



N.C. Fourth of July Festival Celebrates America's 250th Anniversary

For many years, Southport has celebrated America's independence, and this year's North Carolina Fourth of July Festival promises to be one of the biggest yet. As the nation prepares to mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Southport and Oak Island will host more than a week of patriotic events, family activities, entertainment, history programs, music, food and fireworks.

From June 26 through July 4, visitors can enjoy longtime festival traditions alongside several new events created especially for the America 250 celebration. Each year, tens of thousands of people visit the area to experience North Carolina's official Fourth of July celebration.

Patriot's Ball Returns

One of the festival's most anticipated additions comes even before the official week begins. The historic Patriot's Ball returns on Saturday, June 27, reviving a beloved festival tradition that was once a signature social event from the 1960s through the 1990s.

Held at the Southport Community Building, the reimagined fundraiser will feature live music, food, and an evening dedicated to celebrating patriotism, community and the festival's rich history.

Freedom Run and Firefighter Competition

Saturday, June 27 also features two longtime festival favorites.

The Freedom Run and Walk will



once again send runners through historic downtown Southport. The event includes a One-Mile Fun Run for children and families followed by the popular Freedom 5K. Patriotic costumes and red, white and blue attire are always encouraged.



Later that afternoon, the Southport Fire Department hosts the 41st Annual Firefighter's Freedom Competition and Apparatus Expo on Nash Street. Firefighters from across the region will compete in events that showcase teamwork and firefighting skills while paying tribute to the profession's history. Spectators can

enjoy demonstrations, apparatus displays, children's activities and some friendly competition among area departments.

Gospel music and Local History

Festival activities continue Sunday, June 28, with the annual "We the People" Gospel Fest in Franklin Square Park. This year's event features nationally known gospel recording artist Angela Primm along with local performers including The Lightkeepers, The Singing Kellys and the Southport Baptist Church Worship Team.

Also on June 28, the American Legion's new Everyday Heroes program begins. The two-part presentation highlights the contributions of local veterans and the history of Bellamy-Joyner Post 213. A second session on June 30 will allow attendees to hear veterans share stories about military service and communi-

ty involvement.

That evening, one of the festival's sweetest traditions returns as volunteers create the World's Largest Ice Cream Sundae. Originally introduced during the nation's Bicentennial celebration in 1976, the event has become a favorite for generations of festivalgoers.



Beach Day and Colonial Dinner

Wednesday, July 1 brings a full day of activities to Oak Island during Beach Day 2026.

Beginning in the morning, families can enjoy volleyball, sandcastle contests, horseshoes, cornhole, inflatable rides, food vendors and beach games at Middleton Park. The celebration continues into the evening with live music and concludes with a fireworks display launched from the Oak Island Pier.

Back in Southport that evening, festival visitors can step back in time during a new Colonial Food, History and Music Dinner. Historians and presenters will explore the foods, customs and music of colonial America while guests enjoy a specially prepared meal inspired by the era surrounding the nation's founding.

(Continued on page 18A)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
Your complete, pull-out, easy-to-carry
2026 N.C. 4th of July Festival Event Calendar

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Happy 4th of July and Happy 250th Anniversary America!

By Joanne Hennessy Thompson

Happy July 4th and 250th Anniversary to the United States of America from all of us celebrating our country's founding! We pray freedom and justice for all continues. May the values our country was built upon continue to reign.

Several small businesses are celebrating anniversaries during this time as well. Let us know about any future anniversaries because we love to celebrate our businesses' successes.

Who would have thought that the **Brunswick Marketplace** newspaper would be celebrating 20 years of promoting and encouraging small businesses throughout Brunswick County with affordable advertising? Well, we are proud of our lasting relationships within the communities and with the business owners. We are also proud of the success we share together in making Brunswick County a discovery for all!

The **Brunswick County Chamber of Commerce** is celebrating 50 years of supporting small businesses, from 1976 - 2026. Thank you for your service to Brunswick County.

Oak Island's **Fixins** is celebrating four years of creative menu choices based upon North Carolina sourced food home grown and brought from farm to table for us to enjoy. They are offering specials like cinnamon sweet potato waffles and a founders' omelet to toast their anniversary. They're also considering plans to open for dinner two days a week this summer. Keep an eye on fixinsoki.com for information.

In Southport, **Loco Joe's Bar & Grill**, known for food with creative Asian flair and wide array of clever cocktails, is celebrating their 5th year of food and fun with really interesting give-aways for their customers so they can share in the joy and celebrate with their customers.

Coastal Blue Gift Shop in Southport is one year old and locals and visitors alike have made this shop a favorite place to find a gift with pizzazz. They personalize and customize your choices giving your gift a unique flair.

The **Salty Olive** near the police station in the Walmart Plaza recently celebrated their one-year birthday. Their olive oils and balsamic vinegars are the bomb, and their foodie finds are out of sight. **Blue Moon Shop** in Wilmington offers some of their finest fare. Stop in and try the Balsamic Shrub. It's refreshing and the perfect mocktail. It just might become your new summer drink.

During the summer months when you are walking around Southport you can discover business gems of all types that

satisfy your shopping itch.

Pick up the newest beach reads and maybe a specialty iced coffee at **Needful Things and the Moody Bean** located at 114 E Nash St. near the post office in Southport. This hidden gem is a cozy spot to take a break from the summer rush.

Then visit **Mirthos**, a new shop opened in "the middle cottage" of the three sisters' historical cottages, at 618 N. Howe St. This is an eclectic shop owned by Hilary Meehan, well known from **Lantana's**, a sister shop further down Howe St. **Mirthos** is a **must** to be experienced! Browse to find one-of-a-kind discoveries. Enjoy artwork in oh so many forms, as well as wonderfully created greeting cards designed by Hilary for all occasions, even some you might not have thought about. Do not skip this store.

Southport Cookies has huge cookies that are gluten-free or vegan that are simply magical. Celebrate the 4th with some stars-spangled cookies. They also deliver with **Doordash!**

Burney's Bakery on Howe St. offers a nice assortment of red, white and blue holiday desserts. Why bake during the summer when **Burney's** can do it for you? Of course, do not miss the stuffed croissants. They are addictive.

Southport Cheese Shoppe's select cheeses, sandwiches, freshly baked breads and bagels as well as all things that accompany cheese can now be delivered right to your door through **Door Dash**. How convenient!

Looking for just the right amount of a spice that is fresh for a certain recipe or a specialized tea that soothes, excites or just delight? The **Southport Spice Shop** is your find. Stop in and sample the special teas crafted to celebrate our 250th Anniversary made from Yaupon, red, white and blue cornflowers, and strawberries, peaches, and blueberries.

