



Energy research holds potential



Photos by Lee Hinnant

Randy Sturgill of Oceana examines a wind turbine blade at Clemson University's Dominion Energy Research Center, the nation's largest testing facility for wind generators.

Brunswick coast

Major players serious about wind turbines

By Lee Hinnant
Staff Writer

In a stark, gray niche at Charleston, South Carolina's working harbor, engineers from Clemson University and their industrial partners are breathing life into the next generation of offshore wind turbines, structures that have the potential to power thousands of homes without polluting the air or water.

Wind power has come a long way from the days of centuries-old, iconic pumps in the Netherlands. There are now 25,000 wind turbines in the United States, and Clemson is working with companies across the globe to put more, larger generators offshore in the Atlantic Ocean, said Meredyth Crichton, director of the Dominion Energy Research Center.

Clemson University's Dominion Energy Innovation Center is a leader in testing and refining wind turbine energy and building the next-generation electrical smart grid.

The center merges bench-testing of wind power components with the new vision of a "smart" electrical grid. It's a mix that has garnered attention from some of the largest

See Wind, page 8A



Center director Meredyth Crichton talks with Oceana staff about the larger of two generators at the facility. This 15-megawatt generator has the potential to power more than 3,000 homes.

Brunswick County COVID surge raises concern

Community deals with outbreaks headed into Labor Day weekend

By Caroline MacGregor
Staff Writer

As we approach the Labor Day holiday weekend comes the unsettling news that the risk level associated with becoming infected with COVID-19 is raging out of control.

"I know everyone just wants Covid to be over. Unfortunately, right now your chances of catching Covid in Brunswick county are higher than they have ever been," stated Boiling Spring Lakes Family Medicine doctor Karen Wood M.D. "We have a record number of patients hospitalized with Covid right now and both Doshier and Novant hospitals have had patients in their 20's and 30's on ventilators and dying in the past two weeks."

The numbers speak for themselves. Brunswick County is experiencing a high percentage of positive COVID-19 cases fueled by the highly contagious Delta Variant.

As of August 30, the Brunswick County Health Department reported 12,860 cases, and 183 deaths. On August 2, the county counted 10,128 confirmed and probable cases, including 139 new cases, 524 active cases, and 161 deaths.

"I encourage people to get tested for Covid when they feel sick to help prevent spreading it, and because we do have treatments available that can help you get better faster and stay out of the hospital," said Dr. Wood. "We all need to wear our masks, avoid crowds, get Covid test- See COVID, page 9A

Doshier Memorial

Hospital projecting a \$4.5M turnaround

By Terry Pope
Associate Editor

Trustees are projecting a \$4.5-million financial turnaround for Doshier Memorial Hospital's current fiscal year that ends Sept. 30 – turning a deficit of \$5.9-million in excess from operations a year ago into a positive \$1.4-million by the end of this month.

Such a dramatic shift gives trustees confidence in the 2021-22 hospital budget recently approved that projects a \$693,221 net gain in operations, despite a capital budget that also calls for \$2.7-million in expenditures.

Higher than expected patient revenues are leading Doshier's financial rally. The hospital netted \$13.2-million in patient revenue in June, and early figures show \$13.8-million will be collected in July. The hospital projected around \$11-million per month.

"We are seeing a \$4.5-million swing from this time last year," said Trustees Chairman Robert Howard at the August 16 board meeting. "We are seeing the most revenue we've See Doshier, page 7A



Southport Volunteers help BPH fill housing gap

By Caroline MacGregor
Staff Writer

The need for affordable housing in Brunswick County continues to escalate and with it the need for transitional housing for people who, through no fault of their own, are without a permanent residence.

Photo by Caroline MacGregor
Volunteers donate their time to help Brunswick Partnership for Housing transform a property at 250 E. 11th Street in Southport.

Together with other local agencies, Brunswick Partnership for Housing (BPH) is trying to help fill a gap.

In 2020, BPH purchased the property at 250 East 11th Street in Southport which it is now being renovated with help from the community.

BPH board member Susan Crabtree said there are volunteers that work from about 8:30 until 11 in the morning helping out.

The 11th Street building was previously owned by Doshier Hospital and used as a billing office. BPH recently hired a con-

tractor to complete the interior demolition work of the property which will be transformed into four apartments, along with a family activity area, playground and garden.

Sally Learned, Brunswick Partnership for Housing Executive Director, said the volunteers will be invited back to help with painting and landscaping work on the four-unit apartments.

Retired former District Court Judge Bill Fairley said he was looking around for things to do and was happy to help out as a BPH board member and volunteer. See BPH, page 10A

INSIDE Obituaries6A Pets 6B Police reports9A Tides 10A
Classifieds13B Opinion 4A Sports11A Our Town 2A



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