

THE BRUNSWICK NEWS

Coach Rob Ridings

The Voice of the Coast

EST. 1902

Volume 110 Number 13

Save up to
\$152
with coupons
inside today
including exclusive
local offers in
COUPON CLIPPER
on the wrapper of
advertising fliers

Glynn Academy passes key road test

Sports, 9A



www.TheBrunswickNews.com

SEPTEMBER 24-25, 2011

35¢ or less home delivery • 75¢ newsstand

JOBS SCHOOL SEEKS MORE STUDENTS 2A POLLUTION SITES UNDER REVIEW 4A

Ex-city manager was paid to retire

City attorney also getting payment available only if forced out

By LOUIE BROGDON
The Brunswick News

Former Brunswick City Manager Roosevelt Harris and City Attorney Lynn Frey III, who have created public impressions that they were leaving their jobs voluntarily, were given severance payments that were available to

them only if they were fired or asked to resign, a News review of city records shows.

Harris, who had said he was retiring voluntarily Aug. 31, received \$54,300 in severance from the city after commissioners met in a closed session Sept. 7 to discuss paying him six months of salary and car allowance. The com-

mission then voted in public to pay Harris a lump sum under his employment contract, without specifying the amount.

Frey, who has said he will resign Nov. 1 to pursue other interests, will receive a severance package, without an allowance for an automobile, according to his own contract, Frey said

Friday.

The only other city employee who would receive severance if fired or asked to resign is City Clerk Naomi Atkinson. The city clerk, manager and attorney are the city's only contract positions hired by the city commission.



Roosevelt Harris was paid \$54,300.

Please see PAYMENT, 4A



DAYBREAK

Your weekend in Brunswick and the Golden Isles

The Weather

Saturday

HIGH

86

LOW

72

Sunday

HIGH

87

LOW

72

Weekend brings good rain chances

There is a 50 percent chance of rain during the daytime Saturday and Sunday, and 30 percent those nights. Some rainfall during the day Saturday could be heavy. Daytime high temperatures and nighttime lows both days will be a few degrees warmer than normal. **Tides and five-day forecast, 14A**

Worth doing

Fort Frederica open for free Saturday

Here's a government program that can benefit everyone: Admission to Fort Frederica, 6515 Frederica Road, St. Simons Island, is free from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. And if that isn't enough, there will be programs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sunday will close on jazzy note

Julie Wilde and the Bohemian Dream Band will perform at Jazz in the Park, at 7 p.m. Sunday at the St. Simons Island Lighthouse, 12th Street and Beachview Drive. It's \$10 for adults; \$5 for children 6 to 12 and younger are free. It's sponsored by Golden Isles Arts and Humanities Association.

Talk about

How to improve school achievement

Glynn County public schools offer numerous programs to try to boost youths academically. What could be some of the most effective ones schools could offer? **Editorial, 6A**