Word has it that **Celtic Creamery** ice cream shop on Howe St. in Southport is truly based upon an Irish creamy ice cream recipe much to the delight of all who stop in to give it a try. Pure cream no additives... give it a try.

If you are setting up your seats for the NC 4th of July parade, for that day and that day, only get a "walkaround" breakfast burrito from **StrEatside Bistro**, served up fresh to kick off your holiday festivities.

On Howe St. next to **Jenny's Paws and Claws**, a knife shop is reported to be opening soon. No details yet. On the opposite side a new book shop and coffee shop is due to open soon called **Tide and Table**.

Bella Cucina on Southport Supply Rd. has been hosting 4 course Italian wine pairing dinners with a Nonna or Nonno featuring a family recipe from various parts of Italy. The events sell out in a flash. Stop in for some mighty fine lunch choices and check out the nightly blackboard chef specials.

Swain's Seafood and Cut Restaurant 8317 E Oak Island Dr. has refreshed its outdoor courtyard to accommodate alfresco dining, live music and a dog friendly option. **Swain's Stuffed Bakery** next door to the restaurant is renowned for its tastefully (no pun intended) creative stuffed cakes and tangy key lime pie...all of which sell out fast so stop in early or order in advance so as not to be disappointed. The bakery is open Thursday - Saturday from 10 am until 2 pm.

Whole pies are stocked at **Haag & Sons** and **Angie's Produce**.

The Fish Factory Restaurant on Long Beach Rd between Oak Island and Southport recently turned 1 year old. Yes, their air conditioning is fixed and yes, they are open from 11:30 am - 9 pm Tues. through Sat. If you are looking for a place for Lunch look no further. Daily chef specials and in house made crème brulee always please.

Speaking of pleasing, **Mo's Wood Fired Kitchen** at 4956 Old Long beach Rd. opened a strictly takeout spot next door, **Mo Pizza** for pizzas and lunch sandwich specials. Owner Kevin Morrissey prepares a Western NY favorite... beef on weck. Yes, juicy thin sliced beef on a fresh caraway seeded kimmelweck roll with au jus and horseradish or horseradish sauce. It's the real deal. Coming soon is a Chicago-style beef sub with Ditka's giardiniera on it. Should be yummy.

Looking for something fun to do when you need a change from the beaches? Take yourself and the young folk to the **Pottery Playhouse** at 6614 Beach Dr., Ocean Isle Beach, for something fun. Everything is there that you need and lots of help as well. It's air conditioned and filled with joy. Paint your own pottery. Choose pieces and personalize them. Paint and take it home with you. Make memories and take home something you made yourself. Check out the Facebook page or website pyopoib.com.

If you have a need for professionally vetted nanny service for your children, there is such a service available for you to take advantage of with peace of mind. Natalie Glendenning of Leland runs **Southern Coast Nannies**, 910-348-8832, info@southerncoastnannies.com. She works to facilitate and provide matches for your needs and your children's. Visit southerncoastnannies.com.

Beach lovers are especially prone to skin needs. Serving all of Brunswick County and located in Leland, **Impressions Aesthetics & Laser**, 1107 New Pointe Blvd., is not a commercial spa or place to get injections or shots with the quick fix promise of better looks. It is a source of professionally administered medical grade services like IPL photofacials designed to treat sun damage, age spots, Rosacea, redness and uneven skin tone. and broken capillaries. Skin tightening is also a top choice by clients. Owner Lynn Hege, LE, CLT, CPT, has many years of experience working with doctors and extensive training in the most up to date and least invasive skin care and repair equipment. give her a call for a free consultation at 910-899-2944.

A perfect choice for lunch or dinner in Leland is **Pizzetta's 2 Pizza and Pasta**, located near Brunswick Forest, at 1144 E Cutlar Xing, it is well known for really authentic Italian salads, pizzas and freshly created entrées are well worth a visit... in fact it just might become your favorite place to eat.

If you are in Leland with the kiddies feel free to stop into **Bridgewater Wines and Dines** 48 Waterford Business Center because they offer a children's junior explorer menu. A **Beaches of the World** food and wine journey is scheduled for July 8 at 6 pm taking you and your taste buds from California to France to Spain and then to Australia. Sounds like fun. Check this out on Facebook.

CoNoMo 2633 Holden Beach Rd. in Supply, not only has an extensive menu of dishes executed by chef Gerald and chef House but is a source of outdoor fun on Sundays. The parking lot area becomes a venue for artisans, vendors, and crafters to show their stuff to the purchasing public. Shop and dine. Give it a go.

Island Bicycles has moved from Long Beach Rd. Southport to 5533 Rob Gandy Blvd. offering the same well-known brands and service. Open from Tuesday through Sat. from 9 am - 5 pm. to serve you.

Summer heat often means dead batteries and sometimes fender benders for locals and visitors alike. If you are an AAA member look no further than **Wilson's Speed** on Fish Factory Rd. for your tow or repair. Wilson's offers full professional automotive repair and diagnostics. Give them a call at 910-770-3556. They will be there for you.

We at **Brunswick Marketplace** wish you a fun filled summer. Enjoy! Be Safe!



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K9s Receive Body Armor



Brunswick County Sheriff's Office K9s Black, Jax, Pepper, and Ronin have received donation of body armor.

Brunswick County Sheriff's Office, NC - K9s Black, Jax, Pepper, and Ronin have received bullet and stab protective vests thanks to a charitable donation from non-profit organization Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. The vests were sponsored by Sherri Widlund of Colorado Springs, CO and embroidered with the sentiment "In honor of Aunt Marge Wright".

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., established in 2009, is a 501(c)(3) charity whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. This potentially lifesaving body armor for four-legged K9 officers is U.S. made, custom fitted, and National Institute of Justice (NIJ) certified. Since its inception, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has provided over 6,397 vests valued

at \$6.9 million to K9s in all 50 states, made possible by both private and corporate donations.

The program is open to U.S. dogs at least 20 months old and actively employed and certified with law enforcement or related agencies. K9s with expired vests are also eligible to participate. There are an estimated 30,000 law enforcement K9s throughout the United States.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., accepts tax-deductible contributions in any amount, while a single donation of \$1,050 will sponsor one vest. Each vest has a value of \$1800.00, weighs an average of 45 lbs., and comes with a five-year warranty. For more information or to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call (508) 824-6978. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provides information, lists events, and accepts donations at www.vik9s.org, or you may mail your contribution to P.O. Box 9, East Taunton, MA 02718.

