



2026 People's Choice Awards Is Here!

Time to Vote for Your Favorites! Voting Runs January 15th - February 15th.

Children's Amusement Place _____

Creative Chef _____

Dog-Friendly Business _____

Friendliest Business _____

Live Music Venue _____

Locals Night _____

New Specialty Business (Cookies, Bread,
Olive Oils, etc.) _____

Pickleball Venue _____

Place To Pamper Yourself _____

Place To Watch The Sunset _____

Romantic Restaurant _____

Wait Staff _____

Bakery _____

Ice Cream _____

Coffee Shop _____

Seafood Market _____

Breakfast _____

Lunch _____

Soup Source _____

Burger _____

Best Hot Dog _____

BBQ _____

Ribs _____

Wings _____

Pizza _____

Steak _____

Asian Restaurant _____

Seafood Restaurant _____

Family Restaurant _____

Bistro _____

Best Waterfront Restaurant _____

Italian Restaurant _____

Mexican Restaurant _____

Pub/Bar _____

Local Brewery _____

Bartender _____

Wine Shop _____

Wine Club _____

Chiropractor _____

Hospital _____

Vacation Home Rental Company _____

Real Estate Company _____

Moving Company _____

Pest Control Company _____

Home Repair Company _____

Florist _____

Accountant _____

Nail Salon _____

Thrift Shop _____

Consignment Shop _____

Gift Shop _____

Charitable Organization _____

Car Repair Shop _____

3 Ways to Vote!



Scan QR Code and Fill Out Ballot on Survey Monkey or
Go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KVZ8NJX>
or Mail Your Completed Ballot to:
Seaway Printing to
4130 Long Beach Road, Southport, NC 28461
Only 1 Completed Ballot will be Accepted Per Person
Any Duplicated Ballots will Not Be Counted.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

From our family
to yours!

Closed for
the season!
See you in
the Spring!



705 Ocean Drive



705 Ocean Drive



4722 E Oak Island Dr



Cafe Koa
SOUTHPORT
EST. 2017
302 Howe St



614 W West St



A New Year... Here We GO!

By Joanne Hennessy Thompson

Well, the year 2025 certainly was a rollercoaster of good, bad, and bizzarro. For the most part we made it through. Small businesses have come and gone, reflecting the nature of growth and change that marks Brunswick County. For better or worse, it remains to be seen. Hopes are high for the year 2026 to be brighter, peaceful, and sane.

Here's a reminder. Voting begins for the **2026 BRUNSWICK MARKETPLACE'S People's Choice Awards**. Get busy and vote for your favorite in each category. Don't whine if your favorite doesn't win and you didn't vote. Businesses who want to win are urging customers to vote because they care and want to win. So, make this your first act to support our small businesses in 2026. Get busy!

Southport's new **Cape Side Brewing** on North Howe St. is working feverishly to get open and brewing. And, a new wine shop, **Water Tower Wine**, has sprung up in the building where formerly the **Grape & Ale** (the original on Oak Island is still open and going strong!) and **The Wine Rack** operated.

Frying Pan, **Flava's** and **Provisions** are closed for the season. They will open in spring. In winter, you can still count on **Oliver's** for a beautiful waterfront view, well-made cocktails and good food.

Looking for something to do and broaden your creative world? Scott at **Ports of Call** is offering Mixology Lab classes in creative cocktail creation. Classes are limited so call or stop in to

reserve your spot.

Fixins will host monthly Food & Wine pairing dinners again. January is themed "Sea meets the Farm." Menus and dates will be published in January.



Rick Dobrowski
Chef/Owner, Fixins

Southport Coffee Co. has opened another new location 4309 Business 17 in Bolivia. This makes a total of three locations. The other two are 130E Moore St. and 5503 Rob Gandy Blvd. in Southport.

The Pearl in Southport closed its doors but is moving its business to within **Beach and Barn Designs** on Long Beach Rd. At that location a new business, **Southport Spices**, is working toward opening with plenty of things to spice things up in the new year.

Don't forget when the weather turns chilly to visit **Streat Side Café** off of N. Howe St. where the "Soup Magician" chef Rhonda serves up a variety of soups that warm your belly, heart, and soul. Oh, there are other great choices on the menu, but we hear that customers drop by early or order the soup in advance so as not to miss out.

Speaking of spicing things up, **The Salty Olive** is certainly a place anyone who loves to entertain and enjoys great

balsamic vinegars and finest olive oils. Owners Lisa and Mike are welcoming and knowledgeable, always offering tastings, recipes and suggestions. You can find a perfect hostess gift here. Better yet, treat yourself to something new to taste. After all, you deserve it.

Very popular **Southport Cookies** has relocated to 112 N Howe St., to a much more visible and more easily accessed spot. The plan is to open mid-January with a great selection of vegan and gluten-free cookies and baked specialties.

As far as chain stores go; **Burrito Shak**, on Southport Supply Rd., opened. **Dunkin'** (Donuts), a free-standing site near **Food Lion** on Long Bach Rd. is expected. BSL is getting a **Marathon** gas station. Rumor has it that work is well underway on **Cape Fear Seafood** near the River Mist neighborhood off Hwy. 211.

Also, on the way to Oak Island long-time high-end consignment shop **Klassy Konsignment** has undergone a remodel/refresh and is open for business.

Contrary to the rumor **Wildlife Grill**, a favorite of locals and fishermen, will stay open throughout the winter. So, stop in for some "ole tyme cookin'."

Are you looking for general and custom auto repair from professionals who care? **Wilson Speed** at 4366 Fish Factory Rd. offers experienced top-notch car care and sincere customer service. Stop in and talk to the professionals.

Big changes on Oak Island include an expansion of **Salt64**. Something unique

is on its way with a complete remodel and revamp to the building that was the old **Shuckers** for many years. Word has it that **Swain's** has some changes coming along too.

Bored with winter? If you want to plan an adult leisurely vacation, why not consult with Brunswick County local **Katie Bates**, **Viking travel advisor**. Check out her ad in this issue, page 11.

Don't forget to take time to care for yourself in 2026. Be kind to yourself and care for your body and soul in a world that is hard on us all. We have access to many services to help keep your body well in the new year. Here are just a few for you to check out and try:

- **Premier Fitness Studio** on Long Beach Rd. has classes from bungee to yoga, salt float tank sessions, body contouring and sculpture, Parkinson training, mind and spine chiropractic, to name a few of the choices.
- **Spa Bella** in Southport offers one-on-one spa services in a calm peaceful setting.
- **Las Olas** located near **Joseph's** has a complete menu of rejuvenation and medical grade services.
- For strength and mobility, **The Stretch and Mobility Coach**, Brett, can be found at 5521 Rob Gandy Blvd. in Southport 614-560-3015.
- **The Southport Beauty Bar** has a full-service menu from waxing to massage to infrared Sauna.

Lastly, We wish everyone a wonderful 2026! All our very best to All.



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Brunswick County Wellness Center is at Premier Fitness Studio.



Southport, NC

We're growing—and we need caring, energetic volunteers to help support our twice-weekly Knockin' Out Parkinson's exercise classes. These classes are packed with encouragement, connection, and meaningful moments... plus a few good laughs along the way.

Classes meet Mondays & Fridays from 10:30–11:15AM, and volunteers are needed from 10:15–11:30AM.

Volunteers help with simple but important tasks—greeting participants, helping with set up, offering support during exercises, and helping create a welcoming, upbeat environment. Think of it as being part cheerleader, part sidekick, and part “make-everything-run-smoothly” hero.

If you have a compassionate heart, a desire to help others maintain strength and independence, and a willingness to learn more about Parkinson's Disease and how we're working to slow its progression, we'd love to talk with you.

Because of the nature of this role, volunteers must be steady on their feet and comfortable assisting participants with balance, standing, walking, and getting safely in and out of chairs. Super Hero Capes are optional, but stability is required.

Ready to join the “Cool Kids” team?

Send us a message telling us a little about yourself and why you want to volunteer: BrunsCoWellnessNC@gmail.com

Winter Reading Program Encourages Reading Fun for All Ages

The Brunswick County Library invites readers of all ages to take part in its Winter Reading Program, a seasonal opportunity to enjoy books, learning, and library activities throughout the winter months.

Winter Reading runs from December 1 through January 31 and is open to children, teens, and adults. Whether you enjoy novels, nonfiction, audiobooks, or picture books, the program is designed to make reading fun and rewarding for everyone in the family.

