



PHOTO BY BARRY KAUFMAN

### Drilling at Rocks

Prior to being leveled, Rock's T-Shirt Shop and ABC store served one last service to the community as a training ground for Hilton Head and Bluffton Fire and Rescue teams. For two days, firefighters practiced in and around the strip mall, which is being converted into public space. The drills were aimed at similar fires that could break out in commercial buildings, and involved fighting internal fires and freeing trapped victims.

Unfortunately, the drills were quickly called off due to the visibility of the drills and the proximity of a major intersection to the drill sites. As many as three car crashes occurred directly in front of Rock's as rubberneckers became distracted.

## DRAWN TO THE NEWS



ILLUSTRATION BY MATT ANDERSON

*Having been kept out of almost every major plantation around Hilton Head Island, Hargray cable may have to bite the bullet and just pay the five bucks for the gate pass.*

## LOWCOUNTRYNEWS

### Hilton Head Prep bell finally tolls at home

The infamous Hilton Head Preparatory School bell, missing for nearly 21 years, has finally returned to the school. Before disappearing, the bell was traditionally stolen by someone in the senior class during the year and returned on graduation day, but in 1984 the bell went missing altogether. After over two decades of rumors as to the bell's location, it seems that bell has been well traveled. According to Hilton Head lawyer Sam Bauer, the bell was initially buried in the Seven Oaks Cemetery in the middle of Sea Pines, then spent time buried in the Sea Pines Circle. Since being unearthed sometime in the '80s, it has travelled from home to home between the 29 students who formed Prep's class of 1984. The bell was delivered by Linda and Charlie Fraser, who acted on behalf of Bauer, who was acting as "legal counsel" for the class of 1984.

### "Minuteman" movement may come to the Lowcountry

The Minuteman Project, a vigilante group that recently gained national media exposure for posting citizen patrols along the Mexican border, may be setting up stakes in the Lowcountry. Citizens for a Better Community, who have previously weighed in on several issues involving illegal immigration, is planning on dropping their name in order to join a statewide chapter of the Minuteman Project. While there are no borders to protect on Hilton Head, the group's focus will be on local businesses who are believed to be hiring illegal workers.

### Hargray blocked from several island plantations

Hargray's recently inked 10-year deal with the town ran into its first snag when Adelpia Communications announced that it had exclusive agreements with several local plantations, including Palmetto Dunes Resort, Windmill Harbour, Long Cove Club, Hilton Head Plantation, Indigo Run, Spanish Wells Plantation, Wexford Plantation and Sea Pines Resort. Under the conditions of their agreement with the town, Hargray must provide service to 60 percent of the island within a year, reaching the entire island within five years. Adelpia's exclusive agreements with said communities are currently being reviewed by all parties, but Hargray cannot move forward on Hilton Head until this issue is resolved.

### County agrees to regional housing consortium resolution

Beaufort County recently approved a resolution to participate in a joint regional program, along with Jasper, Hampton and Colleton counties, to provide affordable housing to residents. The resolution is the first step toward an overall agreement in which the counties would provide matching funds to the federal program. Beaufort County would be the lead agency, and would contribute \$56,000 a year for three years. Colleton county would then contribute \$19,000 annually, and both Jasper and Hampton counties would contribute \$9,000 each.

### Hardeeville development heats up, ices down

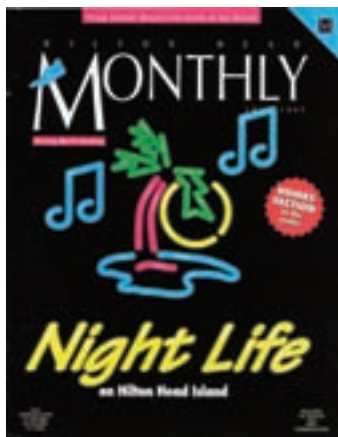
Hardeeville City Council gave first reading on June 9 to a development

agreement for a 5,000-acre Argent West tract located east of I-95 and north of US 278. This tract would double the size of the city of Hardeeville and allow for 9,500 potential dwelling units, as well as commercial property, parks, school sites and emergency facilities. The developer of this tract, Core Communities, will pay \$6,171 per unit in development fees that will go toward roads, police and fire stations, schools, libraries, and a new 75-acre regional park. Included in the \$6,171 development fees is \$2,315 per unit for internal public roads and \$1,980 for off-site road improvements, including the future widening of US 278.

