



# THE BRUNSWICK NEWS

Rob Ridings

The Voice of the Coast

EST. 1902

Volume 109, Number 215

Mary Bryan Peyer

www.TheBrunswickNews.com

MAY 20, 2011

35¢ or less home delivery • 75¢ newsstand



## DAYBREAK

Your day in Brunswick and the Golden Isles

### The Weather

HIGH

87

LOW

66



### Occasional cloud will float by on nice day

Today will be mostly sunny, turning partly cloudy with highs in the 80s and southeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Tonight will be mostly clear with patchy fog, lows in the 60s and south winds 5 to 10 mph. **Tides and five-day forecast, 12A**

### Worth doing

#### Island Players stage wedding comedy

The Island Players are performing "Father of the Bride" at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 3 p.m. Sundays through May 29, St. Simons Island Casino Theater, 530 Beachview Drive, St. Simons Island. Admission is \$20 for adults; \$5 for children 18 and younger. Details: 638-0338.

### Worth knowing



Ellen Strojan

#### Fort Frederica plans archaeology event

The educators at Fort Frederica National Monument had been offering opportunities to fourth-grade students for years, but they decided everyone could get involved with the Digging History Archaeology Festival. **Local & State, 3A**

### Talk about

#### Keeping gangs out of area is important

The possibility of national and established criminal gangs reaching into Glynn County is troubling, and it's something that law enforcement officials at all levels need to work hard to prevent. Let's keep that element of the criminal world from taking hold in the community. **Editorial, 6A**

### Get involved

#### School system could always use help

The Glynn County School System can always use mentors to help children with their studies and to give them encouragement. Call the system at 267-4100 to get connected to a school where you can help.

### Inside The News

2 sections/30 pages

**Advice** 2B **Lotteries** 3A  
**Graham** 6A **Obituaries** 4A  
**Business** 4A **Real Estate** 5B  
**Comics** 4B **Sports** 8-10A  
**Crossword** 4B **State** 3A  
**Editorial** 6A **Sudoku** 4B  
**Local** 2-4A **Television** 3B



6 56251 10471 8

# Forecasters expect big storms

## Government predicts busy 2011 Atlantic hurricane season

By The Brunswick News and Associated Press

U.S. government forecasters announced Thursday they expect three to six major hurricanes from an above average Atlantic storm season.

No major hurricane has made a U.S. landfall in five years, but the forecasters

warned U.S. coastal residents that odds are diminished that they can't expect a sixth straight year without a major landfall on either the Atlantic or Gulf coasts.

And Capt. Jay Wiggins, director of the Glynn County Emergency Management Agency, said there's no better time than now to begin thinking about a plan of action in the event of a major storm.

Wiggins certainly is. Last week, he participated in a tabletop rehearsal of reaction to a major Atlantic storm with local and state emergency officials at the county Emergency Operations Center. He's now in the process of preparing to attend a hurricane conference in Savannah.

"I would encourage people to start doing what I'm doing – start going over plans,"

Wiggins said. "While it's beautiful outside is the time to get ready, not when the clouds begin gathering."

As many as 18 named tropical storms may develop during the six-month Atlantic hurricane season that begins June 1, according to forecasters at the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration. Six to 10 of those storms could strengthen into hurricanes with top winds of at least

Please see STORMS, 5A

## A time to make a difference



Michael Hall/The Brunswick News

Shawn Smith, kneeling, irrigation technician for Jekyll Island, David Loehle, middle, and John Whittingslow, an intern with Jekyll Island, try to remove a tangled mess of chain-link fence, vines and roots from the play yard at Mary House Day Care and Learning Center on Hunter Street in Brunswick. More than 250 volunteers pitched in during the first day of the United Way of Coastal Georgia's Days of Caring.

# Volunteers pitch in to help

## United Way kicks off its annual Day of Caring event

By MICHAEL HALL

The Brunswick News

Shawn Smith, irrigation technician with the Jekyll Island Authority, spent much of Thursday morning on his knees, wrestling with vines, roots and a chain link fence behind Mary House Day Care and Learning Center on Hunter Street in Brunswick.

