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DAYBREAK

Your day in Brunswick and the Golden Isles

The Weather

HIGH **88**
LOW **74**



Temperatures start to cool off a bit

Today will be cloudy with a 40 percent chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon and highs in the upper 80s. Tonight will be mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers and lows in the low 70s. **Tides and five-day forecast, 12A**

Worth doing

Take a look at works focusing on beach

“Boats, Birds and Beaches of Brunswick and Beyond,” an exhibit of the works of Oak Grove Island Artists Guild, is at the Ritz Theatre through August, 1530 Newcastle St., Brunswick. Details: 262-6934.

Photography exhibit hits area sights

“Perceptions,” an exhibit featuring the art of photographer Kenneth Carroll, is at the Brunswick-Glynn County Library, 208 Gloucester St., Brunswick. Details: 267-1212.

Worth knowing



Henry Wright and students

Center settling into its new location

The students of the Performance Learning Center began the new school year with a new location in Glynn County. **News Update, 3A**

Talk about

Community can help hold back criminals

Police in Brunswick and Glynn County can do only so much to stem the tide of the drug trade. It is also incumbent upon everyone in the community to report suspicious behavior when it takes place in our neighborhoods. **Editorial, 6A**

Get involved

Volunteering means a lot to community

There are many nonprofit organizations in the community that need volunteers. Consider giving some time to help those in need.

Veterans clinic to open in fall

Officials set target date of Oct. 6 for long-awaited health facility

By SHANESSA FAKOUR
The Brunswick News

Military veterans can finally mark down an opening date for the long-delayed outpatient veterans clinic in Brunswick: Oct. 6.

Construction crews have been working this month to remodel the Glynco Professional Plaza, 110 Glynco Parkway, Glynn County, where the clinic will be located. Although the drawn-out process that

began in 2007 frustrated many people, including coastal Georgia’s congressional delegation, veterans put it all aside Thursday and welcomed news that the clinic will open in the fall.

The Brunswick clinic, a satellite facility of the Carl Vinson Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Dublin, will provide care from a doctor, podiatrist, optometrist, dietician, pharmacist and several mental health professionals.

“The fact they’re opening a clinic up

here will be a big help, just as much to me as it is for the thousands of other veterans in this area,” Mike Browning, chairman of the Veterans Council of the Golden Isles, said.

“It has taken a little longer than anyone would like to have seen, but I’m not going to fuss about something that I will get some benefit out of.”

For Browning and others, the clinic means a convenient place to receive health care services without having to drive more

than 100 miles one-way to clinics in Dublin, Augusta and Lake City, Fla. – the closest ones to Brunswick.

“It can be up to an eight- or 12-hour day, depending on what you’re going for,” Browning said.

The long delay made the news almost anticlimactic to Woody Woodside, president of the Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce. The chamber, at the fore-

Please see VETERANS, 5A

RISKY WORK



Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News

A worker with McInnis Electric Company was taken to the Brunswick hospital of Southeast Georgia Health System Thursday afternoon when the bucket truck he was working in fell on its side in the Glynn Isles Market parking lot.

Grant gives city boost for housing

Brunswick receives \$750,000 in federal funds for new homes

By NEVIN BATIWALLA
The Brunswick News

A federal grant has boosted the city of Brunswick’s efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing.

Officials learned recently that Brunswick will receive a \$750,000 disaster recovery grant.

A third of the funds, or about \$247,500, will be used to help turn the old C.B. Greer Elementary School site, at Norwich and Fourth streets, into a community of affordable housing and activity space.

“We are just thrilled to death,” Mayor Bryan Thompson said about the grant.

Demolition of the old school will start in the coming months, he said.

Ground breaking for New Town Development, the community’s working title, will occur as soon as the city finds a buyer for \$7.2 million in bonds.

The community will consist of about 50 housing units for people at a variety of income levels, including low-income families. It will feature single-family townhouses and rental apartments.

A community center, an expansion of the old school gym, and green space are also part of the vision for a revitalized block.

Thompson said the community’s location makes

Please see GRANT, 5A

Public discusses bomb range

Marine Corps gathers feedback on McIntosh County proposal

By ERIKA CAPEK
The Brunswick News

There were more questions than answers Thursday as military officials listened to comments and concerns of McIntosh County residents about a proposed expansion of a bombing range in Townsend, about 14 miles north of Darien.

The U.S. Marine Corps, which wants

to acquire more land to expand the bombing range, held the second of two information sessions at the Ida Hilton Library, in Darien. The first was Tuesday in Ludowici. The Marine Corps is considering several land acquisition alternatives, ranging from nearly 12,000 acres to 51,000 acres.