Beach patrol

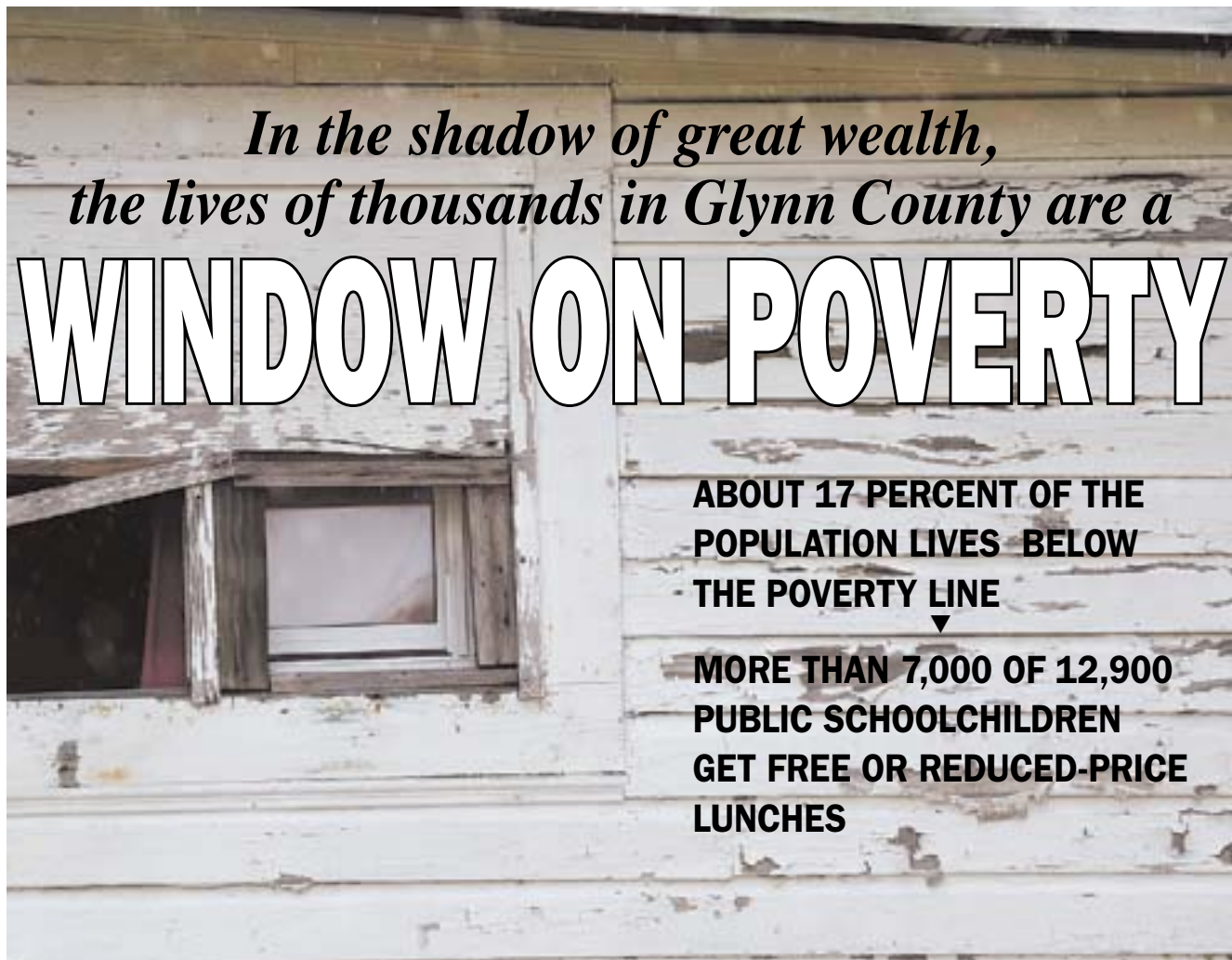
After-summer rules in effect at beach

If you are going to the St. Simons Island beach this weekend, there are two things to know. First, no lifeguards are on duty, because staffing ended Labor Day. Second, seasonal rules for pets at the beach changed Labor Day. Check the sign at Old Coast Guard Station Beach for what they are.

Inside The News

2 sections/38 pages

- Advice 2B
- Business 8A
- Classified 8B
- Comics 7B
- Crossword 7B
- Editorial 6A
- Graham 6A
- Local 2-4A
- Lotteries 3A
- Obituaries 4A
- Sports 8-13A
- State 3A
- Sudoku 7B
- Television 5,6B



In the shadow of great wealth, the lives of thousands in Glynn County are a WINDOW ON POVERTY

ABOUT 17 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION LIVES BELOW THE POVERTY LINE

MORE THAN 7,000 OF 12,900 PUBLIC SCHOOLCHILDREN GET FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCHES

By ANNA FERGUSON HALL
The Brunswick News

ELUNICE WILLCOX looked up to see a man standing outside the locked front door. She then glanced at the clock on the wall: 9:43 a.m.

The man appeared weathered and in obvious need of help. It was help Willcox and other volunteers at Manna House could offer, but not for another two hours.