Before he and his fellow Days of Caring volunteers could erect a new, wooden fence for the children's play yard at the learning center, the old tangled mess of chain-link had to go.

The annual Days of Caring event for the United Way of Coastal Georgia started Thursday and will run through Saturday. This year focuses on two locations – the Scout Hut in Darien and Mary House.

"I see daylight," Smith said as he cut vegetation away from the base of the old fence while John Whittingslow, a Jekyll



Michael Hall/The Brunswick News

T'Shayne Fripp paints an interior wall at Mary House Day Care and Learning Center as part of the United Way of Coastal Georgia's Days of Caring.

Island intern, and David Loehle, who's retired, pulled on the chain link to free it from the grasp of the vines.

Building a new fence was only a small part of the overall project at Mary House. New paint both inside and out, updated plumbing and even some new flooring are all in the works for the day care center and preschool that serves low income children ages 6 weeks to

kindergarten.

"I can't wait to see how the children react on Monday," said Sharon Gamme, director of Mary House Learning Center. "This is such a blessing for us."

Mary House moved from St. Simons Island to Hunter Street in 2005 and has been in need of renovation.

Please see CARING, 5A

# County to request time on code issue

## Delay would help bring fire station up to federal standards

By ANNA FERGUSON HALL

The Brunswick News

An inquiry by the county attorney's offices may have saved taxpayers thousands of dollars.

It will if the U.S. Department of Justice agrees to give Glynn County more time to bring fire station No. 1 into compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

The Glynn County Commission voted during its regular session Thursday to direct the county attorney's office to formally ask the Department of Justice to extend the deadline for bringing the fire station in compliance with federal requirements.

The Justice Department is requiring the county to bring the station, as well as stations Nos. 3 and 6, in compliance with the act. None of the three structures is totally accessible to handicapped individuals.

The deadline set by the Justice Department to make adjustments at Station No. 1 is November.

Glynn County Fire Chief Al Thomas has since asked that station No. 1 be replaced with a new structure and that its construction be added to the list of projects on SPLOST 6, which voters will either approve or reject in November. The problem is, the compliance deadline comes sooner than the SPLOST vote, and Thomas was unsure if the department would be flexible with an extension. Acting Public Works Director Becky Rowell told the finance committee recently that the Department of Justice settlement was set in stone.

That may not be the case, however. Glynn County Assistant County Attorney Will Worley told the commission Thursday that the county attorney's office contacted the Justice Department. He said the federal agency agreed to ease the deadline to give the county the time needed to decide how to proceed, whether with structural adjustments or a new station.

Under a new but tentative agreement between the county and the Justice Department, if the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax 6 is not approved by voters, the county would be given 12 months to bring the station up to federal guidelines.

If SPLOST is approved, the county would have

Please see COUNTY, 5A

# Residents express concerns about lot expansion

## Access restricted by construction on St. Simons Island

By ANNA FERGUSON HALL

The Brunswick News

Island Players President Allan Ledingham has concerns about how successful the next two weekends – the last of the season – will be. He expects tickets sales to drop and complaints to rise because of a project some say was ill-planned by Glynn County.

On Wednesday, the county began work on improving and expanding the parking lot at the St. Simons Island Casino near Postell

Park, erecting a chain link fence and uprooting the asphalt.

The fence raised around the construction area closes off part of the existing parking lot, and blocks partial entrance to the theater and fire door, making access difficult for stage hands and playgoers.

"We have two weekends left of the show, and each weekend we bring in 400 to 500 people," Ledingham said. "Once word gets out that the entry to the theater is limited and parking will be even harder, the grumbles will certainly

start coming in."

Ledingham held a phone conference with Glynn County officials Thursday to try to find a solution. The fence crosses over and blocks off part of the sidewalk leading to the theater entrance and fire door, with the only access to the doors blocked by shrubs and a tree.

Ledingham said county engineering supervisor David DeLoach and county spokesperson Candace Temple offered to increase

Please see PARK, 5A



Nick Nichols/The Brunswick News

County crews work on expanding the parking lot at the St. Simons Island Casino near Postell Park.