Nightly Flag Lowering Returns to Southport

A meaningful Southport tradition returns to the waterfront. Every evening, at 7:30 p.m. (weather permitting) until Labor Day, the community will gather to honor our nation with a patriotic flag-lowering ceremony at Waterfront Park. A different local organization will host, weekly making each ceremony uniquely special.

The ceremony features the playing of Taps, a formal folding of the flag, and a rotating group of civic organizations—creating a powerful and respectful tribute each night.

- June 28-July 4..... Southport Police 8 Fire Dept
- July 5-July 18 Knights of Columbus
- July 19-July 25 American Legion Post 543
- July 26-Aug 1 American Legion Bellamy Joyner Post 213
- Aug 2-Aug 8 Cape Fear Yacht Club
- Aug 9-Aug 15 Cape Fear Blue Star Mothers/Shalotte Detachment of the Marine Corps League
- Aug 16-Aug 22 ... Lions Club
- Aug 23-Aug 29 ... Southport Woman's Club
- Aug 30-Sept 5..... Southport Yacht Club



UNCW Scholarship Winners for Holden Beach Turtle Patrol Marine Biology Fellowship

The Holden Beach Turtle Patrol is proud to announce this year's scholarship recipients for the Judith C. Bryan HBTWP Fellowship in Marine Biology. Judy Bryan started the Holden Beach Turtle Watch Program out of her garage on Holden Beach in 1989. Both fellowship winners are Marine Biology graduate students and researchers at UNCW, and they work directly with sea turtles. They are both second time winners and will share the \$5000 scholarship award again this year. They were both featured in the Fall 2025 edition of UNCW Magazine.



- Jamie Clark conducts research to develop and validate tools for determining the age of living, deceased, and stranded Kemp's ridley sea turtles. Her Ph.D. research calibrates emerging aging techniques with skeletochronology, which estimates age by counting growth rings in

humerus bones. This work aims to improve age-estimation efficiency and support calculations of age-specific demographic parameters, including growth, maturity, and survival.

- Caroline VanDuzer is investigating the diving physiology of juvenile Kemp's Ridley and Green Sea Turtles, focusing on how muscle tissue influences their ability to remain submerged and migrate long distances. Her M.Sc. research could establish a baseline that may be useful to compare the effects of warming oceans on sea turtle diving behavior in the future.

The Holden Beach Turtle Patrol is proud of the educational partnership with UNCW and strongly supports their marine biology program and students researching sea turtles and other marine life. Their research will improve the understanding of sea turtles and improve sea turtle conservation efforts. To learn more about the Holden Beach Turtle Watch Program and Judy Bryan, go to our website www.hbturtlewatch.org/aboutus.php



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July/August Events

HOLDEN BEACH **Tuesdays through August 4**

Tide Dye Tuesday
1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Bridgeview Park
Picnic Shelter

Participants must be in line by 2 p.m. to participate because the process takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.

LELAND **July 19**

Summer Art Market
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Leland Cultural Arts Center
1212 Magnolia Village Way
Shop from local and regional vendors offering handcrafted items, artwork, gifts and more.

OAK ISLAND **Mondays through August 31**

Oak Island Farmers & Artisans Market
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Middleton Park Complex
4410 E. Dolphin Drive
Enjoy fresh produce, homemade jams, cakes and a variety of handmade goods including jewelry, furniture, rugs, potholders and more.

July 1

Beach Day
7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Middleton Park Complex
4610 E. Dolphin Drive
The annual Beach Day celebration features a full day of family fun, contests, activities and entertainment.

July 1

Summer Concert Series:

The Extraordinaires
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Middleton Park Complex
Amphitheater
4610 E. Dolphin Drive

Fridays through August 28

Oak Island
Summer Concert Series
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Middleton Park Complex
Amphitheater
4610 E. Dolphin Drive
Bring a chair or blanket and enjoy free live music by the beach.

July 18

Splashpad After Hours
6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Middleton Park Complex
4610 E. Dolphin Drive

Enjoy an evening at the splashpad with games and activities.

OCEAN ISLE BEACH **Wednesdays through August 19**

Moonlight Movies
Dusk | Town Center Park
11 E. Second Street

Enjoy free family-friendly movie nights under the stars on a 16-foot screen at the amphitheater stage. Food trucks open at 5:30 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket. Smoking, vaping, alcohol, illegal drugs and glass containers are not permitted.

Fridays through August 28

Peggy Hughes
Summer Concert Series
6:30 p.m. | Town Center Park
11 E. Second Street

Free concerts are held Friday evenings throughout the summer. Chair setup begins at 4 p.m. No smoking, vaping, glass or pets are allowed in the park during concerts.

July 1 — Chocolate Chip & Company

July 10 — Rivermist

July 17 — Blackwater Band

July 24 — The Main Event

July 31 — Jam Biscuit

August 7 — Special Occasion Band

August 14 — The Embers featuring Craig Woolard

August 21 — Uptown Easy

August 28 — Julio & the Saltines

SHALLOTTE **Thursdays through September 10**

Shallotte Summer Concert Series

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Mulberry Park
123 Mulberry Street

Bring a chair and enjoy free summer concerts at Mulberry Park.

July 2 — Chocolate Chip & Company

July 9 — Catalinas

July 16 — Fabulous Fish Heads

July 23 — Special Occasion Band

July 30 — Band of Oz

August 6 — Julio & The Saltines

August 13 — JackJack 180

August 20 — Too Much Sylvia

August 27 — Jebb Mac Band

SOUTHPORT **June 28-July 4**

North Carolina
Fourth of July Festival
Downtown Southport
and Oak Island

The 2026 festival celebrates 250 years of American independence with parades, concerts, arts and crafts, food vendors, family activities, patriotic ceremonies and fireworks.

Wednesdays through August 26

Southport Summer Market
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Waterfront Park
146 E. Bay Street

Local growers, bakers, artists and craftspeople offer a wide variety of goods. The market is held each Wednesday from May through August, excluding the week of the Fourth of July.

August 7

First Friday Gallery Walk
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Downtown Southport
Visit local galleries, meet featured artists and enjoy downtown Southport.

SUNSET BEACH **Thursdays through September**

Sunset Beach Summer Market

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunset Beach Waterfront Park

The market features live music, fresh coffee, produce, local artists and vendors.

For Up-to-Date Information on the Above Events and to Find More Fun Things to Do:

www.oakislandnc.com/ | www.oakislandnc.com/government/parks-recreation | www.townofshallotte.org
www.hbtownhall.com | www.sunsetbeachnc.gov/ | www.ncbrunswick.com/events | www.southport-oakisland.com
www.townofleland.com/ | www.oibgov.com/ | www.southportnc.org/ | www.townofcalabash.net/ | www.cityofbsl.org/
Also check events on your facebook page

A Taste of Summer

Courtesy of Chef Rick at Fixins on Oak Island we present what he describes as a "nice & simple summertime recipe that only requires a little patience, and packs a lot of flavor." Enjoy!

