

# COASTAL OBSERVER

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50 cents

## ROADS

### DOT delays roundabout threatening live oak tree

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

A live oak tree will continue to watch over traffic at the corner of Petigru and Waverly roads while the state Department of Transportation waits for demand to increase for a roundabout. A proposal to cut the 38-inch tree as part of a \$1.3 million intersection improvement drew protests from area residents and prompted a call from Gov. Henry McMaster to look at alternatives.

"We're putting it on hold until there is a greater need," said Rebecca Breland, the DOT project manager.

Petigru takes a jog to the right when it meets Waverly Road and DOT looked at ways to align the intersection. A roundabout was proposed because it would eliminate left turns. Georgetown County proposed the project for funding through the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study because of increased traffic as locals look for alternatives to Highway 17.

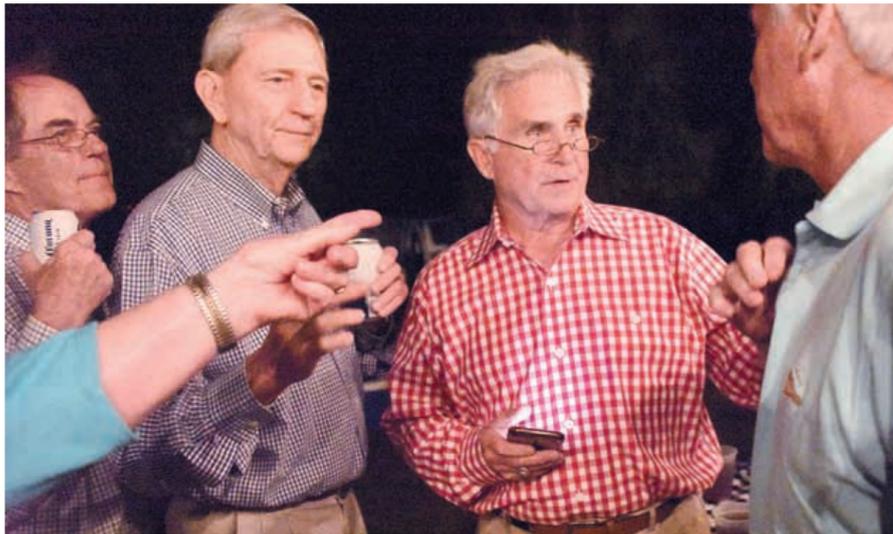
But residents and officials balked at the idea of cutting the oak, which serves as a landmark and a community notice board. Georgetown County commissioned a survey from Total Tree Care. It found the tree in "unkept good health," but warned that ongoing foot and vehicle traffic over the roots will "cause the tree to lose its vigor and to then enter a state of decline."

The county also proposed that DOT shift the roundabout away from the tree. Breland said that would require additional right of way on Petigru and Waverly. It would raise the cost to about \$4 million, she said, because it would impact a private home on Petigru and mini warehouses on Waverly.

The funds for the project which was due to start this year, have been moved to 2020 and 2021 in the GSATS plan.



The oak at the corner in June.



Jimmy Braswell, in checked shirt, receives congratulations on election night.

Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

## ELECTION 2017 | Pawleys Island

### Town picks new mayor in landslide

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

In business there are three choices, Jimmy Braswell said. "Correct decisions, wrong decisions and indecision. Indecision will kill you."

Voters in the town of Pawleys Island ignored the third option and gave Braswell an overwhelming majority in his campaign for

mayor. He won 60-21 over Doug Hooks to become the fifth mayor in the town's 32-year history.

"To me it basically says the folks who voted want to keep things on the same path Bill Otis had them on," Braswell said. "I feel fortunate I got the support I did."

The 81 votes cast, including 11 absentee ballots, represented 59 percent of the 138 registered

voters. It was the first time the island's voters have gone to the polls since 2005 and the first contested election since 2003. Mayor Bill Otis announced in January that he would step down after 20 years in office. Council Member Mike Adams is also retiring from the council seat he has held for 18 years.

Guerry Green will fill the  
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## WACCAMAW HIGH SPORTS | AAA cross country championships

### Warrior runners double up on gold

BY ROGER GREENE  
COASTAL OBSERVER

One team had a plan from the start. The other pieced things together as the year progressed.