# Electronics recycling event planned

By ANNA FERGUSON HALL  
The Brunswick News

Televisions have weighed heavily on the mind of Marsha Smith recently.

Ever since the national switch from analog to digital occurred, Smith has seen residents tossing out TVs, often improperly. As executive director of Keep Brunswick-Golden Isles Beautiful, Smith took the issue to heart and has taken steps to do something about the problem during this year's annual electronics recycling day.

For the first time in its six-year history, the electronics recycling event Saturday will accept defunct televisions along with the usual list

## Recycle

The electronics recycling event will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday behind the main entrance to the Glynn Place Mall. To volunteer to help call KBGIB at 279-1490.

of recyclable gadgets, Smith said.

Televisions contain hazardous lead-bearing particles, making them hard to break down. Because of the laborious process of removing the dangerous compound, a \$10 fee will be charged at this year's recycling event to offset the cost of chunking the clunker tubes.

"People would always come and

try to get rid of TVs, and we had to turn them away," Smith said. "We hated to charge people, but there was just no way around it. We're excited, though, that we can offer this addition to our participants."

Held in the parking lot of Glynn Place Mall, the annual recycle showdown always collects a massive amount of goods.

Just about any unwanted electronic can be recycled at the event, from cell phones and DVD players to modems and fax machines.

Last year, area recyclers took advantage of that fact, bringing out enough recyclable materials to fill an entire tractor-trailer, Smith said.

"Watching them fill palettes and

shrink wrap them, it's a very exciting day," she said. "You've really never seen anything like this."

In years past, Smith has watched as area recyclers shed themselves of old electronics, seeing everything from broken cameras to decades-old computers.

One year, she recalled, she even had a participant get rid of a record player from the 1950s.

Don't worry about lifting a finger, either, she said. Plenty of volunteers will be on hand to help recyclers get rid of their ancient electronics and will come to the car to remove the materials.

"Just pop your trunk and we'll take your stuff," she said. "It really couldn't be easier."

# Caring: Work in Darien finished today

Continued from 1A

"For the last five years, we have found a lot of things around the house that need work, but because we rely on donations and serve low income families, the money to do the work has been hard to come by," said Gammage, who has been with Mary House for 21 of its 22 years in Glynn County.

Running the learning and day care center is truly a work of faith, said Donna Crossland, president

of Mary House Ministries.

"We could not do any of this work if it were not for the United Way and the Days of Caring," she said.

Much of the work on the Scout Hut in Darien, which will finish today, is similar to what is being done at Mary House.

"We have a huge group of people painting, hanging doors and even installing some new cabinets," said Judy Scarlett, community investment and outreach coordi-

nator for United Way of Coastal Georgia.

Diane Martin, branch manager and vice president of Southeastern Bank in Darien, volunteered on Thursday and was surprised by how quickly the work progressed.

"We are almost done with all of the painting. This is all going much faster than I thought it would," she said.

Missy Neu, president and CEO of United Way of Coastal Georgia, attributes the speed of the work to

the great turnout of more than 250 volunteers.

"This will really make a big difference for a lot of people," Neu said.

Alan Hamilton of King and Prince Seafood has volunteered with the Days of Caring for the last three years and said he enjoys it every year.

"This is a great opportunity to help others," he said as he painted the exterior of Mary House Learning Center.

# County: Board approves Sept. 11 artifact

Continued from 1A

36 months to make repairs and changes.

Within the next week, Worley will resubmit a plan for making the needed changes and said he expects the department to respond with a timetable and contract by the next commission meeting, set for June 2.

"We were praised by the department for our thorough work, and that has helped us with this issue," Worley said. "They see us as good partners."

Initially, the county fire department had asked for \$41,000 to make needed repairs to all three stations. Repairs and changes to the stations include widening doorways to allow wheelchair ac-

cess, adding ramps to some stations, and other handicap access features. The county has more time to bring the other stations in compliance.