Among those studying the displays set up by Marine Corps Thursday to detail the project was Wally Orrel, president of

the Darien-McIntosh County Chamber of Commerce.

Orrel, one of 68 persons who browsed the displays during the first 30 minutes of the three-hour session, said he is concerned about losing thousands of acres of land and tax revenue to an expansion project that will not create any new jobs.

Please see RANGE, 5A

County struggles for certification

Workers lag in testing for state’s Work Ready designation

By SHANESSA FAKOUR
The Brunswick News

Tests aren’t just for school students.

Ask Ken Farrell.

He’s president of First Glynn Bank and vice chairman of industrial affairs for the Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce, and he’s up for taking a test.

The test Farrell plans to take is the Work Ready test that is part of

the process used in the state’s Work Ready program to lure new employers by demonstrating that a county has a trained work force available.

While 49 of the state’s 159 counties – including Camden County – have met the criteria, Glynn County has not. It’s high school graduation rate has been too low and not enough people have taken the certification test to prove basic job skills.

Now, with the county at the threshold level of a 70 percent high school

graduation rate after summer school retesting, Farrell is heading up a push to get more workers to take the test – including himself and other employees at First Glynn Bank.

“I think Georgia Work Ready is definitely a program that will, hopefully, help employers recruit and hire talented staff members,” Farrell said. “It sends the message, particularly in economic development efforts, that

Please see WORK, 5A



Nick Nichols/The Brunswick News

Star Foundation teacher Katie Orrel, standing, and executive director Ellen Murphy, look at a Work Ready report card.

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Daily television-style news available at 1 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and in an archive library

Today: Learn about the scheduled opening of a veterans clinic in Glynn County and see how the county is handling ditches given frequent rain.



Sports talk: The sports team predicts the winners and losers in area high school football action.

News: Daily radio-style news beginning in the mornings Mondays through Fridays.

In the next issue



Look for these stories exclusively in The News:

Local: Report Louie Brogdon will check on what has happened to the lone survivor of the New Hope Plantation killings and where the case stands one year later.

Sports: Reporter Buddy Hughes will deliver reaction to the football game between Brunswick High and Statesboro.

Life: Reporter Mary Starr will report on preparations by the congregation of Beth Tefillah for the high holy days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Veterans: 3,400 enrolled for clinic

Continued from 1A

front of efforts to bring a clinic to area, also has been dismayed by how long it has taken.

"To go back and look at it, it should have been opened two years ago," said Woodside, who is also a military veteran. "It will be a great relief to all of the veterans who are inconvenienced to make the long trip to Dublin."

He said the clinic plans to hire between 20 and 25 full-time medical professionals, a help during a time of scarce jobs.

To prepare for the opening, the Carl Vinson Medical Center will enroll veterans at Howard Coffin Park in mid-September, Janine Cameron, public affairs officer, said.

The Dublin staff has already enrolled 3,400 veterans for the

Sign up

Pre-enrollment for the veterans clinic in Brunswick will be from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sept. 14 and Sept. 15 at Howard Coffin Park, 1420 Lanier Blvd., Brunswick.

Brunswick clinic, according to a report to the Veterans Council by John Goldman, director of the Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Dublin. An estimated 8,000 veterans reside in the Brunswick area.

The report predicted that the opening Oct. 6 will not be fully operational or staffed. Several staff members have been hired, including a nurse manager, podiatrist, optometrist and several nurses.



Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News

Workers with Allen and Graham, the contractors for the new veterans clinic, work on one of two nurses stations at the clinic, located on Glynco Parkway in Glynn County.

The clinic will receive medical equipment, office supplies and furniture in September.

A ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for the week of Nov. 8.

Grant: Five affordable houses to be built

Continued from 1A

it an ideal option for college students or hospital employees.

Its residents will have the opportunity to build equity in their homes. After a certain number of years, a renter would have the option to assign a percentage of what had been paid in rent to the purchase of the unit.

The \$8 million project, once known as Norwich Commons, is a collaboration between the city, the Downtown Development Authority and W.H. Gross, a private company.

The main funding for it is a federal stimulus-backed municipal bond program known as Build America Bonds.

The city, which contributed the land, won't end up spending any money on the project. It will collect any expenses from the rent payments of occupants.

The elementary school site was a part of a land swap agreement with the Glynn County Board of Education, which received property from the city on Lanier Boulevard, now the site of the new Glynn Middle School.

The remaining \$495,000 of

the grant will be used by Habitat for Humanity and the Southeast Georgia Community Land Trust to build or renovate houses at scattered sites in the city. Three will be owner occupied. Two will be rental.