"They start lining up early," said Willcox, chair of the Brunswick Kiwanis Club, the group that was preparing and serving meals recently at the soup kitchen on G Street, in Brunswick.

If the previous month the group volunteered was any indication, Willcox and others would dish out at least 170 plates of food by the end of the meal. And they would always willing to give seconds when they could.

"We come once a month, and every month we serve every last bit of food," Willcox said, as she handed out plates of beef stew and tuna sandwiches. "For some of these folks, it's the only meal they get a day. Lord, yes, these are the poor folks of the community. They need our help."

The people who fill Manna House for a daily meal are but one side of the poverty coin. Aside from the hungry and homeless, there are individuals woven into the poverty circle in Glynn County who come from a different walk of life.

They are people like Hailey Myers, a



Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News

At Manna House, a social service program that provides meals to the needy, members of the Brunswick Kiwanis Club, from left, Henry Harvey, Alisha Shuman and Marie Bauer help serve lunch.

First of two parts

Monday: What's being done to fix the problem

single mother of two small children who is working to improve her own condition and to move out of public housing.

A recent graduate of the S.T.A.R. Foundation life training course, Myers is a

graduate who foundation founder and director Ellen Murphy points to as a success story.

Since finishing the program last year, Myers has found a job she enjoys at the nonprofit S.T.A.R. Foundation, which she hopes will allow her to move out of public housing and on to a better life for her and

Please see POVERTY, 5A

Edenfield attempts to change guilty plea

Motion as own lawyer filed after sentencing in child-killing case

By LOUIE BROGDON
The Brunswick News

Peggy Edenfield, who pleaded guilty Sept. 1 for her role in the 2007 kidnapping, molestation and killing of 6-year-old Christopher Michael Barrios, is seeking to withdraw the guilty plea that sent her to prison for 60 years.

Acting as her own lawyer, Edenfield, 62, who is incarcerated in the Glynn County Detention Center, filed a handwritten motion Friday with the Clerk of Glynn County Superior Court to withdraw her guilty plea. The motion was delivered by her sister, Sharon Phillips.

On Sept. 1, during what was supposed to be a final hearing before her trial was to begin this Monday in Valdosta, Edenfield pleaded guilty but mentally retarded to false imprisonment, child molestation, cruelty to children in the second degree, concealing the death of another and tampering with evidence. Glynn County Superior Court Judge Stephen Scarlett immediately sentenced her to 60 years in prison.

In her motion Friday, Edenfield claimed that her court-appointed lawyer, Richard Allen, did not properly explain to her the consequences of changing her initial plea of not guilty to guilty. Citing her IQ of 62, Edenfield said in the motion she was mentally handicapped and was led to believe she would still have a trial even if she signed the plea agreement.

Despite telling Scarlett during the Sept. 1 hearing that she understood what would happen to her case if Scarlett accepted her plea, Edenfield wrote she was misrepresented by Allen.

According to the motion, Allen only visited Edenfield twice prior to the Sept. 1 hearing, while she was incarcerated at the Wayne County Jail in Jesup. She also claimed that she could not reach him by telephone.

Please see PLEA, 5A



Peggy Edenfield

Jekyll beachfront hotel plan scaled back

By ANNA FERGUSON HALL
The Brunswick News

Plans for a beachfront renewal of Jekyll Island could be altered to create more open space and a smaller full-service hotel.

"Certainly, this is a substantial change," said Eric Garvey, chief communication officer for the authority.

As newly proposed, a crossover to the beach would be constructed on the south side of the planned Beach Village of shops and lodg-

ing, giving visitors more options for experiencing the island's sandy shores.

The revision also calls for creating an estimated 100 additional parking spaces, Garvey said.

The shift in direction would include a scaling down of a planned full-service hotel. Authority staff says the contract for what was initially proposed as a 200-room hotel - but which has not been signed with anyone - could be awarded to one of three major hotel chains: Hilton, Westin or

Marriott.

Another hotel planned for the renovated area - the Hyatt Place with about 330 rooms - will be a limited-service hotel.