In other business, commissioners voted unanimously to accept a World Trade Center artifact from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Fire chief Thomas requested that the commis-

sioners allow his team to accept a piece of steel collected from the Sept. 11 Ground Zero site as a memorial to the more than 340 firefighters and paramedics who lost their lives during the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Other fire departments across the country have accepted such commemorative pieces to display in their fire stations.

# Park: Signs will be placed to assist visitors

Continued from 1A

signage to alert theatergoers of the re-routed pathway, and noted that not all entrances are blocked to the Casino. Entry points on the Beachview side of the arena as well as the back entry are still open, and a sidewalk leads from Brogen's restaurant to the theater for individuals parking on the north side of the building, which is also the entrance for disabled patrons.

The issue, DeLoach said, is not a safety concern, merely a problem with access. Removing shrubs to open more access to the doors is not an option, but the county will place signs around the Casino to help patrons navigate their way to the entrances.

"I think this is a compromise we can all live with," Temple said.

Adding more signs will be beneficial, Ledingham said, but will likely do little to curb customer complaints and solve the problem for him and other business owners this summer.

"You can make all the conference calls you want, but extra signs won't help us get items backstage. I am not very happy," Ledingham said. "I understand why they are doing this project, and I think at the end it will be very nice. But I don't see why this walkway has to be left blocked."

With the fence and construction in place, the horseshoe-shaped parking lot that was once outside the Casino's entrance is now a pile of rocks, limiting parking near the

Postell and Neptune park areas, another point that concerns Ledingham and other Village merchants.

Angela Cunningham, owner of Serenity House Tea Society in the Village, has concerns that customers won't be able to find adequate space for parking, and wonders why the county decided to conduct such a destructive, massive project in the height of tourist season.

A former New York resident, Cunningham once worked in construction and interior design, and said she would never have dreamed of executing such an unattractive project at a time when visitors are planning trips to the island.

"Of course this will impact my business. This was terrible planning," Cunningham said. "Why would you do this now and not November or January? They do this every summer and it makes no sense at all."

For her business, Cunningham said she works to create a serene, calm environment for her clients, and the constant noise for grading and dumping counteracts her concept.

Visiting the island with a group of tourists from the United Kingdom, Derek Peddle was a bit taken aback by the Casino project. Though he understands why such a project would be needed, he noted that it nonetheless distracts from the simple, natural beauty of the island.

"This is such a beautiful place, and some of that beauty is certain-

ly lost with all this construction and noise going on," Peddle said.

Not all visitors and area store owners were upset by the construction, though. Riding bikes through the Village with her two young children, Kim Hill said she hadn't even noticed the demolition work occurring right around the corner. Even if she had, she wouldn't be put off by it.

"If a little maintenance and work is needed to keep the island looking nice and modern, then it's worth it," said Hill, of Chattanooga. "I completely see why they would be working on such a project. I'm sure when it's finished, it will be an asset. It hasn't bothered us one bit."

Moon Doggy co-owner Nancy Walter mirrored Hill's words, saying that her business has not been affected in the least by the project. And she didn't expect that to change as the summer continues.

"I've felt no interference and hadn't heard anyone complain," Walter said. "If this is a needed project, then I guess they need to do it."

The project, though messy now, will eventually be a benefit for business owners and visitors, said

county spokeswoman Temple. Once the construction is finished, the Casino will be supplied with more parking, which is much needed in this commerce-driven section of the island. But getting to that point means being slightly put out for a few months.

"For the last two years, we've always had a project in that area and it always turns out that the end product was worth it," Temple said. "We are doing what we can to make this as easy for everyone, and we know it might be a little inconvenient for some people. These are just necessary little growing pains."

In an effort to ease those pains, construction crews are moving as quickly and efficiently as possible. Already, crews are ahead of schedule, and hopefully will stay so for the duration of the work, said county engineering supervisor DeLoach.

"We are moving as quick as we can," DeLoach said. "Our crews are very good at their job, and we will move as fast as possible."

The project at the Casino is slated to last 120 days, with the construction deadline set for mid-September.