Participants can pick up a Winter Reading log beginning December 1 at any Brunswick County Library branch. Reading progress may be tracked using the paper log or recorded digitally through READsquared, the library's



online reading platform. READsquared is accessible at <http://brunswickcounty.readsquared.com> and is also available through a mobile app, making it easy to log reading anytime, anywhere.

In addition to the reading challenge, library visitors are encouraged to check the library's events calendar for a full schedule of winter programs and activities taking place at branches across the county. These events offer additional opportunities to connect, learn, and stay engaged during the winter season.

The Brunswick County Library's Winter Reading Program is a great way to stay active, curious, and connected while enjoying the many resources the library has to offer.



A Reminder About Freezing Temps!



It's winter and even though we have generally mild winters in Brunswick County, temperatures can suddenly drop. Brunswick County Sheriff Chism wants to remind everyone a few extra precautions can keep people, especially our seniors, and also our pets, safe:

People: Dress in layers, limit time outdoors, and bring blankets or space heaters (used safely) for extra warmth.

Pets: Bring pets inside! If it's too cold for you, it's too cold for them. Make sure outdoor animals have dry, insulated shelter and unfrozen water.

Seniors: Check on elderly neighbors or family members to ensure they have heat, blankets, and everything they need for the night.

Stay warm and stay safe, Brunswick County!

Palmetto Creek Hosts Red Cross Blood Drive



Palmetto Creek will host an American Red Cross blood drive on Tuesday, January 6, from 10:00am to 3:00pm at the Palmetto Creek Club House, located at 1195 Palmetto Creek Way in Bolivia.

Community members are invited to help support a lifesaving cause by donating blood. Blood donations play a vital role in helping hospitals provide care for patients in need throughout the year.

For more information, contact Pat Mintzer at 551-206-8418.

Leland's Got Talent Sign Ups Now Officially Open for 2026!



Leland Brewing Company. If you can sing and want the chance to win big, now is the perfect time to step into the spotlight.

Secure your audition slot — space is limited — and compete for:

- \$1,000 for the top vocalist
- \$500 for the runner-up

And even if you're not singing... auditions are open to the public! They will be held at 6pm on January 8, 15, 22 and 29 for 15 available slots. Come out, grab a beer, cheer on every performer, and be part of the hype.

Your stage is waiting. Scan the QR code or use the link below to claim your spot! <https://calendly.com/lelandbrewing-info/lbc-auditions?month=2026-01>



Thank You for Voting Us #1 in 2025



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Happy New Year!



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At Suds of Love, this is what hope looks like.



In every load of laundry, every gifted washer and dryer, and every moment spent serving our neighbors, we're reminded why this work matters so deeply.

These photos tell our story:

Children who deserve to feel confident, clean, and cared for.

Families and unsheltered neighbors who rely on us for dignity and stability.

Schools receiving washer/dryer sets so students never have to worry



about being embarrassed or missing class because of unwashed clothes.

Our team—hands-on, committed, and showing up with compassion every single day.

This is who we are.

This is why we serve.

This is Suds of Love.

We believe that clean clothes can change a day—and sometimes a life.

We are grateful to every person who supports this mission and helps us bring dignity, comfort, and kindness to those in need.

K9 Team Tracks and Apprehends Domestic Violence Suspect

On November 8th, Deputy J. Smith and his K9 partner, Oti, responded to a domestic violence incident on Bistrow Road. After learning the suspect had fled the scene and had active warrants, Deputy Smith deployed K9 Oti to track him. Oti quickly followed the scent through a wooded area and successfully located the suspect, who was taken into



custody without further incident.

Thanks to the teamwork, skill, and dedication of Deputy Smith and K9 Oti, a dangerous individual was safely apprehended and a victim, who is six months pregnant, was protected.

Great work by Deputy Smith, K9 Oti, and all deputies involved!

Dancing in Defiance Seeks Sponsors

Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson Dancing in Defiance: A Night of Merriment & Rebellion on February 21st from 5pm-8pm.

Don't miss the opportunity to sponsor the Friends of Brunswicktown/Fort Anderson America Turns 250! event "Dancing in Defiance: A Night of Merriment and Rebellion" on February 21st, 2026! Your crucial sponsorship is needed now to cover costs for our all-volunteer, non-profit organization. Guests will enjoy period music, dancing, and an immersive reenactment vignette of the 1766 march on Governor Tryon's house. By



signing up today as a Settler (\$100-\$299), Patriot (\$300-\$499), or a leading Revolutionary (\$500 and above), you ensure you or your business receives prom-

inent recognition in the small program that all visitors will receive. Act immediately to secure your spot and support this unique local historical experience before the program is finalized!

Contact Ashley Simons-Rudolph at (910) 371-6613

Protect Battery Island — Support the Living Shoreline Project



The Audubon North Carolina is now accepting donations to help build a pilot "living shoreline" on the southwest side of Battery Island — a critical sanctuary for nesting waterbirds in the lower Cape Fear River.



— is putting the island's trees and bird habitat at risk.

- The living-shoreline project will install a 70-foot test reef to buffer waves, stabilize sediment, and help protect the island's shoreline

for future generations.

How you can help:

Donate to support the project and ensure Battery Island remains a safe, thriving home for thousands of nesting birds.

Read more — and get details on how to donate — via Audubon's blog: <https://buff.ly/2yl1QnX>

Why this matters:

- Battery Island hosts as many as 10,000 nesting pairs of White Ibis each year, among the largest wading-bird colonies in North Carolina.
- Shoreline erosion — driven by rising tides, storms, and boat wakes

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January/February Events

BOILING SPRING LAKES

January 8

Brunswick Energy Senior Tour & Presentation

10:30-2pm | Boiling Spring Lakes Parks and Recreation Community Center | 1 Leeds Rd

Join us as we get a tour of the Energy & Education Center in Southport. We will go out to lunch afterwards. For more info contact Amy at 910.363.0166 or asegen@cityofbls.org.

February 21

Chili Cook Off

11am-2pm | The Lakes Room
1 Leeds Rd

Join us for our first ever Chili Cook Off. Space is limited to 12 entrants. Bring extension cord to keep your chili warm. Feel free to bring toppings to SPICE up your chili. We will provide sample cups and spoons. \$5.00 to enter. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place for Peoples Choice, (1) Grand winner chosen by the judges.

Enroll from January 1-February 13.

BOLIVIA

February 6

THE BOSS PROJECT:

The Premier Bruce Springsteen Tribute Band

7pm | Odell Williamson Auditorium | 50 College Rd

Covering decades of Springsteen's beloved catalogue, The Boss Project has done the (nearly) impossible, not by merely replicating what's no less than an immortal show, but by presenting audiences with a taste of the up-close and personal magic that only a small percentage of the E. Street Band's millions upon millions of fans will ever have the privilege to see in concert. In more than a decade filled with live performances in front of countless audiences, The Boss Project has garnered a reputation for leaving it all out on the stage with every show they play, with fans across the nation commenting "I'm a huge Springsteen fan and seen all of the Springsteen tributes. You guys are the best!", "I wasn't a Springsteen fan, until now!... this band and this show was incredible!", "Best band or tribute we've ever had here, by far!", and many more.

No Refunds, No Exchanges.

February 10

How to Find Your Customers Using Market Research

5:30-7:30pm | Brunswick Community College Main Campus, Library Conference Room | 50 College Road, N.E, Bldg. A

One of the biggest challenges business planners face is finding credible data to prove their business can thrive in a competitive market. Many entrepreneurs don't realize that their local library is a powerful resource, offering tools that can help identify who their customers are, where they are located, and how effectively their business model can reach them. This seminar is essential for anyone in the planning or early growth stages who wants to learn how to access and use statistical data to strengthen their business plan, secure funding, and make informed decisions. Discover how market research can give you a competitive edge and set your business up for success.

Speaker(s): Jonathan Dusenbury, BCC Librarian. Free admission.

Visit <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?key=60460025> for more information.

CALABASH

**January 8, 15, 22, 29
February 5, 12, 19, 26**

Bingo

6:20-9:30pm
VFW Calabash Post #7288
900 Carter Drive SW

Come out and join us at the VFW Calabash Post #7288 for Bingo every Thursday night. Bingo pays out \$1,200 or more every Bingo session. Packages start as low as \$10. Progressive Jackpot minimum \$150 up to \$500! Dinner and snacks are available for purchase from the VFW Calabash Post #7288 Auxiliary.