Pickling has always been part of Southern kitchens — a way to preserve the harvest, reduce waste, and turn simple vegetables into something unforgettable. At Fixins, we keep that spirit alive with a fresh, scratch-made approach that fits right in with our comfort-food roots.


At Fixins, we believe some of the best things in the kitchen happen when you

slow down just enough to let the flavors do their thing. Our signature Chicken Coop follows the same philosophy — giving the seasoning time to work deep into the meat for extra flavor, tenderness, and that crave-worthy Southern-style bite.

Whether it's crisp cucumbers, spicy green beans, or juicy cherry tomatoes, this small-batch recipe's ingredients spend two full days soaking up garlic, herbs, vinegar, and spices before they hit the plate. The result? Bright, punchy flavors that wake-up burgers, corn on the cobb and other grilled sandwiches.

It's not fancy. It's not complicated. It's just good food made with care, patience, and a little brine-time magic.

Recipe



Direction:

48-Hour Cherry Tomato Pickles

- Prick tomatoes once with a paring knife.
- Pack jars with herbs, garlic, and tomatoes.
- Heat vinegar, water, sugar, and salt until dissolved.
- Pour hot brine over tomatoes.
- Refrigerate 48 hours.

Ingredients:

- 2 pints cherry tomatoes
- 1½ cups wine vinegar
- 1½ cups water
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- 4 garlic cloves
- Fresh basil, 6 leaves
- Fresh thyme, small bundle
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- Pinch chili flakes
- 2 Ball canning jars, or any other glass jar with a rubber seal

A Good Summer for Art Lovers

The gallery's annual Fourth of July raffle is underway, featuring a wide variety of donated artwork from members of the Associated Artists of Southport.

Prizes include paintings, pottery, photography, prints, note cards, glass art and more. Winning tickets will be drawn at 5 p.m., and participants do not need to be present to claim a prize. Tickets are available for \$1 each, six for \$5, or 12 for \$10.

The gallery will also host its Summer Regional Show from June 22 through



July 18. Artists from across the region will compete for \$1,200 in awards, which will be presented during a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, July 10. The event is open to the public and refreshments will be available.

Visitors can also browse the Members Show upstairs, with all artwork offered for sale. Franklin Square Gallery is located at 130 E. West Street in Southport and is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Admission is free.

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The Hidden Cost of Crime Prevention

When people think about public safety, they often think about deputies responding to emergencies, making arrests, or investigating crimes. What many don't see are the countless crimes that never happen because residents take simple steps to protect themselves and their neighbors.

Every day, we receive reports of vehicles entered overnight, valuables stolen from unlocked cars, or firearms left unsecured. In many cases, these crimes could have been prevented with a few simple precautions. Locking your vehicle, removing valuables from plain sight, securing firearms, and ensuring your home is well-lit are some of the most effective crime prevention tools available.



Crime prevention is not solely the responsibility of law enforcement. It is a partnership between the Sheriff's Office and the community we serve. When residents report suspicious activity, keep an eye out for their neighbors, and take steps to secure their property, they become an important part of keeping Brunswick County safe.



Sheriff Brian Chism

One phone call about suspicious activity can prevent a theft. One porch light can deter a criminal from targeting a home. One locked car door can save a resident from becoming a victim.

The reality is that the most successful public safety efforts often go unnoticed because nothing happens.

There is no crime report, no victim, and no emergency response. While those successes may not make headlines, they are among the most important victories we

achieve together. As Brunswick County continues to grow, I encourage every resident to remain vigilant, take basic security measures, and report suspicious activity when they see it. Working together, we can continue making Brunswick County one of the safest places to live, work, and raise a family.

Remember: preventing crime is always better than responding to it after the fact.

Brunswick Marketplace

Volume 20, Number 6 | July/August 2026

Publisher: SeaWay Printing

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Facebook: Brunswick Marketplace News

Web: brunswickmarketplace.com

Brunswick Marketplace is published bimonthly, serving the citizens of Brunswick County, North Carolina.

Brunswick Marketplace was established June 14, 2006.

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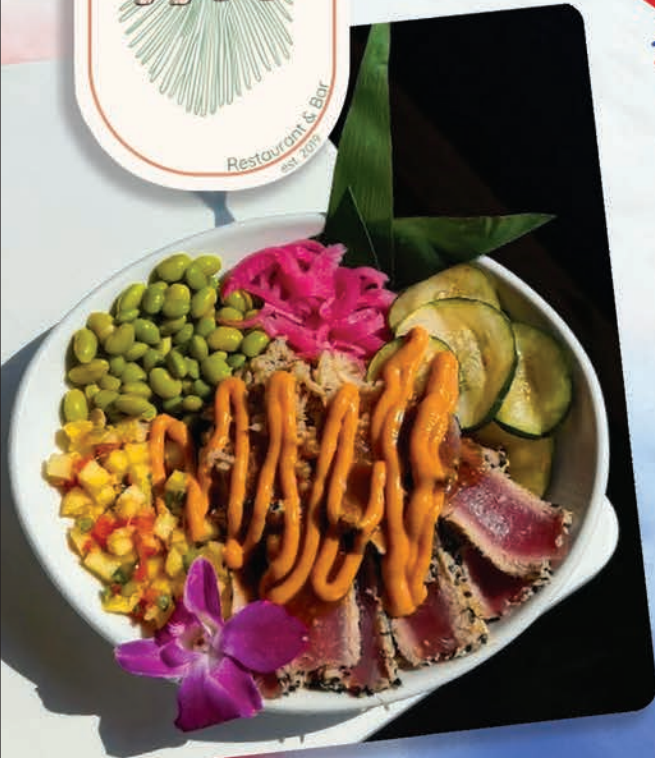
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2026 Calendar of Events

FRIDAY, JUNE 26

10AM - 4PM: Fort Johnston-Southport Visitors Center and Museum open.

10AM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

12:30PM - 3:30PM: Old Brunswick Jail open. Corner of N. Rhett Street/E. Nash Street. Hosted by the Southport Historical Society.

4:30PM: Welcoming Reception, Southport Community Building, Organized/hosted by the Southport Woman's Club. All are Welcome to Attend. Sponsored by the Southport Lions Club.

5:30PM: Welcoming Ceremony. Fort Johnston Garrison Lawn. Sponsored by the Southport Lions Club.