Since the authority began planning the remodeling of the island several years ago, it has always kept the idea of an additional access point on the south side of the village on the back-burner. A series of town hall meetings brought the idea to the forefront, and now it seems to make the most sense, Garvey said.

To the north of the planned Beach Village area is the Great Dunes Park beach access, which was recently renovated. While the park will provide access to the merchants area, there were no plans for a southern entrance.

"It just sort of was a dead end," Garvey said. "With access on both the north and south ends now, it opens the area up and creates a much more conducive flow."

A flow, he said, the authority hopes will give greater attention to the merchants area and create

a central activity point.

The board of the Jekyll Island Authority, which operates the island state park, will discuss the proposed changes when it meets at 9:30 a.m. Monday at the Morgan Center Convention Campus on Jekyll Island.

"Our project manager will be on hand to answer any questions and address any issue that may be raised," Garvey said. "This change, though, really just makes a lot of sense. I think the board will support the idea."

Poverty: Area image masks problem

Continued from 1A

her family, she said.

Myers sees the struggles of her neighbors, and says that many in the community never pay attention to the ways and worries of the poor.

In Georgia, more than 1.8 million of the state's 9.7 million residents are living in poverty, according to a report Sept. 13 by the U.S. Census Bureau. With 17.5 percent of its population in poverty, the state ranked as the third most impoverished in the nation, behind Louisiana and Mississippi.

"The issue of poverty in our community, it is really just seen person-by-person," Myers said. "It's an issue that is easy to see, but also very easy to ignore. For me, I saw it in my life and made changes. It's hard, getting out of poverty, but I'm trying, and I am doing it."

In just about any corner of the county, such tales of struggle and adversity can be found. Yet the faces of the impoverished are often blocked by an image of wealth and luxury often associated with the coastal community.

Poverty is certainly an issue that touches this community, said Mary Beth Chew, Glynn County Archway professional with the University of Georgia Archway Partnership, which connects community projects to university resources.

Working to improve the community through a series of priorities — which include education, economic development and sustained growth — Chew watches over all sides of the city and county, seeing both its points of pride and essential needs. Her regular interactions as a go-between for area leaders, officials and residents offers her a unique perspective on the heart of the community. That heart, she says, is carrying a heavy burden.

"Whether it is homelessness, the working poor or inter-generational poverty, you can see that the county is hit hard by citizens struggling to make ends meet," Chew said.

In Glynn County, an estimated 12,754 residents, or nearly 17 percent of the population, fall below the poverty line, according to the latest number from the U.S. Census Bureau, reported in 2009. Of those, some 5,000 individuals are under the age of 18.

Drive east on the F. J. Torras Causeway and it is easy to put aside the idea of living on government assistance. Across that marsh-lined drive is Sea Island, a gated private island, golf club and resort, just 10 miles from the hous-



Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News

Eunice Willcox of the Brunswick Kiwanis Club sets out lunch at Manna House.

ing projects in Brunswick. There, too, is St. Simons Island, where wealthy and upper-class vacationers find solace just moments away from the harsh realities of generational poverty.

Across the Downing Musgrove Causeway is Jekyll Island, a former paradise for the Millionaires Club, which was once a haven for the nation's wealthiest families.

When accepting the top position at the Salvation Army unit in Brunswick, Capt. Scott Lyles knew of the Golden Isles reputation as a wonderland for vacationers seeking Southern charm alongside beachfront properties. When he arrived here, he was shocked by what else he found.

He had not expected to see such a large percentage of the region drenched in poverty, especially given the geographic pockets of well-off individuals.

"I thought with so many vacation homes, second homes, access to the beach, that this would be a place where poverty was not such a huge issue," he said. "It's an issue that does seem to be overlooked. It's easy to turn a blind eye."

Teachers and staff in the Glynn County School System cannot turn away from the poverty of the community. They see children from families struggling with eco-

nomics every day.

In the county's public school system, more than 7,000 of the 12,900 students are enrolled for free or reduced-price lunches, a statistic which points to the realities of the county, said United Way Executive Director Missy Neu.