February 6

Super Bowl Shootout

10am | Brunswick Plantation & Golf Resort | 380 Brunswick Drive

Four Player Scramble with 10AM Shotgun Start for 18 Holes. Odd Player Out Format with Mulligans for Wearing Team Apparel. Includes 18 Holes, Cart, Range, Prizes, and Hot Dog at the Turn.

Unlimited \$25 - Premier \$50 - Guests, Locals \$75.

Sign Up in the Pro Shop.

OAK ISLAND

January 7

Upcycled Jewelry Craft Class

1pm-3pm | Oak Island Recreation Center
3003 East Oak Island Drive

Come create a piece of framed art using old jewelry! A frame, background, and jewelry will be provided, but BRING any of YOUR own old jewelry to incorporate into your piece!

To register for the class, visit OakIslandNC.gov/PROGRAMS.

For any questions, email ekincer@oakislandnc.gov.

February 7

Valentines Dance

5:30-7:30pm | Oak Island Recreation Center
3003 East Oak Island Drive

Come enjoy time with loved ones as we welcome Fathers & Daughters, Mothers & Sons and Couples to some fun and dancing with those they care about. Featuring Music, Games, and Refreshments! To register visit OakIslandNC.gov/PROGRAMS

\$5 Residents/ \$10 Non-Residents (cost per person, registration required).

February 21

Mardi Gras By The Sea: Parade & Festival

11am-4pm
Middleton Park Complex

One of the most celebrated and anticipated events in Town returns for 2026, featuring a traditional parade, food vendors, crafters, a kid zone and live music.

OCEAN ISLE

January 18

9th Annual Chili Cook-Off

2pm | Pelican's Perch Bar & Grill
8 E Second St

Join us as we host our 9th annual chili cook off! All Chilis are to be dropped off between 1-2pm on the day of the event! Free to enter \$10 donation to taste. All proceeds to benefit Brunswick Family Assistance.

January 27

Brunswick County

Chamber of Commerce

2026 Annual Business Meeting

8am | The Links at Brick Landing
1882 Goose Creek Rd SW

Join us for our Annual Membership Meeting at The Links At Brick Landing. This member-only event brings our business community together as staff and Board members recap the past year and share goals for the year ahead. We'll also recognize outgoing and incoming Board of Directors.

Registration required: <https://form.jotform.com/253216973051152>.

Networking at 7:30 AM, meeting begins at 8:00 AM. Light refreshments provided.

SHALLOTTE

January 12, 26, Feb 9, 16, 23

Crochet & Knitting Circle

10:30am-12:30pm
Rourk Branch Library
5068 Main Street

Join our crochet and knitting group. Bring your own crochet or knitting project and enjoy some good conversation and helpful hints from other members. Beginners are welcome and no registration is required.

SOUTHPORT

January 13

Southport Historical Society Presents: Second Tuesday Program

10am-5pm | Harper Library
109 W. Moore Street

This program explores how political tension, Militia activity, and conflict in the Lower Cape Fear helped shape North Carolina's path to independence during the early years of the American Revolution

Reservations required: 910-457-6237

February 15

Darling Daughter Dance

4-7pm | Southport Community Building | 223 E Bay St.

Waves 4 K.I.D.S. is thrilled to announce the 3rd Annual Darling Daughter Dance. Join us for an unforgettable evening filled with music, dancing, and special memories. Last year's event was a sell-out, so don't wait to secure your tickets!

Tickets available at: www.waves4kids.org

February 21-28

Crafting the American Story: Art, Identity and History

Southport Community Building
223 E Bay Street

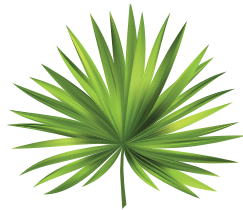
This exhibition will celebrate the boundless creativity of Americans, both past and present, and explore how creativity serves not only as artistic expression but also as a powerful catalyst for change. We invite artists to engage with materials and processes that reflect the diverse and multifaceted nature of American creativity over the past 250 years—highlighting the resilience, adaptability, and vision that have shaped our collective journey, even in times of adversity.

For more information, visit <https://cityof-southport.com/crafting-the-american-story/>.

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.cityofbls.org/
Also check events on your facebook page

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Darling Daughter Dance Returns for a Magical Evening in Southport

WAVES 4 K.I.D.S. will host its 3rd Annual Darling Daughter Dance on Sunday, February 15, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm at the Southport Community Building, located at 223 East Bay Street.

The Darling Daughter Dance offers dads and dad figures a chance to share a memorable evening with their favorite girl in a semi-formal setting designed for fun, connection, and celebration. Guests are encouraged to dress semi-formal and bring their dancing shoes for an event filled with music, laughter, and lasting memories.

The evening will feature dinner and dessert, a DJ-led dance floor, face painting, red carpet photography, raffles, auctions, and door prizes. Pro-



fessional photography will be provided by Katie D Photography and RAW Imagery and More by Shae, with production support from Shore-sound Production.

Tickets are \$40 per person and can be purchased online at <https://waves4kids.org>

All proceeds from the event benefit WAVES 4 K.I.D.S., a federally sanctioned 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting children and teens under the care of the Brunswick County Department of Social Services by providing resources and services not available through public funding.

Those interested in supporting the mission of WAVES 4 K.I.D.S. or becoming an event sponsor may contact Jennifer at 828-230-1160.

Southport Specialty License Plate Pre-Orders Still Open

Pre-orders are still underway for the official Southport, North Carolina Specialty License Plate, and local residents are encouraged to take part in bringing this hometown design to the road.

The specialty plate features iconic Southport imagery, including the town's recognizable water tower and festive banner elements inspired by the annual North Carolina Fourth of July Festival, making it a colorful and meaningful way to show Southport pride year-round.

Standard plates are available for \$30, while customized plates are offered for \$60. Personalized plates are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Plates are available for any North Carolina-registered, non-commercial vehicle, including passenger vehicles and golf carts.

To move forward with production, 500 pre-orders are required. Organiz-



ers report the effort is currently 33 percent of the way toward that goal, and community support will be key to bringing the plate to life.

Residents may place a pre-order in person at Southport City Hall, located at 1029 North Howe Street. City Hall is open Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Pre-order forms must be completed and payment made in person, or the form may be downloaded online at <https://buff.ly/hLS-mpkO> and mailed to City Hall at the same address.

Those with questions or seeking additional information may contact ChyAnn Ketchum at cketchum@city-ofsouthport.com.

With enough community participation, the Southport specialty license plate will soon offer residents a new way to celebrate and share their love for this coastal town wherever the road leads.



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ESTABLISHED 1993
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Katie Bates

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REPRESENTING BRUNSWICK COUNTY

- Complimentary events with a Viking representative:
- January 6, 2026
- February 14, 2026
- April 25, 2026
- June 20, 2026
- September 5, 2026
- November 7, 2026

Sign up here:



(203) 910-6149 kbates@lovethemousetravel.com







Burney's
Bakery of Southport

MAKING EVERY OCCASION SWEETER!

910-454-4222

Love is in the Air.

Sweeten your loved one's day.



808 North Howe St • Southport • Monday - Saturday 6am -5pm

Look for our Menu on Facebook: Burney's Bakery of Southport

www.burneyssweetsandmore.com



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Office of the Sheriff

BRUNSWICK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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A New Year's Message

As we turn the page on another year, January offers us a natural moment to pause, reflect, and look ahead with purpose.

The past year reminded us, once again, that public service is not just about responding to calls or enforcing laws; it's about people. It's about showing up during moments of uncertainty, celebrating milestones together, and building trust that lasts beyond any single interaction. Throughout the year, our deputies and staff worked tirelessly to serve this community with professionalism, compassion, and integrity. I am incredibly proud of their dedication and grateful for the steady support of the citizens we serve.

We faced challenges, as every year brings its own. But we also saw progress in community partnerships, proactive initiatives, and everyday moments that don't always make headlines but matter deeply. From school visits and neighborhood outreach to major investigations and quiet acts of service, our team demonstrated what it means to lead with commitment and care.

Looking ahead to 2026, I feel optimistic and energized. The work before us is important, and we are

ready for it. We will continue focusing on transparency, community engagement, and innovative approaches to public safety. Our goal remains simple but powerful: to ensure Brunswick County is a place where families feel safe, supported, and heard.

The strength of this office does not come from a badge alone — it comes from collaboration. Law enforcement, local leaders, businesses, schools, faith groups, and residents all play a role in shaping the future of our community. When we work together, we are stronger.