5:45PM: Reenactment of the first 4th of July Celebration in Southport, presented by the NC Maritime Museum at Southport. Fort Johnston Garrison Lawn. Sponsored by the Southport Lions Club.

6PM: Brunswick Summer Winds Ensemble. Fort Johnston Garrison Lawn. Sponsored by the Southport Lions Club.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27

7:30AM - 10AM: Freedom Run 5K-1 Mile. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by Novant Health. Entertainment by NOW CAT.

10AM - 4PM: Fort Johnston-Southport Visitors Center and Museum open.

10AM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

10AM - 5PM: Summer Regional Art Show. Franklin Square Gallery. Hosted by The Associated Artists of Southport.

12:30PM - 3:30PM: Old Brunswick Jail open. Corner of N. Rhett Street/E. Nash Street. Hosted by the Southport Historical Society.

3PM: 41st Annual Fire Fighters Freedom Competition & Apparatus Expo. Nash Street. Hosted by the Southport Fire Department.

3PM: Patriotic Concert - *Celebrate America! 1776-2026*. Sea Notes Choral Society. Brunswick Community College, Odell Williamson Auditorium.

5PM - 9PM: Patriot's Ball, Southport Community Building. Ticketed Event. Sponsored by Duke Energy.

SUNDAY, JUNE 28

1PM - 2:30PM: Brunswick Arts Council presents *AARGH! A Pirate's Life For Me!* Melodrama & Vaudeville Fun at the Southport Community Building.

2PM - 4PM: The Bellamy Joyner Post 213 -

Everyday Heroes, 530 W. Ninth Street.

3PM: Patriotic Concert - *Celebrate America! 1776-2026*. Sea Notes Choral Society. Brunswick Community College, Odell Williamson Auditorium.

4PM: Gospel Fest. Franklin Square Park Stage, featuring Angela Primm.

6PM: World's Largest Ice Cream Sundae. Franklin Square Park. Hosted by the Southport Fire Department.

MONDAY, JUNE 29

10AM - 5PM: Celebrating Art in Southport - Patriotic Art Contest & Porch Activity at Artisans Gallery on Howe, 114 S. Howe Street. Hosted by Artisans Gallery on Howe. Presented by Southport Art Gallery Guild

10AM - 5PM: Celebrating Art in Southport - open House & Art Activity at Franklin Square Gallery, 130 E West Street. Hosted by Franklin Square Gallery. Presented by Southport Art Gallery Guild.

10AM - 5PM: Celebrating Art in Southport - Refreshments & Kids' Craft-Making Activity at Studio Artists of Southport, 715 N Howe Street. Hosted by Southport Studio Artists. Presented by Southport Art Gallery Guild.

10AM - 5PM: Celebrating Art in Southport - Patriotic Sidewalk Chalk Activity at Lantana's Gallery, 113 S Howe Street. Hosted by Lantana's Gallery. Presented by Southport Art Gallery Guild.

10AM - 4PM: Fort Johnston-Southport Visitors Center and Museum open.

10AM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

TUESDAY, JUNE 30

10AM - 4PM: Fort Johnston-Southport Visitors Center and Museum open.

10AM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

5PM - 7PM: The Bellamy Joyner Post 213 - Everyday Heroes, 530 W. Ninth Street.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

7AM: Oak Island Beach Day - Contest Registration at the Middleton Park Rec tent. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio - Middleton Park Stage.

8AM: Oak Island Beach Day - Volleyball at the Middleton Park Complex. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

8:30AM: Oak Island Beach Day - Sandcastle Contest, 46th Street SE & Beach Drive Access. Hosted by Oak Island Recreation.

Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

9AM: Oak Island Beach Day - Horseshoes at Middleton Park (Register at field by Softball Field). Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

9:30AM: Oak Island Beach Day - Stars, Stripes and Snouts Dog Costume Contest at Middleton Park Complex Stage. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

10AM: Oak Island Beach Day - Cornhole at Middleton Park Complex. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

10AM - 9PM: Cape Fear Radio MCing at Middleton Park.

10AM - 4PM: Fort Johnston-Southport Visitors Center and Museum open.

10AM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

10AM - 5PM: Summer Regional Art Show. Franklin Square Gallery. Hosted by The Associated Artists of Southport.

10:30AM: Oak Island Beach Day - Freedom Scoot Baby Crawling Race at Middleton Park Complex Stage. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

11AM: Beach Day - Splash for the Stars Pre-K School Age Reusable Balloon Toss at Middleton Park Complex Stage. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

11AM - 2PM: Beach Day - Inflatables at Middleton Park. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation.

11AM - 2PM: Large Field Games. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation.

11:30AM: Red, White and Blue Bucket Relay (6th-12th grade & 18+ Divisions) at Middleton Park Complex Stage. Hosted by Oak Island Recreation. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

12PM: Mic Drop for America Karaoke Contest. Registration Required. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation.

12:30PM - 3:30PM: Old Brunswick Jail open. Corner of N. Rhett Street/E. Nash Street. Hosted by the Southport Historical Society.

1PM: Liberty Looks Costume Contest at Middleton Park Complex Stage. Registration Required. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation.

5:15PM: Flag Unrolling and Red, White and Blue Streamers to the National Anthem. Hosted by Oak Island Parks and Recreation.

5:30PM: Welcoming Ceremony, Oak Island. Middleton Park Complex. Sponsored by the Southport Lions Club.



2026 Calendar of Events

5:30 - 7:30PM: Colonial Food & History Dinner Event, Southport Community Building. Ticketed event.

6PM: Beach Day Concert - Extraordinaires at Middleton Park Complex Stage. Hosted by the Town of Oak Island. Beach Day is sponsored by Cape Fear Radio.

9PM: Beach Day - Town of Oak Island Anniversary Fireworks. Oak Island Pier. Hosted by the Town of Oak Island.

THURSDAY, JULY 2

10AM - 2PM: Historic Chapel of the Cross. Guided tours. St. Phillips Church, Southport.

10AM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

10AM - 11PM: Trolley available from Southport Elementary, 701 W 9th Street. Sponsored by Intracoastal Realty Corporation/Waterway Community.

10AM - 7PM: Arts & Crafts. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by Beach Road Furniture.

10AM - 9PM: Merchandise Tent open. Southport Waterfront.

11AM - 10PM: Food Concessions. South Howe Street.

12PM - 5PM: Summer Regional Art Show. Franklin Square Gallery. Hosted by The Associated Artists of Southport.

12:30PM - 3:30PM: Old Brunswick Jail open. Corner of N. Rhett Street/E. Nash Street. Hosted by the Southport Historical Society.