"It's heartbreaking," Neu said. "The children affected by poverty, children who are born into such situations — that's what really touches me. Children, the number of children living in such impoverished conditions, that's an eye-opening truth for many people. It's a shocking statistic."

Brunswick Mayor Bryan Thompson is confronted daily by issues stemming from lack of sufficient income. More than half of the city's residents live at or below the poverty line, and that number has only gotten worse during the stalled economy and shrinking jobs market.

But the picture of poverty he sees is not one some individuals have painted in their mind's eye. It is not a person too lazy to work. It is not a criminal. It is not a person without a proper education or lack of drive to fill in educational gaps.

The poverty he sees centers on single parents working two minimum-wage jobs. It is el-

Poverty rates

Poverty rates of Glynn and adjacent counties:

Glynn County: Total: 16.8 percent; Ages 18 years old and younger: 26.5 percent; Ages 5-17 years old in impoverished families: 24.5 percent

Camden County: Total: 15.2 percent; Ages 18 years old and younger: 20.2 percent; Ages 5-17 years old in impoverished families: 18.8 percent

McIntosh County: Total: 21.2 percent; Ages 18 years old and younger: 32.1 percent; Ages 5-17 years old in impoverished families: 29.7 percent

Brantley County: Total: 19.9 percent; Ages 18 years old and younger: 30 percent; Ages 5-17 years old in impoverished families: 25.6 percent

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

derly, retired individuals having to choose between home repairs, medications and food. It is once-employed residents, people laid off in the economic downturn and now unable to find work.

"When we say people in poverty, these are not bad people. These are good, upright citizens, for the most part," Thompson said.

In recent years, the face of poverty has changed, even from the working single parent or retired worker stereotype, said Glynn County Commission Chairman Tom Sublett.

With bruising rounds of employee layoffs, home foreclosures and bankruptcies that have swept the nation, not even the educated segments of society are shielded from becoming a victim of poverty's plague.

Recent college graduates, who worked for four years or more to earn degrees, are now entering a stalled work force. These are young people with skills and college loans to pay off, but nowhere to look for careers.

"Young people, they have to live with three, four roommates, or move back home, because they just can't afford to live on their own," Sublett said. "They have college degrees, but they wait tables, because there are just very few jobs right now. Even a college degree can't protect people from poverty right now."

• **MONDAY: What is being done to fix the problem in Glynn County**



BRUNSWICK GUN SHOW / SALE

Public Invited! SEPT. 24 & 25 Bring Your Guns!

BUY • SELL • TRADE

NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY
3100 NORWICH ST.
GUNS, KNIVES, AMMO, COLLECTIBLES, JEWELRY & MORE!
SATURDAY 9-5 • SUNDAY 10-5

GUNRUNNER SHOWS
706-592-4347

NEW DAY! NEW PLACE!

RHYTHM ON THE RIVER
DOWNTOWN BRUNSWICK

Sunday, Sep. 25
6:00PM
Queen Square

Fall Fun... grab the children, a picnic basket, your favorite beverage and join "The Traveling Riverside Band Featuring Josh Kirkland" for Rhythm on the River Sunday, Sept. 25 at 6:00 pm, Queen Square (Corner of Newcastle & Mansfield).
Admission \$10.00, children 16 & under free.

- City of Brunswick
- The Coastal Bank of Georgia
- GA Port Authority
- King & Prince Seafood
- Main Street Brunswick
- Georgia Power
- Southeast Georgia Health System
- McGinty Gordon & Associates

GEC

Monday, September 26, 2011
6:00 to 8:00 PM Selden Park Gym
3401 Ross Road, Brunswick

Community Meeting With Dr. Peter deFur

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

All living in Brunswick and Glynn County are invited to meet Dr. Peter deFur, our community's new technical advisor for the:

- LCP Chemicals Superfund Site
- Brunswick Wood Preserving Superfund Site
- Terry Creek Dredge Spoil Areas/Hercules Outfall Site

A light dinner will be followed by a brief update and time to meet Dr. Peter deFur, and speak with him about your questions, comments, and concerns about the Superfund Sites around the Brunswick Peninsula.