As the new year begins, I want to thank our residents for your trust and partnership, and my staff for their unwavering service. It is an honor to serve as your Sheriff, and I look forward to continuing this work together in the year ahead.

Here's to a safe, hopeful, and connected year ahead.



Sheriff Brian Chism

It's Time to Vote! The 2026 People's Choice Awards is Here!

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Southport, NC 28461

Only 1 completed ballot will be accepted per person.
Any duplicated ballots will not be counted.

Brunswick Marketplace

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Spa Bella Helping Relax and Reset

Founded by licensed esthetician Jamie Sullivan, Spa Bella has become a trusted local space for relaxation, rejuvenation, and results-driven skincare. Jamie's philosophy is simple: when you care for your skin, you're really caring for yourself. Combining advanced treatments with a calm, welcoming environment, Spa Bella helps clients feel confident in their skin—inside and out.

The holiday season brings joy, but it can also bodies feeling overstimulated with skin showing signs of stress. Elevated cortisol levels, late nights, and indulgent treats can trigger inflammation, breakouts, and dullness.

The good news? A little intentional care can help skin bounce back.

Simple home rituals can make a big difference. Choosing foods rich in antioxidants, such as berries, leafy greens, and dark chocolate, helps fight off free radicals that contribute to premature aging. Chamomile or

green tea supports relaxation while offering skin-loving benefits. Aromatherapy—scents like lavender, eucalyptus, or bergamot can calm the nervous system and set the tone for rest.

Creating your own mini spa night can be



Jamie Sullivan

a lovely way to slow down and recharge.

For those ready to take their self-care to the next level, professional treatments offer deeper rejuvenation and more targeted results. Spa Bella, exists to guide you every step of the way—

from a first-time facial that helps you learn about your skin, to advanced services designed to refine, renew, and restore.

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The postholiday season is the perfect time to invest in your skin and yourself. Whether at home or in the spa, small moments of care can make a big impact on how you look and feel.

When you care for your skin, you are really caring for you.

— Jamie Sullivan,
Licensed Esthetician & Owner
of Spa Bella, Southport

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Small Changes, Big Wins: Five Flavor Swaps for a Healthier Year

January always brings a burst of inspiration. We're ready for fresh starts, healthier routines, and meals that make us feel good. But here's the truth most of us discover by February: big, sweeping food changes rarely stick. What does work?

Small, satisfying upgrades—ones that add flavor, not frustration.

Here are five simple swaps that can make a meaningful difference in how you cook, eat, and enjoy food this year.

1. Swap Bottled Dressings for a Simple Vinaigrette

Most store-bought dressings are loaded with added sugars, preservatives, and inexpensive oils. A homemade vinaigrette takes one minute, tastes brighter, and lets you control what goes into it.

Try this: whisk together a high-quality extra virgin olive oil and a favorite balsamic, add a pinch of salt, and a dab of prepared mustard. That's it. Make a small jar and keep it in the fridge for the week.

2. Swap Heavy Sauces for Herb-Infused Oils

Creamy or sugary sauces can weigh down meals. Flavored olive oils—like garlic, basil, or lemon—add a burst of fresh flavor without added heaviness.

How to use it: drizzle garlic olive oil over roasted veggies, basil oil over pasta, or lemon oil on fish or chicken right before serving. It's the easiest upgrade you'll ever make.

3. Swap Sugar-Packed Glazes for Balsamic Reductions

A high-quality balsamic reduction delivers that same glossy, delicious finish without loading your plate with refined sugars.

Try this: Gently heat a dark balsamic on the stovetop until syrupy or use Salty Olive's Aged Balsamic which is already thick. Drizzle it over



Lisa Rogers

vegetables, chicken, fruit, or even yogurt for a sweet-tart finish.

4. Swap Bland Veggies for Roasted, Seasoned, and Drizzled Ones

Many people think they don't like vegetables—but what they

really don't like is boiled vegetables. Roasting brings out natural sweetness and pairing them with a finishing drizzle takes them from "meh" to irresistible.

Warm up winter produce: roast carrots with rosemary oil, Brussels sprouts with garlic oil, or sweet potatoes with a dab of cranberry pear balsamic. You'll be surprised how often vegetables become the star of the plate.

5. Swap Restriction for Flavor

This might be the most important change of all. Healthy eating doesn't have to feel like a chore. Instead of taking things away, try adding flavor. When food tastes good, you naturally eat more of the nourishing things—colorful vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains—without feeling deprived.

A simple philosophy: Add plants. Add color. Add flavor. Add joy.

Start Small, Savor Big Wins

Healthy eating isn't about perfection. It's about patterns—and patterns are shaped by tiny daily habits. A drizzle here, a better oil there, a more vibrant veggie on the plate. These little choices build momentum, and by spring, they add up to a way of eating that feels effortless, joyful, and delicious.

If you're looking for more inspiration, join us at Salty Olive this winter as we explore simple, flavor-forward ways to make 2026 your most delicious year yet. Our Olive Oil and Balsamic Vinegar Bar is open daily for tasting no RSVP needed!



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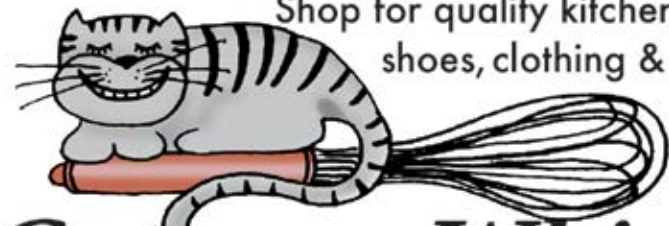


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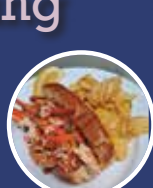
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Safe Plates Training Scheduled for Late January and Early February

Safe Plates is a food safety training course developed by NC State University. Certification is based on passing a CFP-ANSI accredited exam from the National Registry of Food Safety Professionals. Passing this exam satisfies the FDA Model Food Code requirement for a certified food protection manager.

This is a comprehensive program for food service managers and supervisory staff in restaurants, hospitals, nursing homes, schools and other food handling establishments.

The Chamber partners with NC Cooperative Extension - Brunswick County to hold this training annually.

Class will be held 9am-4pm on January 28 and 9am-2:30pm on February 2.

The Food Safety Manager Certification



test will be given at 2:30pm on February 2. Attendance both days is recommended but not required.

Price of the course depends on if you want to purchase the training and exam together.

Training + In-Person Exam - \$125. Price includes 365-day access to the program and online instructors plus the cost of the exam.

Training Only - \$90 Price includes 365-day access to the program and online instructors.

Registration can be completed online at: <https://foodsafety.ces.ncsu.edu/retail-food-safety-programs/safe-plates-food-managers/spfm-online/>

If you have questions please email clsyracu@ncsu.edu or call (910) 253-2594.

Welcome to the Yoga Unlimited Studio Debb Keller

Debb Keller is a registered nurse who embraces alternative healing practices as part of a holistic approach to health and wellness. She is a YTT 200 teacher after achieving her certification here at Yoga Unlimited.

In addition to being a yoga teacher, Debb is a Level 2 Reiki practitioner and a certified Sound Healer. Priding herself on being a lifelong learner, Debb is currently completing her master's degree to become a Family Nurse Practitioner as she also moves forward with her YTT 500 training here at Yoga Unlimited.

Debb incorporates yoga breathing techniques into all her classes and loves to teach individuals who are newer to yoga. She also loves teaching private beach yoga classes, making it special for bachelorette, birthday person or girl's weekend events.

Debb lives on Oak Island with her husband and their son and her four dogs, and two birds.

Wednesdays 6pm Slow Flow and Thursdays 6pm Restorative Yin Plus Guided Meditation and Sound Bath on the 1st Thursday Night of each month @ 7:15pm



Lasagna is Back on the Menu!

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Oak Island Sea Turtle Protection Program: Be on the Lookout for Cold-Stunned Sea Turtles

As winter temperatures arrive, the Oak Island Sea Turtle Protection Program is asking residents and visitors to be especially alert for cold-stunned sea turtles along our beaches and waterways.

North Carolina is already seeing a significant increase in cold-stunned sea turtles. Cold-stunning occurs when water temperatures drop below 50°F (10°C), causing sea turtles to become lethargic and unable to swim properly. Because sea turtles are ectothermic, or cold-blooded, they rely on external heat sources to regulate their body temperature. When exposed to prolonged cold, they may float at the surface of the water, unable to dive, or wash ashore.