2PM - 3PM: Flotilla - Red, White & Blue Freedom Flotilla. Southport Waterfront. Organized by Cape Fear Yacht Club.

2PM - 4:45PM: Cape Fear Radio. Southport Waterfront.

3PM: Up Your Arts Downtown Banner Showcase.

5PM: A Salute to Veterans - Featuring *Letters from Home*, Southport Community Building. Organized by River Road Animal Hospital.

4:45PM: Reading of the Declaration. Southport Waterfront Stage.

5PM - 7PM: Waterfront Stage Entertainment - Whiskey Ridge Outlaws. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by *The State Port Pilot*.

7:30PM - 10PM: Waterfront Stage Entertainment, *The Conspiracy*. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by the *The State Port Pilot*.

FRIDAY, JULY 3

10AM - 2PM: Historic Chapel of the Cross. Guided Tours. St. Phillips Church, Southport.

10AM: Meet winners of the 2026 Miss NC 4th of July Festival & Court. Fort Johnston Garrison Lawn.

10AM - 11PM: Trolley available from Southport Elementary, 701 W 9th Street. Sponsored by Intracoastal Realty Corporation/Waterway Community.

10AM - 7PM: Arts & Crafts. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by Beach Road Furniture.

10AM-9PM: Festival Merchandise Tent open. Southport Waterfront.

10AM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

10AM - 5PM: Summer Regional Art Show. Franklin Square Gallery. Hosted by The Associated Artists of Southport.

11AM - 4PM: Kid Zone... Children's Entertainment! Taylor Field Park. Inflatables, water slides, live animals, crafts, entertainment, kid-centric vendors. Includes Humphrey Honey Bunny Farm Traveling Petting Zoo. Hosted & Organized by NC 4th July Committee, Brunswick Arts Council, Southport Rotary Club and community groups.

11AM - 10PM: Food Concessions. South Howe Street.

11AM - Noon: Wilmington Virtuosi Brass at Fort Johnston Garrison Lawn.

12PM - 1:45PM: Naturalization Ceremony at Fort Johnston Garrison Lawn. Keynote Speaker, Dr. Yousry Sayed, founder, president and CEO of Quality Chemical Laboratories, Inc. Organized & Sponsored by Downtown Southport, Inc.

12:30PM - 3:30PM: Old Brunswick Jail open. Corner of N. Rhett & E. Nash Streets Hosted by Southport Historical Society.

12PM & 2PM: Clicks of Confidence and Trick Horses, Southport, Taylor Field Park

2PM: Meet winners of the 2026 Miss NC 4th of Festival & Court. Southport Waterfront Stage.

2:30PM: Flag Retirement Ceremony. Southport Waterfront Stage. Organized by Richard H. Stewart Jr. American Legion Post 543 and Cape Fear Council of Boy Scouts.

2:30PM - 4:30PM: Cape Fear Radio. Southport Waterfront.

4:30PM - 6:30PM: Waterfront Stage Entertainment - Deep Creek Soul. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by *The State Port Pilot*.

7PM - 10PM: Waterfront Stage Entertainment & Street Dance - Sleeping Booty sponsored by the *The State Port Pilot*.

SATURDAY, JULY 4

7AM - 10:30AM: Pancake Breakfast. Trinity Methodist Church, 209 E Nash Street. Hosted by Trinity United Methodist Church.

10AM - 2AM: Historic Chapel of the Cross. Guided Tours. St. Phillips Church, Southport.

10AM - 5PM: Summer Regional Art Show. Franklin Square Gallery. Hosted by The Associated Artists of Southport.

9AM - 11PM: Trolley available from Southport Elementary, 701 W 9th Street. Sponsored by Intracoastal Realty Corporation/Waterway Community.

10AM - 9PM: Arts & Crafts. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by Beach Road Furniture.

10AM - 9PM: Festival Merchandise Tent open. Southport Waterfront.

11AM - 10PM: Food Concessions. South Howe Street.

10:15AM: Reading of the Declaration of Independence at the intersection of Moore and Howe Streets.

10:30AM: Flag Raising Ceremony. Intersection of Moore and Howe Streets. Organized by Brunswick Town Fort Anderson.

11AM: Festival Parade. Moore and Howe Streets. Sponsored by WECT TV6 and Doshier Memorial Hospital.

12PM - 5PM: NC Maritime Museum open at Southport.

12:30PM - 3:30PM: Old Brunswick Jail open. Corner of N. Rhett & E. Nash Streets Hosted by Southport Historical Society.

2PM: All Veterans Jump. Lands in Waterfront Park at this time.

1PM - 3PM: Coast Guard Activities. Waterfront Park Pier.

1PM - 3PM: First Responders Vehicle/Helicopter Display. Southport Waterfront. Organized by the City of Southport Fire and Police Departments.

2PM - 3PM: Old Smithville Cemetery Tour with Musette Steck. 401 E. Moore Street.

2:30PM - 3PM: Miss NC 4th of July Scholarship Pageant Talent Showcase. Main Stage, Waterfront Park.

3PM - 5PM: UPWA Live Pro Wrestling. Nash Street.

12PM - 4PM: Cape Fear Radio. Southport Waterfront.

4:30PM - 6:30PM: Waterfront Stage Entertainment - Salty Dawgs. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by *The State Port Pilot*.

7PM - 10PM: Waterfront Stage Entertainment - Irresistible Groove. Sponsored by the *The State Port Pilot*.

9PM: 4th of July Fireworks. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by American Fish, Frying Pan and McPherson Marine.

9:30PM - 10PM: Band Returns to Waterfront Stage. Southport Waterfront. Sponsored by *The State Port Pilot*.

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Pirate Week Returns to Ocean Isle Beach

Pirates will once again take over Ocean Isle Beach this summer as the Museum of Coastal Carolina and the Town of Ocean Isle Beach present Pirate Week, a six-day celebration of coastal history, adventure and family fun scheduled for July 5-10.



some of the era's most famous names, including Blackbeard, Calico Jack Rackham, Anne Bonny, Mary Read and Stede Bonnet.

Town Center Park will host several free events during the week, including pirate-themed crafts, games and a Pirate Party in the Park. Families can also enjoy

The annual event highlights North Carolina's colorful pirate past through a variety of interactive activities, educational programs and entertainment designed for visitors of all ages.

North Carolina's coast played an important role during the Golden Age of Piracy, when notorious seafarers frequently traveled the waters off the state's shoreline. The region's shallow inlets, shifting sandbars and easy access to the Gulf Stream made it an ideal refuge for pirates seeking safe harbors and unsuspecting targets.