**SHARPS SHOOTERS & SERVICES LLC**  
Classes Available  
HAMPTON INN CONFERENCE CENTER  
EXIT 38  
**CALL NOW**

- NRA First Steps-Pistol Class
- Personal Safety/Protection In Home
- Personal Safety/Protection Outside Home
- Private Lesson by Appointment

912-342-7336 gadashootitnow@yahoo.com

**BUYING Now**  
Big Diamonds, All Precious Metal & Jewelry  
Ask About our 25% Bonus!  
Free Quote

*Joseph*  
JEWELERS  
Serving The South Since 1910

Shops at Sea Island • 600 Sea Island Road #16  
St. Simons Island, GA 31522 • 912-634-9060

**ABEKA ACADEMY**  
"Licensed and Insured" 912-289-2725  
"A Place Where Your Child Will Excel!"

**We are ready to help you with your summer plans!**

- For busy moms & dads
- Monday - Friday 6:30am - 11:30pm
- Available to both enrolled and unenrolled ABEKA student
- Best drop off rates in town
- Call for more information

2606 Altama Ave • Brunswick, GA 31520

**Kerb Appeal**  
Concrete Landscape Edging  
Free Estimates 222-6250  
Variety of Colors, Stamps & Textures Available  
kerbappealkerb.com

**2011 BRUNSWICK PIRATES YOUTH FOOTBALL CAMP**  
June 1st-June 3rd 8:00 am - 12:00 pm  
All Proceeds Benefit Brunswick Pirates Football  
CAMP INFORMATION  
Kindergarten - 6th Grade Non-Contact Skills Camp  
\$40 per Child - Siblings 2/\$60 - Includes Lunch & T-shirt  
REGISTRATION DATES  
Tuesday May 24th, 25th, Wed May 31st • 10-12, 2-5pm  
Brunswick High School Field House (look for signs)  
For any questions please contact Coach Floyd at 577-0912  
Youth will have free admission/recognition to first home game.

**Century Metals Roofing Supply**  
"We Are Your Manufacturer"

Best Pricing In So. Ga  
Now Carrying Lumber & Insulation  
19 Colors to choose from

40 Yr. Warranty  
3 Profiles To Choose  
912-576-2840  
www.centurymetals.net

**Want an Experienced Lawyer with Integrity?**  
Call Attorney Higgins



- 24 years of experience
- Experience as a prosecutor
- Top 1/3 of law school class
- Member of Mercer Law Review
- American Jurisprudence Award in Constitutional Law
- 7 years of military service (USMC Reserve)
- Eagle Scout

**www.attyhiggins.com**  
912-275-8506  
1515 1/2 Newcastle Street • Brunswick, GA

**Get \$50.00**  
CJ's Italian Restaurant  
Gift Cards  
for only **\$25.00** (Wow, That's Half Price!)



Cards go on sale Friday, May 27th at 9 a.m.  
Buy Yours At  
**www.thebrunswicknews.com**  
DON'T DELAY - At half price, these cards will sell out QUICKLY!



# Storms: Readiness key

Continued from 1A

74 mph, the agency said. Three to six could become major hurricanes, with maximum winds of 111 mph and up.

"It doesn't matter whether they say it's going to be 10 or 100 storms," Wiggins said. "All it takes is one coming into Glynn County to cause us a problem, and it doesn't necessarily have to be a direct hit. Landfall in Savannah or Jacksonville could be devastating to us."

There is plenty of information available on how residents can prepare for a storm and an emergency evacuation.

Wiggins urges residents not to

forget the kind of damage tropical storms can cause, too. In fact, emergency officials, with assistance of the National Weather Service in Jacksonville, practiced just such a scenario during last week's tabletop exercise.

Wiggins said few will forget Tropical Storm Tammy's bruising march through Brunswick and the Golden Isles in 2005.

"We could see just as much wind and rainfall from a tropical storm as a hurricane," he said. "Look at your emergency plans. The weather is unpredictable."

Last year's hurricane season was one of the busiest on record with 19 named storms, including 12 hurricanes.