



PHOTO COURTESY THE SEA PINES RESORT

### DEEP ROOTS IN SEA PINES

Course officials at the Sea Marsh Course in Sea Pines want to expand tree areas and reshape fairways to bring the course up to industry standards. But doing so would involve the removal of eight protected trees. The trees are endangered, rare or threatened and prohibited from being cut down under town law,

so course officials need the permission of the town to remove them. In the past four years, the Board of Zoning Appeals has only approved the removal of two such trees. Course managers hoped to show town officials why removing the trees is necessary for the course to be successful, but board members have yet to make any decision in the matter as of press time. The plan to improve the Sea Marsh Course also calls for the removal of about 799 other unprotected trees.

## Month in REVIEW

July started with a bang, and development and disaster recovery were on everyone's minds.

## Lowcountry NEWS

### DISASTER RECOVERY COMMISSION MEETS FOR THE FIRST TIME

In an effort to increase the town's ability to respond in the event of a hurricane or other disaster, natural or otherwise, The Town of Hilton Head Island has created a Disaster Recovery Commission. At its first meeting, the commission, headed by Ward Kirby, recommended the Town Council approve a disaster-recovery plan created in 2002. Once the plan, which outlines 242 tasks which will need to be accomplished to prepare for a disaster, is formally on the books, the town will be able to operate more efficiently in the event of a disaster. While the commission rules only require the group to meet quarterly, the members have decided to meet monthly for a while to begin fulfilling their duties and help prepare for hurricane season. The commission will meet again on August 10 and will observe the town's emergency operations centers both on Hilton Head and in Ridgeland. In addition to chairman Ward Kirby, other members of the Disaster Recovery Committee include: vice chairman Rusty Hildebrand, Ray Faust, Thad Gregory, Merry Harlacher, Russ Marane and Donna Lowman.

### TOWN DENIES TRIATHLON PERMIT

The town has decided to withhold the permit for Go Tri Sports' September 9 triathlon, primarily because it was concerned the closing of roads for the running and bicycle legs might cause safety and traffic problems. This decision may affect future races that use public roads on island. The Sheriff's Office would like Go Tri Sports to find an alternate route that doesn't use public roads, however, race organizer Al Olivetti doubts that another location, that will not disrupt traffic, can be found. Olivetti still hopes a compromise can be reached and he will be allowed to continue organizing the triathlon, which has raised more than \$276,000 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

### HOME DEPOT PLAN COMES AS SURPRISE TO NORTHRIDGE CINEMAS

As Home Depot seeks to build a new store in Northridge Plaza, moviegoers – and Northridge Cinemas – are hoping the home-improvement retailer comes up with a different plan. When Home Depot submitted a plan to the Town of Hilton Head Island calling for the demolition of the building currently occupied by Northridge Cinema 10, it was the first the cinema owners had heard of any such plan. Don Harrison, spokesman for the Home Depot, said the plans were preliminary and that not all the land is under contract. Home Depot hopes to build a smaller store than the one located in Bluffton. The proposed store would be about 85,000 square feet and include a garden center. Even if Home Depot purchases the property, approval for the new store could take up to a year.

## Drawn to the NEWS



ILLUSTRATION BY MATT ANDERSON

### FESTIVE FOURTH FINDS FEW FINES

Although thousands of dollars worth of fireworks were discharged illegally throughout the county on the Fourth of July, no one on Hilton Head or in Bluffton was cited for the violations. Because many of those setting off fireworks were visitors to the area, officers opted to issue violators a warning instead of a citation. While there were no citations issued for illegally discharging fireworks, there were several firework-related mishaps. A 20-square-foot area of sea grass in the dunes on South Forest Beach was burned when a firecracker went awry, and the roof of a home on Gold Oak Drive was damaged by an errant explosive. In Bluffton, a brush fire, caused by a firecracker, threatened a home in the Heritage Lakes subdivision, but fortunately the fire was put out before it could do any damage.

### COUNCILMAN SPARKS SMOKING DEBATE

Councilman John Safay, a former smoker, is proposing a ban on smoking in all indoor bars, restaurants and workplaces on Hilton Head. If the ban is approved, Hilton Head will be only the second municipality in South Carolina to prohibit smoking in workplaces. The proposed ban comes shortly after the release of a study by the U.S. Surgeon General that found second-hand smoke is more dangerous than previously thought. Many on Hilton Head are concerned about the negative impact the smoking ban could have on the restaurant and bar business. But Safay, several anti-smoking groups, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say data shows that prohibiting smoking has little if any effect on revenue for bars and restaurants.

### THREE NEW DIRECTIONS FOR NORTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY GROWTH

At the third meeting between representatives of Beaufort, Port Royal and Beaufort County, leaders debated the direction of growth north of the Broad River. Three different growth scenarios were presented by Clarion Associates of Denver. One reflected growth close to Beaufort and Port Royal, another on Lady's Island and near Yemassee, and a third showed even more growth that included Lobecko and Sheldon. Officials were asked to OK each scenario for further study to estimate the cost of future services, such as police, roads and schools. Although representatives disagreed whether development would come to waterside land or could be harnessed within municipal boundaries, the committee voted to prepare more detailed growth scenarios, and plans to review them at an August meeting.

## Statewide NEWS

### THIRD SHARK ATTACK OF THE SUMMER IN SOUTH CAROLINA

For the third time this summer, a beach goer was attacked by a shark in South Carolina. A 21-year-old woman, swimming off the shore of Kiawah Island, received a bite on the foot last month. She joins 14-year-old Caelin Lacy, bit off the coast of Pawleys Island, and a seven-month-old visitor from Missouri, bitten on Hilton Head Island, on the list of South Carolina's 2006 shark bite victims. With this third attack, South Carolina has met its annual average of shark attacks per summer, although last year five incidents were recorded. The Palmetto State's waters are generally a safe place to swim, and no fatal shark attacks have been recorded since 1883.

### GOP, DEMS VIE FOR OPEN SENATE SEAT

Within a week of Sen. Verne Smith's announcement that he would vacate his Senate seat due to illness, contenders were already announcing their intentions to replace him. State Rep. Lewis Vaughn, a Republican, recently left the State House of Representatives after declining to seek a 10th term. He will seek Smith's seat along with Greenville Democrat Frank Eppes. A third-generation attorney, Eppes is the son of a state legislator, judge and 1986 gubernatorial candidate. The two will go head-to-head in a special election to be held November 7.

### SANFORD ROCKS OUT AT MYRTLE BEACH THEME PARK

After taking a ride on the Beatle's Magical Mystery Tour bus, Gov. Mark Sanford was in the proper spirits to break ground on a new Hard Rock theme park in Myrtle Beach. Upon completion in the spring of 2008, the \$400 million amusement park will bring 3,000 jobs to the coast and help replace the landmark Pavilion Amusement Park, set to close this fall. The groundbreaking was done with silver Gibson guitar-inspired shovels and in the shadows of "Mount Rockmore," a sand sculpture featuring the busts of Jimi Hendrix, John Lennon, Elvis Presley and Bob Marley.

### FLORIDA INSURER TO STOP SC POLICIES

The Florida Office of Insurance Regulators has put Florida Select Insurance Co. into rehabilitation, ordering it to stop issuing new policies within the states of Florida and South Carolina. The SC Insurance Department is looking into the company, which was 17th in the state as of 2004. **M**



*Ten years ago in Monthly... Our focus was on children even as far back as our August 1996 issue, when we took an enlightening look at area education options. We also offered up advice for families dealing with troubled teenagers and spruced up kids' rooms by sharing fun, youth-centric decorating tips.*