

# Wreck: Two I-95 construction jobs wrapping

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ions of diesel fuel spilled over the roadway.

Phillips said he hopes Tuesday's accident isn't an omen for what might lie ahead during the spring and summer vacation season on the busy Maine-to-Florida interstate.

"We've always done a pretty

aggressive patrol on the interstate during the holiday," he said.

Given the amount of traffic on the interstate and the construction work in Glynn and McIntosh counties to add a third travel lane, that may be wishful thinking.

Traffic usually peaks in the warm months, sending even more vehicles through the two coastal counties.

According to the Georgia Department of Transportation, about 42,000 to 46,000 cars travel through Glynn County on the interstate daily.

That's quite a few cars streaming through a construction area highlighted by orange traffic barrels at posted speeds of 60 mph or less.

There may be some relief in

sight.

Larry Barnes, area engineer for the state transportation department, said the interstate should clear up soon because two construction projects in Glynn and McIntosh counties are coming to a close.

He said both projects should be completed in early summer.

# Fire: 16 Mercedes-Benz costing \$800K lost

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coupled together. It was carrying 16 Mercedes-Benz vehicles with a total value of more than \$800,000.

The fire comes just two months after Mercedes-Benz USA opened

a processing facility on Colonel's Island, receiving a maiden shipment of vehicles in January. It was the first delivery of what is expected to be 40,000 vehicles to be processed annually at the facility.

Monday afternoon, firefighters from the Glynn County Fire De-

partment managed to contain the blaze, which started shortly before 2:30 p.m. Three fire engines and several water tankers were sent to the trestle that had to be reached through a marsh. St. Simons Island volunteer firefighters also were called to assist.

Officials said the damage from Monday's fire wasn't as severe as the last time the trestle caught fire. Almost seven years ago, a fire destroyed portions of the train trestle, temporarily shutting down the agri-port facility, which depends on rail.

# United Way: Allocates funds throughout area

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"The main function of United Way's funding is for Power Hour, our homework and tutoring programs," Dolan said.

Communities in Schools' of Glynn County, another education-driven agency, will receive \$24,000 for its Focus Graduation program. The program identifies ninth-graders at risk of dropping out of high school and provides them mentoring, support and encouragement to graduate.

Another agency that works to improve the lives of children is Court Appointed Special Advocates of Glynn, or CASA.

Ellen Baker, CASA executive director, said this is the first year the agency is a major recipient from United Way.

"When I applied for the grant, we had the same staffing as two years ago, but a 35 percent increase in case load," Baker said.

CASA trains adults to advocate for children removed from their homes through Juvenile Court proceedings for safe and permanent placements in homes. CASA recently established a coastal family visitation center in its office to serve as a place for parents not allowed to be alone with children to visit them.

"Part of the grant is for our advocacy function and to offer ex-

## How it's spent

United Way of Coastal Georgia will allocate these amounts to community and social service agencies in Glynn and McIntosh counties:

- Boys & Girls Club of Southeast Georgia, \$115,000
- Speech, Hearing and Rehabilitation Enterprises, \$90,000
- United Way of Coastal Georgia (three programs: 211 of Glynn & McIntosh Counties, Hands on Coastal Georgia Volunteer Center, Foundation Center Collaborative Collection), \$81,171.03
- Red Cross, \$50,000
- Coastal Coalition for Children, \$37,000
- Salvation Army, \$35,000
- Golden Isles Children's Advocacy Center, \$30,000
- Coastal Medical Access Project, \$30,000
- Glynn Community Crisis Center, \$25,000
- Communities in Schools of Glynn County, \$24,000
- Court Appointed Special Advocates of Glynn, \$20,000
- Coastal Regional Commission of Georgia, \$20,000
- Community Impact Initiative, \$16,250
- STAR Foundation, \$15,000
- Girl Scouts, \$15,000
- Boy Scouts of America, \$15,000
- Hospice of the Golden Isles, \$15,000
- Special Olympics, \$10,000
- YWCA, \$10,000
- America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia, \$8,000
- Heather House of Glynn County, \$8,000
- Mary House Ministries, \$8,000
- Senior Citizens, \$8,000
- FERST Foundation of Glynn, \$3,000

panded visitation hours," Baker said.

Some agencies did not receive repeat funding, although this does not necessarily reflect on their quality, Neu said.

"We look at the current community needs, how we can best collaborate our resources to have the greatest impact and how to have the best impact on our population," said Neu.

One program and one agency were not continued for funding received during the past year.

First Steps, a parenting program for parents of newborns, was dropped. Also, Safe Harbor Children's Center's funding was discontinued. Safe Harbor provides emergency shelter for abused or neglected children.

Safe Harbor last year received \$11,000 from United Way for the first time, Rana Smith, executive director of the agency, said.

She said the center works to keep children in the community safe, and still receives donations from the combined federal employees campaign, of which United Way is an option for donors.

Smith said United Way officials have a difficult task of picking which agencies receive funding out of the many that apply.

Every year agencies must re-apply to United Way for a committee of 25 volunteers to award funding.

From its fundraising efforts, United Way will deduct about \$300,000 for its own programs, administration and fundraising costs, about \$100,000 budgeted as uncollectibles and another \$300,000 donated as grants for specific programs which its volunteer committee does not allocate.

# Jail: City will not convey streets to Glynn County

Continued from 1A

by the end of the month.

"We are exploring any and all options," said Todd Brooks, Torras' attorney. "We intend to continue fighting this."

Torras contends there are two main reasons why the appeals court ruling the Supreme Court declined to review should be reversed.

First, he said the county has abandoned the idea of building a jail expansion where his property is located and, therefore, should abandon its use of eminent domain to force him to sell it.

In 2008, the Glynn County Commission approved expanding the jail at I and Reynolds streets

into the adjacent block of Newcastle, I, Reynolds and J streets. The county went on to spend more than \$4 million on the expansion from I to J streets, including more than \$104,000 in legal fees defending the eminent domain challenge.

The city commission, which opposes the expansion downtown, has subsequently said it would not give the county streets and alleys that intersect the county's blueprints, thus preventing the county from pursuing its original plan.

A majority of county commissioners, including proponents of a downtown expansion, have said recently that building an expansion in the block that includes Torras' property would be "impossible" or "infeasible" without the

city-owned streets.

While not formally abandoning its original plan, proponents of the expansion shifted focus toward building a scaled-down addition at the site of the existing jail. That plan has been referred to as a "Band-Aid" by commissioners who support it and those against it.

Torras' other argument is that the county has acted in "bad faith" in its condemnation attempt by dismissing expert opinions it had retained, by withholding information supporting alternatives and disseminating misinformation to mislead the public and judiciary.

The county is obligated to negotiate in "good faith" during condemnation proceedings, he said.

Meanwhile, the fate of the jail

plan remains tangled as a federal court-supervised mediation proceedings continue.

Two Glynn County commissioners — one from each side in the jail expansion dispute — met with lawyers and a mediator Monday to try to resolve a federal lawsuit aimed at preventing the jail from being enlarged downtown.

Commissioner Tony Thaw represented commissioners Jerome Clark, Don Hogan and Howard Lynn, who support downtown expansion. Commissioner Tom Sublett was there on behalf of commissioners Amy Callaway and Bob Coleman, who oppose it.

All parties involved have agreed to keep the proceedings confidential.

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