In this vulnerable state, sea turtles are at serious risk from boat strikes, predators, and rough surf. They may appear injured or even deceased, but many turtles can recover with proper care and re-



Trained responders will come to assess the turtle and, if needed, transport it to a licensed rehabilitation facility. Quick reporting can make the difference between life and death for these protected animals.

The photo above shows Angel Hair, a sea turtle previously found cold-stunned on Oak Island. Thanks to prompt reporting and proper care, turtles like Angel Hair have a chance

to recover and return to the wild.

If you see a sea turtle floating at the tide's edge or washed ashore:

- Do not place the turtle back in the water
- Do not attempt to move, bury, or handle the turtle
- Call immediately for assistance
- Oak Island Sea Turtle Protection Program Hotline: 910-945-8888

to recover and return to the wild.

The Oak Island Sea Turtle Protection Program appreciates the community's continued support in helping protect these incredible animals.

This conservation work for protected sea turtles on Oak Island is authorized by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (ES Permit 25ST01).

For emergencies or to report a cold-stunned sea turtle: 910-945-8888

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Sip, Savor, and Stay Awhile: Grape & Ale Brings Eclectic Charm and World-Class Selection to Oak Island

Tucked away on the coast of North Carolina, a local gem is redefining the beverage experience for residents and visitors alike. Grape & Ale, located in the heart of Oak Island, has quickly become a "must-visit" destination, offering an Asheville-eclectic vibe paired with coastal hospitality.

More than just a bottle shop, Grape & Ale is a sanctuary for enthusiasts of the vine and the hop. The establishment prides itself on carrying a diverse and creative selection of wines available for purchase or to enjoy by the glass. Whether you are searching for a specific varietal, a region-specific vintage, or a bottle that fits a specific price range, their shelves are curated to cover it all.

"We strive to carry wines that are popular and desired by our regulars, but we are also passionate about introducing new wines to broaden our customers' experiences," says the

team at Grape & Ale.

The dedication to variety extends to their impressive craft beer program. With 12 rotating taps, the selection is always changing, featuring everything from crisp kolsches to robust stouts and everything in between. For those looking to take the party home, the shop stocks a wide selection of craft beer in six-packs, four-packs, and singles.

The Region's Premier Wine Club

Perhaps the crown jewel of Grape & Ale is its renowned Wine Club—the largest of its kind in Brunswick and Hanover Counties. For just \$34.99 per month, members receive incredible value that goes far beyond



Joe Yeager

the glass.

Membership includes two bottles of specially curated wines each month, hand-picked to delight the palate. However, the perks don't stop there. Members also enjoy exclusive discounts, access to weekly specials, complimentary tastings, and educational wine classes designed to deepen their appreciation of winemaking.

A Community Hub

The atmosphere at Grape & Ale is as inviting as the menu. The store exudes charm with an eclectic interior that feels both cozy and vibrant. Outside, a great patio offers the perfect setting to enjoy the coastal breeze with a drink in hand.

The business is also a hub for local

entertainment and social gathering. Guests can look forward to:

- * Weekly Free Tastings: A chance to sample new beer and wine arrivals.
- * Live Music: Every Saturday, the space comes alive with local talent, providing the perfect soundtrack for a weekend evening.

Whether you are a seasoned sommelier, a craft beer aficionado, or someone just looking for a relaxing spot to unwind, Grape & Ale offers a warm welcome and a cold drink. If you haven't been yet, make it your next stop on Oak Island.

About the Grape & Ale

Grape & Ale is Oak Island's premier destination for fine wine and craft beer, located at 8521 E. Oak Island Drive, Oak Island, NC. For more information on their current tap list or Wine Club membership, visit them in-store today.



Cheers to a Happy 2026!

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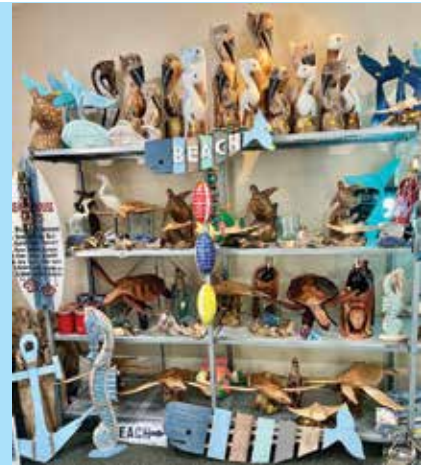
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Coastal Consumer Showcase to be Held Thursday, February 12



Area businesses will be on display for area residents and visitors to explore what our business community has to offer.

This event is free to attend and is open to the Public. The date will be Thursday, February 12, 2025 at the Homer E. Wright Event Center at 4140 Southport-Supply Road from 4pm-7pm.

No matter if you are new to the area or just want to know what's new to the area, the Coastal Consumer Showcase is a must attend event. We know that sometimes it is difficult to find a business that provides a product or service. You can search the Chamber's Business Directory but going to an event where you can see the product or talk with the business owner about their services, is extremely valuable. For this reason, the Chamber holds the Coastal Consumer Showcase.

The Showcase is a public event organized by the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce. There are many free giveaways provided by the participating businesses.

- Free Samples
- Free Giveaways
- \$100 Cash Drawing
- Pick-A-Prize Auction

Admission is free. Register for the \$100 Cash Drawing. Each vendor will donate prize for the Pick-A-Prize Auction. Those who register for the \$100 Cash Drawing will receive one ticket for the Pick-A-Prize Auction. You may purchase as many additional auction tickets as you would like:



5 tickets for \$5.00 and 20 tickets for \$10.00. At 6:30pm the Chamber will draw the winners for the Pick-A-Prize Auction prizes and will notify the winners ASAP by email. Winners will pick up their prize at the business donating the item. The Chamber will notify the winner of the Cash Drawing ASAP as well.

What is a Pick-A-Prize Auction? Register and get a free ticket or purchase additional tickets. There will be a "bag" in front of each prize at every vendor booth. You determine which prize(s) you would like to a chance to win. Then you place your ticket(s) in the bag(s) of that prize(s). The winner of that prize will be selected from the corresponding "bag".

An event of the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce. For more information contact 910-457-6964. If you are a business and would like a booth at the event or to sponsor the event, please call the Chamber to be placed on a list to be notified when applications become available.

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Brunswick County Real Estate: Sales up Over Recent Years During November

Brunswick County’s residential real estate market saw a higher number of sales, new listings and higher prices compared to last November.

“It’s normal for our market to cool off during the holiday months, and last month was no exception compared to the rest of the year. However, the number of sales we saw last month definitely stands out in comparison to previous Novembers,” said Cynthia Walsh, CEO of the Brunswick County Association of REALTORS®. “Excluding the pandemic-fueled years, November 2025 stands out as the best November for sales in the past 15+ years. This demonstrates the underlying strength our market has despite national trends.”

New listings increased 1.3% compared to last November, climbing from 554 to 561. The number of homes sold increased by 12.3%, from 438 to 492, while total sales volume climbed 19.7%, from \$214,432,198 to \$256,672,662. The average sales price increased 6.6%, from \$489,571 to \$521,692, and the median sales price increased 8.7%, from \$372,000 to \$404,500. Brunswick County’s luxury market remained active, with 37 sales over \$1 million, including the largest sale of 2025, which was \$6.4 million in Ocean Isle Beach. This sales was also the third largest sale of all time in the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) in Brunswick County.

At the time of this report there were nearly 500 pending listings, up almost 20% over November 2024. Homes spent an average of 74 days on the market and the absorption rate, which is a measure of the amount of time it

would take to sell off all current inventory, is at four months.

Year-to-date through November, Brunswick County’s total residential sales volume reached \$2,790,823,847, up 9.5% from the same period in 2024. The number of homes sold increased 7.4%, from 5,341 to 5,737, while new listings rose 11.7%, from 7,418 to 8,283. The average sales price climbed 1.9%, from \$476,988 to \$486,139, and the median sales price rose 1.4% from \$372,083 to \$377,200.