And Saturday at the Sandhills Research Park in Columbia, each approach played out with both the Waccamaw High boys and girls cross country teams being crowned as Class AAA state champions.

The girls team placed five runners - Annabelle Scully, Alice Francke, Ella Fata, Anna Margaret Loftus and Briley Arnold - inside the top 17. The Warriors team total of 64 points easily outpaced second place May River (114) and Bluffton (129).

Junior Perrin Jones was third overall and senior Jack Moody placed ninth, leading a boys squad that had none of its top five runners finish any lower than 22nd. The Warrior boys also ran away from the competition,



Waccamaw runners on the podium in Columbia.



## BEACHES

### State delays jurisdiction line shifts

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

The state's decision last week to extend the comment period on proposed beachfront jurisdictional lines until April will give coastal communities the opportunity to lobby the legislature to preserve the current lines, Pawleys Island Mayor Bill Otis said.

A month-long comment period was due to close Monday. The new lines were due to take effect by the end of the year.

"Based on feedback received during the original 30-day comment period, DHEC feels it is appropriate to give property owners and other interested parties more time to meet with department staff, understand the methodology used to set the jurisdictional lines and bring the department any additional information for consideration," the state Department of Health and Environmental Control said in a statement Friday.

At issue are two lines that define the state's jurisdiction: the baseline, which defines the crest of the most seaward dune; and the setback line, based on an estimate of erosion over the next 40 years. On the southern end of Pawleys Island and portions  
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their team total of 71 outdistancing runner-up Bishop England (97) and third place May River (139).

"It's amazing," said Fata, whose time of 20:43 earned a ninth-place finish. "It's a great group of girls we have on our team."

"Being a senior, it was my last chance to be part of bringing home a state title," Moody said. "We had been so close before, we earned this one. It wouldn't have been possible without everyone on the team and the coaches."

The girls won the AA title in 2015. The boys team had never won, though coach Rob Del Bagnò did lead the squad to three consecutive runner-up finishes in Class AA. He conditioned his squad for a more patient approach this year, wanting fresh legs to play a part in conquering the demanding Sandhills layout.

Saturday "was the date we  
**SEE "WHS," PAGE 5**

## LANDUSE | Marlin Quay Marina

### Neighbors, divided by parking lot, continue building dispute

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

An ongoing dispute over rebuilding of the marina store and restaurant at Marlin Quay returned to where it began, with an appeal of Georgetown County's decision to issue a permit for the project without a public hearing. It was the second permit to be appealed and the second appeal to be rejected. It is likely to be the second appeal to go Circuit Court.

There are also two other lawsuits pending between the owners of the marina store and the Gulfstream Café, which share a parking lot overlooking the marina at Garden City.

"Don't get confused on this project if you think it looks familiar," Boyd Johnson, the county planning director, told members of the Board of Zoning Appeals last week. Gulfstream Café, owned by the Atlanta-based CentraArch restaurant group, appealed the county's permit decision in 2016.

Gulfstream argues that the reconstruction of the marina office and restaurant constitute a



The temporary marina office, right, and Gulfstream Café, left, share parking.

Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

major change to the Marlin Quay "planned development" zoning district. The zoning ordinance requires a hearing before the Planning Commission and three readings by County Council for major changes. "The county considered it a minor change," Johnson said. Not only did the appeals board agree, so did Circuit Court Judge Ben Culbertson. Gulfstream filed a motion for reconsideration that is still pending.

In the meantime, Palmetto

Industrial Development, whose principal is Mark Lawhon of Florence, turned in a new building permit application to rebuild the marina store and restaurant. (The original building was torn down in 2016.) The old building had 4,603 square feet. The new building will have 4,598 square feet plus another 3,927 square feet of unheated space. It will also increase the amount of parking spaces to 62, 11 more than are required by the zoning ordinance,

according to the planning staff. Gulfstream, represented by George Redman, an attorney with the Bellamy Law Firm, said the new building will change the intensity of use on the property, one of the criteria the ordinance lists for deciding whether a change to a planned development is major or minor.

"This is a major change. The plans show it," Redman said. In addition, Gulfstream has an  
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