In a separate deal, a proposed village at the southeast corner of the I-95 and U.S. 278 intersection would include a spate of multipurpose indoor arenas, including one which would hopefully hold a minor league hockey team. The owners of the property, Ice Plus Properties, has spent the last four years getting financing and tenants in order to create the development. Plans for the arena call for a capacity of 10-12,000 spectators, which would then possibly justify the creation of a minor league hockey team, playing in the East Coast Hockey League.

### Traffic jams result in online petition

Frustrated by the usual rush-hour gridlock that plagues the island and Bluffton, local business owner Jennifer Megliore decided to take her case to the World Wide Web, launching an online petition to protest traffic measures. According to the Web site's manifesto, the purpose of the signatures is to demonstrate "the number of people fed up with our Saturday traffic situation, and commuter traffic, so that our SCDOT will consider teaming up with local law enforcement to either adjust the traffic light for smooth flow or provide a policeman to manually adjust the timing for maximum green time." As of press time, 211 people had signed their names to the "Honking Mad Commuters of Hilton Head & Bluffton," posting comments along with their electronic signature that run the gamut from annoyed to infuriated. If you'd like to add your name to the list, visit [www.petitiononline.com/Commuter/petition.html](http://www.petitiononline.com/Commuter/petition.html).



### 10 years ago in Monthly

Our July 1995 issue painted the town red in a special in-depth look at our island's blooming night life scene. Glancing through the section, it's amazing to see how much that segment of business has grown in just ten years. We also took a look north to Fripp Island's ascension to major resort and first addressed the issue of Beaufort County's water quality, an issue that would gain prominence later on with the development of Bluffton.

## STATEWIDENEWS

### State Chamber of Commerce reports best year yet

In a meeting of chamber of commerce executives in Columbia, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce said the state legislature passed 17 pro-business bills and that several more bills are staged to pass early next session (January). Among successful legislation is a highway bill that will move \$68 million from the general fund to the transportation department. It's currently on the governor's desk for signing. Half the dollars would go to road maintenance and the other half to the State Infrastructure Bank. Otis Rawl, vice president for public policy at the state chamber, further mentioned the successful passage of the mini-bottle/free-pour legislation, which the governor has signed and which was an important piece of legislation for the hospitality industry. Mr. Rawl said the legislature most likely will focus next year on property reassessment.

### Seafood season outlook begins to shape up

Shrimping season began mid-month to a late start due to cooler water temperatures and lower spawning rates. Facing pressure from farm-raised imported shrimp, the state was only able to license 488 commercial trawlers, a drop from 516 licensed last year. While the outlook for this year's shrimping season could be better, officials are confident the haul will pick up later on in the season. Clam farmers throughout the state, however, are facing a banner year. With hurricanes damaging the harvest in Florida, and an outbreak of red tide in many northern harvesting spots, the South Carolina region has a natural advantage.

- With help from Hilton Head/Bluffton Chamber of Commerce

## NATIONWIDENEWS

### Federal Reserve Board governor predicts real estate drop

A Federal Reserve Board governor recently made several statements that don't bode well for our region's real estate market. Specifically listing coastal, leisure-oriented locations, Susan Bies predicted a coming burst of the real estate bubble. Bies cited a similar burst in oil states in the 1980s, when a dip in oil prices was echoed by a decline in real estate.

### What is "Stagflation?"

According to the experts at Investopedia.com, stagflation is "a condition of slow economic growth and relatively high unemployment - a time of stagnation - accompanied by a rise in prices, or inflation."

When prices are growing, but the economy isn't, stagflation can set in - not good. Stagflation occurred back in the '70s due to a surge in oil prices, which brought on major inflation in developed nations, such as the U.S. And stagnation exasperated the effects of inflation. Experts say that our shaky economy is too dependent upon spending by American consumers who are heavily indebted and will eventually need to cut back.