Brunswick County

NEW LISTINGS

November 2025: 561
November 2024: 554
Increase/Decrease: +1.3%

UNITS SOLD

November 2025: 492
November 2024: 438
Increase/Decrease: +12.3%

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

November 2025: \$521,692
November 2024: \$489,571
Increase/Decrease: +6.6%

MEDIAN SALES PRICE

November 2025: \$404,500
November 2024: \$372,000
Increase/Decrease: +8.7%

TOTAL SALES VOLUME

November 2025: \$256,672,662
November 2024: \$214,432,198
Increase/Decrease: +19.7%

Bladen County

NEW LISTINGS

November 2025: 11
November 2024: 12
Increase/Decrease: -8.3%

UNITS SOLD

November 2025: 9
November 2024: 9
Increase/Decrease: 0%

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

November 2025: \$193,944
November 2024: \$233,444
Increase/Decrease: -16.9%

TOTAL SALES VOLUME

November 2025: \$1,745,500
November 2024: \$2,101,000
Increase/Decrease: -16.9%

Columbus County

NEW LISTINGS

November 2025: 24
November 2024: 35
Increase/Decrease: -31.4%

UNITS SOLD

November 2025: 13
November 2024: 19
Increase/Decrease: -31.6%

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

November 2025: \$325,108
November 2024: \$184,158
Increase/Decrease: +76.5%

TOTAL SALES VOLUME

November 2025: \$4,226,410
November 2024: \$3,499,000
Increase/Decrease: +20.8%

Robeson County

NEW LISTINGS

November 2025: 9
November 2024: 5
Increase/Decrease: +80%

UNITS SOLD

November 2025: 4
November 2024: 8
Increase/Decrease: -50%

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

November 2025: \$156,850
November 2024: \$257,500
Increase/Decrease: -39.1%

TOTAL SALES VOLUME

November 2025: \$627,400
November 2024: \$2,059,999
Increase/Decrease: -69.5%

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Chamber's Afternoon Business Connections Grows Local Businesses

The Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce invites members to take advantage of Afternoon Business Connections, a weekly networking program designed to help local businesses build relationships and generate meaningful referrals.

Afternoon Business Connections meets every Tuesday from 11:45am to 1:00pm at the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce, located at 4433 Long Beach Road, SE, in Southport. The program has been serving the local business community since January 2022.

This structured networking event is a benefit of Chamber membership and offers participants the opportunity to connect with fellow business owners in a focused, professional environment. The goal of Business Connections is to establish and strengthen member-to-member referrals while encouraging collaboration and long-term growth within the Southport-Oak Island business community.

Through regular attendance, participants can develop stronger relationships, increase visibility for

their business, and expand their professional network. The program emphasizes consistency and engagement, with the belief that business growth happens "one lead at a time." Chamber leaders note that the more frequently members attend and actively participate, the greater the potential benefit.

Members interested in spotlighting their business may also schedule a 10-minute presentation during a meeting. These

presentations provide an opportunity to share services, expertise, and current needs with the group. Those wishing to present are encouraged to call the Chamber to reserve a presentation date.

While Business Connections meets weekly, there are two upcoming exceptions in 2025:

January 21, 2025 - No meeting

February 18, 2025 - No meeting

For Chamber members looking to strengthen connections, grow referrals, and engage with the local business community, Afternoon Business Connections offers a consistent and effective networking opportunity.

Oak Island Parks & Recreation Department Kicks off 2026 with Fun

One of the most celebrated and anticipated events in Town, the Mardi Gras Parade and Festival returns to kick off a new year of fun and festivities! The day starts with a traditional parade, which ends at the Middleton Park Complex where food vendors, a craft market, fun "Kids Zone" and live music.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, February 21, starting at 11am. The

Parade starts: 11am at SE 63rd Street and the Craft Festival will be held at Middleton Park Complex, 4610 E Dolphin Drive, Oak Island.

For More Information about Programs and events with the Oak Island Recreation Center visit www.OakIslandNC.gov/PROGRAMS.



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Free Afternoon Youth Program at Oak Island Recreation Center

The Oak Island Recreation Center offers a free afternoon program designed to give local teens a fun, safe place to gather, stay active, and connect with friends after school.



welcoming space to socialize and be active during the afternoon hours. There is no pre-registration required, but all participants must have a parent or guardian waiver on file prior to taking part.

Open to youth ages 12-17, the program runs Tuesday through Friday from 3:30pm to 5:00pm behind the Oak Island Recreation Center, located at 3003 East Oak Island Drive. Led by recreation staff, participants can compete for bragging rights in the classic playground game Knock Out, with additional opportunities for pick-up play using corn hole boards and bags.

This free program is intended to provide local youth with a casual,

Parents and guardians are reminded that this is not a childcare program. Recreation staff oversee the program as a whole, but are not responsible for direct, one-on-one supervision. Participants are required to sign in and out during each visit.

For questions or additional information, contact Hannah Ennis, Assistant at the Oak Island Recreation Center, by email at hennis@oakislandnc.gov or by phone at 910-278-5518.

Spring Semester Road Scholar Lecture Series Offered

The Brunswick County Library's Southwest Brunswick Branch in Carolina Shores invites adults to take part in its Spring Semester Lecture Series with Road Scholar, a free educational program designed for lifelong learners.

Presented in partnership with Road Scholar, the program offers participants the opportunity to explore a wide range of engaging topics through high-quality online lectures, followed by interactive, nationwide virtual discussions. After each lecture, attendees will join a live question-and-answer session with participants from across the country, creating a shared learning experience that extends beyond the local community.

Lecture topics vary throughout the semester and include subjects such as health and wellness, history, philosophy, religion, and the arts, ensuring there is something to interest learners with a wide range of curiosities and backgrounds.

All lectures will be held at the Southwest Brunswick Branch Library, located at 9400 Ocean Highway West in Carolina Shores, typically in Meeting Room

127 unless otherwise noted. Dates and times vary by session, and all programs are open to adults ages 19 and older.

The Spring 2026 lecture includes:

Monday, January 26 at 2:00pm

• **Georgia O'Keeffe:** Visions of an American Pioneer

Wednesday, February 18 at 1:00pm

• **Forging Friendship:** Jefferson & Madison's Northern Journey (Room 125)

Monday, March 2 at 12:00pm

• **Greece:** Land of History, Beauty, and Inspiration

Monday, April 22 at 1:00pm

• **The Frozen Frontier:**

A Journey into Antarctica

Wednesday, June 10 at 2:00pm

• **Honoring D-Day:** Echoes of Valor and Victory

Programs are free to attend, and advance registration is encouraged when possible. Seating is available on a first-come basis.

For additional information, contact the Southwest Brunswick Branch Library at 910-575-0173.

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Record-Breaking Investment in Local Education: Brunswick Electric Awards \$62,000 to Teachers



Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation (BEMC) proudly celebrated a record-breaking year for its Bright Ideas education grant program, awarding \$62,000 to 57 local teachers during its annual Bright Ideas Awards Luncheon on Thursday, November 6 at BEMC headquarters in Supply.

The grants will fund innovative classroom projects designed to enhance student learning in Brunswick and Columbus counties. This marks the largest total amount ever distributed through BEMC's Bright Ideas program, underscoring the cooperative's continued commitment to supporting education and inspiring creativity in local schools.

"Our teachers are doing incredible work to engage and inspire students every day," said Josh Winslow, CEO. "We're honored to help bring their Bright Ideas to life and proud to invest in the future of our communities through education."

This year's milestone coincides with the 31st anniversary of the Bright

Ideas program. Since its inception in 1994, BEMC has awarded more than \$800,000 in grants to local educators. The program began as a local initiative and has since expanded statewide, with North Carolina's electric cooperatives collectively funding thousands of creative classroom projects that have reached countless students across the state.

This year's celebration also marked the introduction of the Fred Mason Legacy Award, a new recognition honoring the life and influence of Fred Mason, a local teacher who touched countless lives before his passing last year. In his memory, BEMC awarded a \$2,000 grant to Columbus Career and College Academy to help continue his lifelong mission of sparking curiosity and creativity in the classroom.

"Fred Mason's enthusiasm for education was contagious," said Dan Strickland, BEMC Board of Directors. "Through this award, we hope to carry forward the same spirit of innovation and care that he shared with every student."



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Brunswick County Chamber of Commerce to Hold Annual Membership Meeting



The Brunswick County Chamber of Commerce will host its Annual Membership Meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at The Links at Brick Landing in Ocean Isle Beach. This member-only event offers an opportunity for Chamber members to come together, reflect on the past year, and look ahead to the year to come.

Networking will begin at 7:30am, followed by the formal meeting at 8:00am. During the meeting, Chamber staff and Board members will recap key accomplishments from the previous year and outline goals and initiatives planned for the year ahead. The event will also include recognition of outgoing Board members and the introduction of incoming members of the Board of Directors.

