small county in South Carolina says a lot about how important we're going to be in the 2028 election," she said.

The son of a former governor, Beshear is currently serving his second term as governor. He served as the attorney general of Kentucky from 2016 to 2019.

Beshear was a proponent of common ground at the fundraiser, saying most Americans don't wake up thinking about their party. They're thinking about their jobs and if they make enough to support their family and about making the next doctor's appointment for themselves, their kids or their parents.

"If they can't afford their child's prescription, they'll vote



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Rescue buoys will be added to signs, below, that will warn of rip currents on the north end of Pawleys Island where there is now a single life ring.

PAWLEYS ISLAND | Dangerous currents

Town will post warnings in wake of north end drownings

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

Signs are due to go up on the north end of Pawleys Island this week to warn beachgoers of the threat of rip currents in an area where five people have drowned in the last two years; two of those in the last month.

Torpedo-shaped rescue buoys will be fitted to the signs that will be placed from the Shell Road beach access to Midway Inlet. "They'll be more visible," Police Chief Mike Fanning said.

An orange rescue ring is mounted on a post at the crest of the dune by the access. It overlooks the beach where a



Georgia man went into the water July 13 to help rescue a group of swimmers who were being carried offshore by a rip current.

Chase Childers, 38, drowned

after apparently going in search of other victims, according to police. He left a wife and three young children.

From interviews on the
SEE "CURRENTS," PAGE 2



Madison Sharrock/Coastal Observer

Gov. Andy Beshear chats with county Democrats at Litchfield Country Club.

BEACHES

Anglers condemn county bid to restrict surf fishing

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

Dozens of anglers urged Georgetown County Council this week to reject rather than defer an amendment to its beach regulations that would restrict surf fishing, including a few who, during Shark Week, said the county's premise that fishing poses a threat to swimmers is flawed.

Greg Haskins, a fishing guide in Murrells Inlet, told the council the measure also violates the state Constitution. He filed suit this week in Horry County challenging its ban on shark fishing.

"My ability to continue to make a living is under attack," he said.

Others called the amendment that received the second of three required readings last month an attack on tradition. It would prohibit commercial or shark fishing from the beaches and limit surf fishing to 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. from May through September.

Council Chairman Clint Elliott said the change was prompted by complaints about a commercial operation that brought people to Georgetown County to fish for sharks because of Horry County's prohibition.

The beach regulations already prohibit fishing that creates unsafe conditions.

The fear of sharks is irrational, but it's real, Haskins said.

"No one has ever died from
SEE "FISHING," PAGE 4

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Curtain call: Summer programs set the stage for sharing talents.
SECOND FRONT

Traditions: Beach music fits festivalgoers like a hammock.
PAGE 8



Outdoors: SC7 expedition high-



lights the natural resources across the state.
PAGE 12

Obituaries2
Crime.....5
Opinion.....6
Crossword10
Classifieds11
Sports 12
Online
coastalobserver.com