Throughout the week, attendees will have opportunities to learn about that history while participating in hands-on activities and special presentations.

Among the featured events are swordsmanship demonstrations and beginner classes presented by Sword Circle, a historical combat group based in Garner. Instructor Alex Foster, who has nearly 20 years of experience in historical combat, will teach participants ages 13 and older the fundamentals of medieval sword fighting techniques.

The popular Pirate Ghost Walk will also return, taking guests on an evening journey through Ocean Isle Beach's legends and lore. Participants will hear tales of famous pirates and local mysteries while exploring stories connected to Blackbeard, Stede Bonnet and other legendary figures. Because of its popularity, advance registration is recommended.

Young visitors can enjoy Sea Shanties for Little Pirates, while adults and history buffs may be interested in the Sandbar Lecture Series presentation, "Pirates of the Cape Fear." Author and historian Jack E. Fryar Jr. will discuss North Carolina's pirate history and the exploits of

an outdoor showing of Disney's animated adventure film "Treasure Planet."

Organizers say Pirate Week continues to grow each year by combining history, education and entertainment in a way that helps visitors better understand the coastal region's unique heritage while creating lasting family memories.

For a complete schedule of events, registration information and program details, visit the Museum of Coastal Carolina or the Town of Ocean Isle Beach.

Sunday, July 5

- Pirate Week Kickoff with the Sword Circle!
- Demos – 12:30pm and 3pm
- Sword Fighting Class – 1:30-2:30pm (REGISTRATION AND ADDITIONAL FEE REQUIRED)

Monday, July 6

- Sword Circle
- Demos 12:30pm and 3pm
- Sword Fighting Class – 1:30-2:30pm (REGISTRATION AND ADDITIONAL FEE REQUIRED)
- Pirate Ghost Walk – 7pm (REGISTRATION AND FEE REQUIRED)

Tuesday, July 7

- Sea Shanties for Little Pirates – 11am-12pm
- Sandbar Lecture– 5:30pm
- Pirates of the Cape Fear with Author and Historian Jack E. Fryar, Jr

Wednesday, July 8

- Join the Museum of Coastal Carolina and the Town of Ocean Isle Beach for two family-friendly and free pirate week events at Town Center Park.
- Pirate Party in the Park – 10:30-12pm
- Crafts Before Pirate Movie in the Park – 7pm

Thursday, July 9

- Stede Bonnet, Black Sails Adventure – 10am-4pm
- Weapons Demos at 12pm and 3pm

Friday July, 10

- Jack Sparrow, Black Sails Adventure – 10am-4pm
- Weapons Demos at 12pm and 3pm
- Captain Morrow – Tabling 10am-4pm

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Pour balsamic and spirits over ice. Top with club soda or sparkling wine. Stir gently and garnish with it with berries for a festive, patriotic pop!

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911 Team Recognized



Congratulations to the Brunswick County 911 Communications Center, C-Shift, for being awarded the NC NENA Communications Team of the Year this morning at the North Carolina Public Safety Communications Conference in Wilmington.

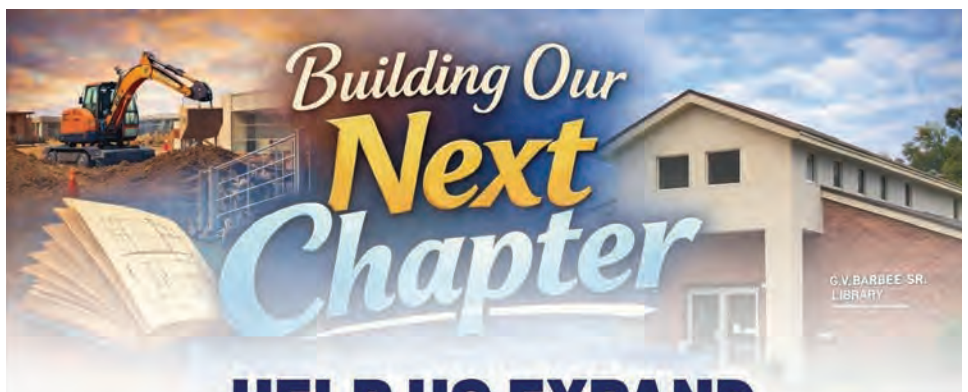
This well-deserved recognition highlights their exceptional performance during last year's Southport mass shooting incident. In one of the most critical moments our community has faced, these telecommunications demonstrated professionalism, composure, and unwavering

dedication, serving as the vital link between those in need and the responders rushing to help.

We are incredibly proud of C-Shift and the entire Communications Center for the work they do every day, often behind the scenes, to keep our community safe.

The BCSO Honor Guard was also honored to present the colors prior to the award ceremony, making this moment even more meaningful for our agency.

Congratulations on this outstanding achievement, we are grateful for each of you.



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Sponsors Sought for the 48th Annual U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament

The countdown is on for one of the premier fishing events on the East Coast. The 48th Annual U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament will take place October 1-3, 2026, at Dutchman Creek Park in Brunswick County, and sponsorship opportunities are now available for businesses and organizations looking to gain exceptional exposure while supporting a longstanding coastal tradition.

Recognized as one of the largest king mackerel tournaments on the East Coast and a featured event on the Southern Kingfish Association (SKA) Tournament Trail, the U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament regularly attracts more than 400 boats from across the Southeast and awards over \$300,000 in cash prizes.

The tournament is known for its guaranteed all-cash payout structure, which does not depend on participation numbers. Anglers compete for 55 paid places in the primary category, including a top prize of \$25,000

for the largest king mackerel. Additional sponsor-contributed prize money and incentives continue to make the U.S. Open a must-fish event for serious competitors.

Tournament sponsors receive valuable visibility through event marketing, signage, social media promotion, printed materials, media coverage, and direct interaction

with thousands of anglers, spectators, and coastal visitors throughout tournament week.

“The U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament has become more than a fishing tournament – it is an eco-

economic driver and community tradition that brings anglers, families, businesses, and visitors together from across the region,” said tournament organizers.

“Our sponsors play a vital role in helping us continue to grow and maintain the quality and prestige of this event.”

Businesses interested in becoming a sponsor are encouraged to contact the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce for sponsorship opportunities and benefits.

For additional information about sponsorships or the tournament, contact the Southport-Oak Island

Area Chamber of Commerce at (910) 457-6964 or visit the tournament website www.usopenkmt.com

About the U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament

Founded in 1979, the U.S. Open King Mackerel Tournament has earned a reputation as one of the most respected king mackerel fishing tournaments in the country. Held annually in Brunswick County, North Carolina, the event attracts anglers from multiple states and generates significant economic impact for the local community.