Those who buy a house from the land trust will own the house but not the land. By limiting land costs and locking in subsidies, houses will remain affordable even after several re-sales.

The units could be built soon.

"We are hoping to start construction as soon as possible, maybe even October," said Eric

VanOtteren, who heads the city's Economic Development Department.

People shouldn't confuse affordable housing with subsidized Section 8 housing, said VanOtteren. Section 8 is for those living in poverty.

"These (new units) will be affordable to people like teachers, policemen and firemen," he said.

The city commission will hold a public information meeting at 5:30 p.m. Thursday at the National Guard Armory on Norwich Street to discuss the New Town Development.

TIME TO REFURBISH



Nick Nichols/The Brunswick News

Fendig Signs employees David Ellis, left, and Will Frazier steady the redwood face of the St. Simons Island welcome sign at the entrance to the island while Bruce Fendig, not pictured, pushes the sign through on Thursday afternoon. Fendig said the sign company installed the sign more than two decades ago and they are proud to be able to refurbish it. They will be salvaging the sound parts to include in the new sign, which Fendig said he hopes will be up in a week.

Work: Groups issue challenge

Continued from 1A

we have a qualified work force, so that if they brought their businesses to our community, they would find an employment base ready to go to work."

As president of First Glynn Bank, he recently issued a challenge to all Glynn County banks to have their employees tested and certified as Work Ready.

Farrell said some of the bank's 11 employees have volunteered to take the test. He plans to issue personal challenges to other employers to do the same.

"I think (when) an employer in this community understands what being a Work Ready community truly means to the overall community, as a whole, and how it impacts the overall quality of life, once they rally behind that concept, they will embrace working with the testing process and making sure their employees can get out and take the test," Farrell said.

Following summer school, Glynn County reached the neces-

sary 70 percent graduation rate, but still needs to certify enough workers in three of eight sectors of the community, said Ellen Murphy, director of the Star Foundation, a program that teaches work skills and serves as the main testing site.

About 20 people remain to be certified in government and high school equivalency sectors, but the private employment sector still needs 140 workers to take and pass the test in math, reading comprehension and locating information on maps, charts and graphs.

"There's a concern we won't get 140 people out of the private sector to pass the test before the end of December," Murphy said.

With an effort under way to have Glynn County certified as Work Ready before the end of the year, Murphy is fairly confident that enough people in the high school equivalency and government categories can be tested and pass. "The private sector is a problem," she said.

The test lasts three hours, which

may present a problem to some employers that have to allow workers paid time to take it during the week, said Woody Woodside, president of the Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce.

"We're trying to encourage companies to do this," he said.

The chamber and the Brunswick and Glynn County Development Authority plan to hold a group meeting to issue challenges to different companies to have their employees take the test.

While the Star Foundation is the main testing site, the test can be administered on computers at work places for a group of five or more employees, Murphy said. The testing can also be spread over several days.

"We're even available for Saturday testing if we're assured of having a group here," she said.

The Work Ready program was started by Gov. Sonny Perdue in 2006. Jefferson County was the first to be certified, in October 2008. Camden County gained Work Ready status this past February.

Range: Impact study next step

Continued from 1A

Ron Popiel, a McIntosh County resident, had a good reason to want to find out more about the expansion.

"We live out in that area," Popiel said. He is concerned about the potential for noise.

The bombing range is operated by the Georgia Air National Guard and used by other military forces to test munitions and to improve pilots' skills. The range cannot be used for precision guided missile training because it is too small.

The training range is used for non-explosive, or inert munitions, including guns, rockets, bombs and laser training munitions. Those munitions contain the equivalent of about a 10-gauge shotgun shell that explode on impact.

Like others, Popiel moved from station to station at the session, talking to military representatives. He noted that it seemed like a lot of precautionary measures were being taken by the military.

There is still a lot of work to be done before a decision is made. The Marine Corps is in the process of gathering information for an environmental impact statement.

An impact statement, to be completed by fall 2011, will be a detailed, roughly 3,000-page study that will analyze potential effects an expansion would have on the environment and the community.

It will also address questions and concerns residents submitted.

"There are a lot of things that need to be studied," Sgt. Chad McMeen, public affairs officer for the Marine Corps, said. "There's also a no-action alternative, and we could do nothing. This (process of analysis) is in the very early stages."

Officials are encouraging people to give them specific concerns by Sept. 7, when a 30-day public scoping period ends. Comments will be reviewed and released in a final report. The final decision is to be published in fall 2012.

Speak up

Anyone can offer comments of the planned expansion of the bombing range at Townsend online at www.townsendbombingrangeeis.com or by mail to Townsend EIS Project Manager, P.O. Box 180458, Tallahassee, Fla., 32318.



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