Families and children are welcome.

For more information: Call the Glynn Environmental Coalition at 912-466-0934. Or email to [grec@glynnenvironmental.org](mailto:gec@glynnenvironmental.org)

Plea: Lawyer disputes claims in motion

Continued from 1A

Allen said Friday, he had not been made aware of the filing, but that Phillips was behind it. "Peggy does not have a mind of her own, this is all her sister's doing. She's got her own agenda," Allen said.

Rebutting the claims made by Phillips after an outburst in court Sept. 1 that were echoed in Friday's motion, Allen said he had served Edenfield well.

"Anyone who would check the jail logs would know that I went to see her well more than two times, especially in the beginning when everything was so important. I saved that woman's life. She would have gotten the death penalty. We turned down a life sentence that would have meant she wouldn't have parole for 30 years. Now she has a parolable case," Allen said.

Edenfield also claimed in the motion that she was abused after her arrest in 2007 by Glynn County Police Capt. Marissa Tindale, who Edenfield claimed sprayed her with disinfectant. She stated: "Capt. Marris Tindall did in fact spray me, Peggy C. Edenfield in the face, groin area and the buttocks saying that I stink, my whole Edenfield family stinks." She said she had video on 10 DVDs documenting the alleged attack.

Edenfield asked the court to allow her to withdraw her plea and be sent to a mental health facility for a psychological evaluation, which she claims to not have been offered since March 13, 2007.

Prosecutors and Allen both cited a state psychiatric evaluation of Edenfield at the Sept. 1 hearing to qualify her as mentally retarded.

Scarlett denied a separate motion from Edenfield on Monday to dismiss Allen as her lawyer,

saying that she was not mentally competent to represent herself without an attorney.

Allen said Friday he was still representing Edenfield, as per Scarlett's ruling.

It is not clear whether Edenfield's motion to withdraw her plea was filed within an appropriate time period. According to state superior court rules, "after sentence is pronounced, the judge should allow the defendant to withdraw a plea of guilty or nolo contendere whenever the defendant, upon a timely motion for withdrawal, proves that with-

drawal is necessary to correct a manifest injustice."

Timeliness could be an issue, because Edenfield's plea was taken during the March Term of court. The September Term started Monday, according to Georgia law.

If the motion is ruled timely, Scarlett could hold a hearing to determine whether Edenfield's plea could be withdrawn.

Edenfield had been accused of murder, but that charge was dropped as a result of her plea agreement, because prosecutors said she did not physically kill

Christopher.

Her husband, David Edenfield, 63, was sentenced in 2009 to death for killing and molesting Christopher in the trailer where the Edenfields lived. Their adult son, George Edenfield, 36, was also charged in the killing, and is in a state mental hospital until he is ruled mentally competent to aid in his defense.

Peggy Edenfield testified during David Edenfield's trial that she watched her husband and son molest and murder Christopher while she performed a sex act on herself.

Brian Joseph Cox

September 24, 1968 - February 7, 2011



Today would have been your 43rd birthday. You held a special place in this family that is empty now ... you always made every occasion brighter. We cherish the memories of your birth, all the years of your childhood through the day you graduated from Georgia Southern,

and then went on to become a wonderful husband and father to Jeremy, Codie and Micah. You are remembered for your love, generosity and service to others. We have always been so proud of you, and we are thankful to be able to say that we told you so. You knew you were loved, and we knew how very much you loved us. We miss you more than words can express, but we take comfort in knowing you are with the Heavenly Father.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4

You are forever loved.

Mom, Dad, Andy, Erin,
Granddad Anderson, Grandma Anderson,
your nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles



Buy 1 Regular Stack of Pancakes **get a short stack FREE!**

Come **Welcome Flo** back to the Kitchen!

Serving Breakfast
7 days a week
from 8am - 1pm.

321 MALLERY STREET • ST. SIMONS ISLAND
MONDAY - SUNDAY - 8AM - 9PM

(912) 638-5444



The 4th of May Cafe