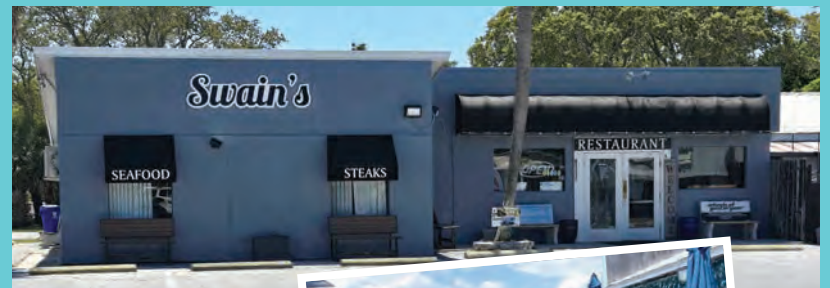


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Dosher to Host Drive-Through School Supply Donation Event August 6th

Dosher Memorial Hospital's annual "Operation School Supplies" school supply donation event is scheduled for Thursday, August 6th, between the hours of 9:00 am and 1:00 pm.

Local residents are invited to drop off new school supplies at the hospital front entrance, which will be donated for the benefit of students served by Communities In Schools of Brunswick County. Participants will be able to "drive through and drop off" donations without having to leave their cars.

This event will be held in conjunction with the Communities In Schools annual Stuff the Bus School Supply Drive which takes place each August, where collection boxes can be found at their thrift shops and local businesses. Dosher looks forward to

hosting an alternative location for this event, with the convenience of a drive through arrangement. The school supplies collected enable every student to be prepared for the school year by having the tools they need to succeed.



**Communities In Schools
Brunswick County**

Needed supplies include the following:

- Headphones or ear buds
- Crayons
- Backpacks
- Colored Pencils
- Glue Sticks
- Dry Erase Markers
- #2 Pencils (not mechanical) and erasers
- Pencil pouch for binder or supply box
- Two-inch 3 ring binders
- Composition books wide ruled
- Spiral notebooks and dividers for 2-inch binders
- Three-inch 3 ring binders
- Spiral notebooks & dividers for 3-inch binders
- Blue or black ink pens



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(Continued from page 1A)

Freedom Flotilla Fills the Waterfront

On Thursday, July 2, decorated boats will once again fill the Cape Fear River and Intracoastal Waterway during the Freedom Flotilla.

Organized by the Cape Fear Yacht Club, the popular parade on the water features vessels of all sizes dressed in patriotic colors. Spectators can enjoy the colorful procession from the Southport waterfront as participating boats travel along the river in celebration of Independence Day.

Naturalization Ceremony Celebrates New Citizens

One of the festival's most meaningful traditions takes place Friday, July 3, when the 27th Annual Naturalization Ceremony welcomes some of America's newest citizens.

The ceremony begins at noon on the Fort Johnston Garrison Lawn and will be preceded by a patriotic concert from the Wilmington Virtuosi Brass. The brass ensemble, made

up of professional musicians from across southeastern North Carolina, will perform patriotic favorites before the ceremony.

This year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Yousry Sayed, founder and CEO of Quality Chemical Laboratories in Wilmington.

Children's Day and Family Entertainment

Families with young children will find plenty to do during Children's Entertainment Day at Taylor Field.

The Kids Zone will feature inflatables, water slides, crafts, games, live animals, a petting zoo, youth performances and other hands-on activities throughout the day. Trick horse performers from Clicks of Confidence will also present shows demonstrating remarkable feats of horsemanship and positive reinforcement training.

Festivalgoers can also enjoy a special appearance by the organization's Guinness World Record-holding horse.



Patriotic Ceremonies and Traditions

Additional events on July 3 include the annual Flag Retirement Ceremony at Waterfront Park. Organized by American Legion Post 543 and Boy Scout Troop 238, the ceremony honors retired American flags while celebrating the symbols and traditions of the nation.

Throughout the festival, visitors can also enjoy live music, arts and crafts vendors, food concessions, community exhibits and entertainment throughout downtown Southport.

Parade, Wrestling and Fireworks

The celebration reaches its peak on Saturday, July 4.

The annual Fourth of July Parade will once again wind through the streets of Southport, continuing a tradition whose roots stretch back centuries. Thousands of spectators will line the route to watch marching bands, floats, community groups, military units and special guests.

Later in the day, UPWA Live Pro Wrestling returns to Nash Street with the Brunswick County Brawl, offering family-friendly action and entertainment.

The festival concludes with one of the region's largest fireworks displays over the Southport waterfront. The show serves as a fitting finale to a week honoring America's independence and celebrating the community spirit that has made Southport's Fourth of July festivities a treasured tradition for generations.

For more information visit nc4thofjuly.com including a complete festival schedule, or see our special pull-out section in this issue, pages 9A-12A.

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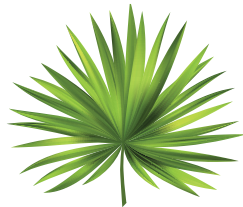
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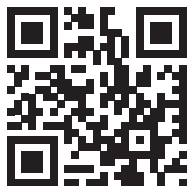


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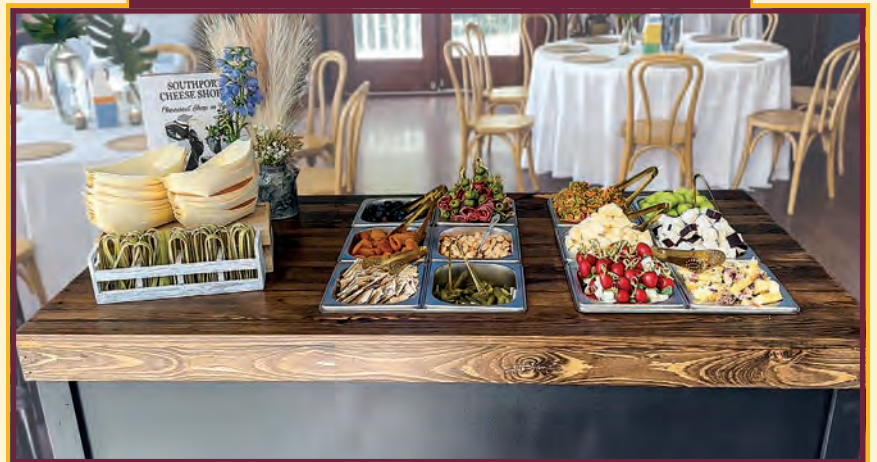
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