The meeting will be held at The

Links at Brick Landing, located at 1882 Goose Creek Road SW, Ocean Isle Beach. Light refreshments will be provided for attendees.

Advance registration is required and may be completed online at:

<https://form.jotform.com/253216973051152> or by scanning this QR Code.



The Annual Membership Meeting is sponsored by CCNB Coastal Carolina National Bank.

Chamber members are encouraged to attend and take part in this important annual gathering of the local business community.

Dosher Drug Drop Serves 231 Households

At Doshier Memorial Hospital's 29th semiannual Operation Medicine Cabinet, held on Wednesday, October 1st, 231 households discarded 7,383 expired or unwanted narcotic pills and 1,514 milliliters of narcotic liquids. Medications collected were sorted and then transported from the hospital grounds for safe incineration.

Said Doshier President and CEO Lynda Stanley. "We thank everyone who took the time to safely dispose of their medications through Operation Medicine Cabinet. We are happy to see that over the years, there are many more safe disposal locations in our immediate area compared to when Doshier started this event 17 years

ago. We encourage our community to utilize those locations as well as our drug drop, since proper disposal of unwanted medications saves lives."

In addition to Doshier employees, staff and volunteers from the Brunswick County Sheriff's and Coastal Horizons were onsite to assist and to provide law enforcement. "This event requires a lot of hands-on support, and we appreciate the staff and community partners who helped ensure its success," said Stanley.

The next collection of unwanted prescription medication will be scheduled for April, 2026. Check the event calendar at Doshier.org for date and time.

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Baskets of Love Brings Comfort to Nursing Home Residents This Valentine's Season



Baskets of Love is a heartfelt community initiative dedicated to bringing comfort, connection, and dignity to nursing home residents at Autumn Care of Shallotte during the Valentine's season.

The program was created to ensure residents—many of whom may feel isolated or overlooked—are reminded that they are valued, remembered, and cared for. Each basket is thoughtfully assembled with practical and comforting items chosen to provide warmth, encouragement, and small moments of joy. From cozy essentials to engaging activities, every basket serves as a tangible expression of kindness and community support.

Community members are invited to take part in Baskets of Love through donations, sponsorships, and raffle ticket purchases. Financial contributions help fund the creation of care baskets, while sponsorships assist with overall initiative costs. Raffle ticket purchases also directly support the program and help ensure that every resident receives a basket.

The physical donation period runs from January 5 through February 6. Monetary donations, sponsorships, and raffle tickets may be purchased online through Zeffy at: <https://www.zeffy.com/.../2nd-annual-love-your-local>

Those wishing to donate physical items are encouraged to consider the following suggested items:

- Chapstick and lotion
- Non-slip socks
- Puzzle books, word searches, and crosswords
- Soft blankets
- Personal care and comfort items

Physical donations may be dropped off at the following locations:

**Brunswick County
Chamber of Commerce**
 112 Pine Street, Shallotte
 Monday-Thursday:
 9am-4pm
 Friday by appointment only

**The Hive by Bumblebee Digital
Marketing - Shallotte**
 5320 Bridgers Road
 Suite 2-A, Shallotte
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DR Horton - Rolling Hills
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Organizers say the generosity of the community plays a vital role in making this initiative possible. Through collective support, Baskets of Love aims to brighten the Valentine's season for residents at Autumn Care and remind them that they are not alone.

Practicing Winter Weather Safety

As our region begins to experience colder temperatures, Brunswick County encourages community members to start their winter preparedness efforts. Whether you are a longtime resident or visiting the area, these tips can help keep you safe during the colder months.

Stay Informed

Register for the ReadyBrunswick emergency notification system: <https://member.everbridge.net/311440963535093/new>

Remain alert for updates from the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Wilmington, NC (NWS-Wilmington) at weather.gov/ilm. You can find the latest weather briefing at weather.gov/ilm/briefing and winter weather information at weather.gov/ilm/winter.

Have multiple ways to get weather information (local news and radio stations, NOAA weather radios, National Weather Service, emergency alert notifications, etc.)

Know how to report power outages and downed electrical lines to your electric provider. Visit their websites to learn how to report these hazards to Duke Energy Progress or Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation (BEMC).

Fire Prevention & Heat Safety Tips

Most deaths that occur during winter storms are not a direct result of the weather. Instead, people die from home fires and carbon monoxide poisoning while using alternate ways to heat or power their home. Take time to safeguard your home against these dangers and ensure the well-being of your family, pets, and property.

Check your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. The Brunswick County Fire Marshal's Office offers a Free Smoke Alarm Installation Program and a Free Carbon Monoxide Detector Installation Program to Brunswick County employees, residents, and property owners. Visit the Community Risk Reduction webpage to learn more.

Always plug space heaters directly into wall outlets, and make sure the cords and plugs aren't damaged or frayed. DON'T use an extension cord or power strip.

Place space heaters on a solid, flat surface and keep them at least three feet from other items. Turn them off when leaving the room or sleeping.

NEVER use a stove, oven, or charcoal grill to heat your home.

Operate generators outdoors, away from doors and windows to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Keep all heat sources—including fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, portable heaters, or candles—at least three feet away from anything that can burn.

Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected each year by a professional.

Protect Water Systems from Freezing Temperatures

Your pipes are at risk of freezing any time temperatures drop below 32°F or 0°C. Prevent costly pipe damage this winter by taking precautions to protect household and irrigation water systems from freezing.

Insulate pipes in unheated areas of your home and crawl spaces.

Seal any gaps and cracks in your home's exterior (such as crawl spaces) to prevent cold drafts from reaching your pipes.

Disconnect water hoses from outdoor spigots and turn off irrigation systems.

Open doors to cabinets below your sinks to help warmer air circulate around plumbing at night.

Allow a small amount of water to drip from your faucets. Running water, even at a trickle, helps prevent pipes from freezing.

Always be aware of the main water shut-off valve location for your home in case you should experience a burst pipe and need to turn off your water. Contact Brunswick County Public Utilities or your local water provider if you need assistance.



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Brunswick County reminds residents to recycle this holiday season

Brunswick County Solid Waste and Recycling invites residents to properly dispose of holiday waste by dropping off approved items at the Brunswick County Landfill and Convenience Centers.

Drop Off

Residents and property owners can drop off the following items at the Brunswick County Landfill and Convenience Centers:

- Live Christmas trees (without ornaments, lights, and decorations)

Accepted at the Landfill at no charge from Jan. 2 through Jan. 31, 2026. After Jan. 31, normal tipping fees apply.

Accepted at the Convenience Centers for \$5 per tree from Jan. 2 through Jan. 31, 2026. After Jan. 31, normal tipping fees apply.

- Natural wreaths (without ornaments, lights, and decorations)

These are considered yard waste and normal tipping fees apply.

- Alkaline, Lithium, and NiCd batteries (Lithium and NiCd batteries must be taped on both ends.)

Accepted year-round at no charge.

- String lights and cords are accepted year-round at no charge as part of the Electronics Recycling Program.

- Electronics (complete and not broken into pieces) are accepted year-round at no charge as part of the Electronics Recycling Program.

- Plain/traditional wrapping paper and cards (no glossy, metallic, or glittery wrapping paper)

- Cardboard (Flatten cardboard boxes and remove tape. Do not leave Styrofoam in cardboard containers. No grease-soaked cardboard.)

- Textiles (clothing, shoes, pillows, sheets, towels, etc.) are accepted year-round at no charge.

See a full list of accepted items and tipping fees at BrunswickCountyNC.gov.

gov/tipping-fees.

Curbside Recycling Collection

Residents and property owners who pay for curbside recycling collection can place the following items in their recycling carts:



- Cardboard (Flatten cardboard boxes and remove tape. Do not leave Styrofoam in cardboard containers. No grease-soaked cardboard.)

- Plain/traditional wrapping paper and cards (no glossy, metallic, or glittery wrapping paper)

- Paper (Newspaper, craft paper, office paper, magazines, paper bags, paper cups and cartons, cereal and food boxes, junk mail, brochures, catalogs, and phone books. Shredded paper is not accepted.)

- Plastic cartons, bottles, tubs, jugs, jars, and containers (excluding motor oil or pesticide containers)

- Books (For hardcover books, remove and discard the spine and front and back covers.)

- Glass bottles and jars

- Metal cans or containers used for food (empty and rinse before recycling)

For more information about curbside recycling collection in Brunswick County, visit BrunswickCountyNC.gov/recycle.

Reuse, Donate, or Trash

The following items should be repurposed or will need to be bagged and disposed of as household trash (normal tipping fees apply):

- Artificial Christmas trees
- Artificial wreaths and decorations
- Aluminum foil
- Bows and ribbons
- Decorative wrapping paper or gift bags (glossy, metallic, glittery, etc.)
- Plastic bags/wrap
- Packing peanuts and Styrofoam (commonly found in packaging for TVs and electronics)
- Toys

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Bruce Thompson, MD



Tracey Allen, FNP-C

The Doshier Medical Clinic network is pleased to welcome two new providers to its Long Beach Road primary care practice. Bruce Thompson, MD, and Tracey Allen, FNP-C, are now accepting new patients and bring a shared commitment to providing extraordinary, patient-centered care.

Bruce Thompson, MD, is a board-certified internist with more than 30 years of experience spanning internal medicine, urgent care, and emergency care in both hospital and outpatient settings. He is highly experienced in managing complex

and chronic medical conditions and is dedicated to improving patient outcomes through compassionate care, patient education, and continuous professional development.

Tracey Allen, FNP-C, is a board-certified family nurse practitioner who began her healthcare career as an ICU and Cardiovascular ICU nurse. She now provides comprehensive primary care to patients of all ages, drawing on her extensive clinical background and passion for caring for diverse patient populations.

For an appointment at our Long Beach Road clinic, please call 910-457-3996.

Author Talk at Barbee Library Features K. Robert Campbell

Author K. Robert Campbell will visit the G.V. Barbee, Sr. Library on Friday, January 23, at 4:00pm for a special author talk and book discussion.

Campbell earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation and Park Administration from North Carolina State University and spent several years working as a park ranger in various parks across North Carolina. He later earned his law degree from Campbell University and practiced law in Southport until his retirement in 2020. His unique combination of legal expertise and outdoor experience provides a rich and authentic foundation for his writing.

Campbell is best known for his suspense novels featuring the character Cameron Scott, an outdoorsman and



small-town attorney whose clients' seemingly straightforward legal matters often escalate into unexpected and dangerous situations. During the program, Campbell will discuss the first novel in the seven-book series, *The Fifth Category*, as well

as his collection of short stories, *The Twelve Tales*. He will share insights into his writing process, character development, and the real-life experiences that inspire his stories.

Copies of Campbell's books will be available for purchase following the program.

Seating is limited. Registration is required and may be completed by calling the G.V. Barbee, Sr. Library at 910-278-4283, or online at <https://brunswick.libcal.com/event/15953140>

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Golden Pineapple Winter Nominations Open for Exceptional Customer Service

The Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce is now accepting Winter Quarter nominations for its Golden Pineapple Award, a program that recognizes Chamber member businesses that consistently deliver exceptional customer service to residents and visitors throughout the community. The Golden Pineapple program is proudly sponsored by Corning Credit Union.

Outstanding customer service is the foundation of a strong and thriving small business community. By recognizing businesses that go above and beyond, the Chamber seeks to celebrate those who help create positive experiences and lasting impressions for everyone who lives in or visits the Southport-Oak Island area.

The Golden Pineapple symbol dates back to colonial America, when pineapples represented the warmest welcome a host could offer guests. In keeping with that tradition, the Chamber hopes to encourage local businesses to extend that same sense of hospitality and care, ensuring that residents and visitors alike feel welcomed and valued.

Each quarter, Chamber member businesses nominated by the general public are honored with a Golden Pineapple Certificate. Community members are encouraged to take a moment to nominate a business that has provided outstanding service, whether through friendliness, professionalism, or a genuine commitment to customer satisfaction. The only requirement is that the nominated business must be a member of the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Winter Quarter nomination period runs from November 1 through January 31.

For more information or assistance with nominations, contact the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce at 910-457-6964, or visit: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sv/T20J9Fs/Golden>

Through the Golden Pineapple program, the Chamber continues to highlight the importance of exceptional service and celebrate the small businesses that help make the Southport-Oak Island area a welcoming place to live, shop, and visit.

Southport Looking for Sponsors for Next Year's Summer Concert Series

The City of Southport, in partnership with Up Your Arts, Cape Fear Radio, and Downtown Southport, Inc. are now accepting sponsorship applications for the 2026 Concert Series in Franklin Square Park. These free summer concerts are a long-standing community favorite, drawing locals and visitors alike for evenings of great music in a beautiful setting.

For \$350 (half the cost of a band), sponsors receive:

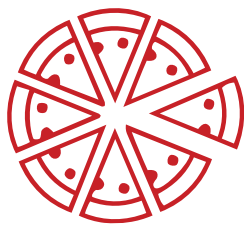
- Logo placement on the sponsor banner on stage for the entire concert season.
- The opportunity to host a table on your sponsored night to connect with concertgoers and share information or giveaways (table available upon request).

mation or giveaways (table available upon request).

- Your logo featured on the City website, social media posts, and Facebook event for your sponsored night.
- Invitation to co-host the Facebook event for your sponsored night.
- Mentions on Cape Fear Radio tied to your sponsored night.
- Recognition in the City newsletter, stage announcements, and end-of-season thank-yous.

Bands will be finalized shortly after the April 1st deadline.

If you're interested, you can complete the sponsor application here: <https://www.eventeny.com/events/sponsor/application/?a=bynrzgpj-15840>.



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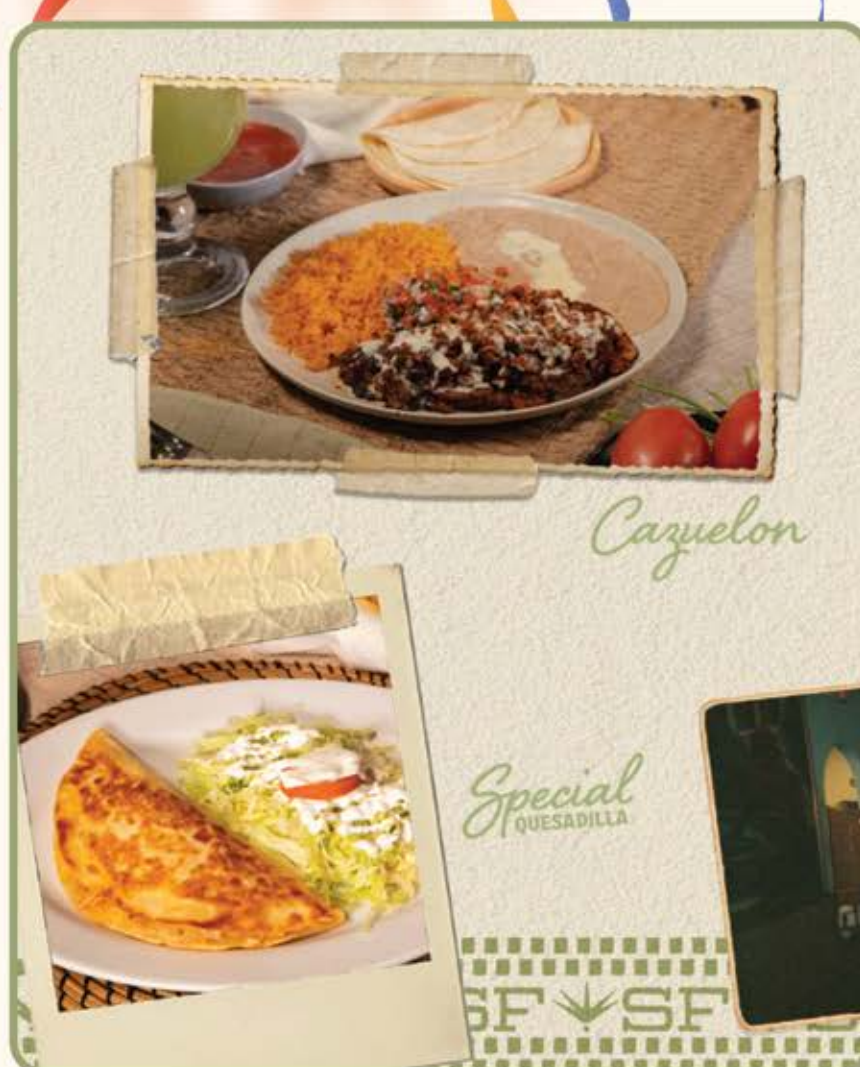


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