

TOWNS



Fire destroys Windjammer Pub

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Holden Beach commissioners OK another \$50K for pier due diligence extension

By MEREDITH WILLSE
Staff Writer

Holden Beach commissioners voted Oct. 1 in a special meeting to pay another \$50,000 for an extended due diligence while they continue to investigate the town's possible purchase of the Holden Beach Fishing Pier.

Holden Beach Mayor Alan Holden was not present due to previous plans.

The due diligence period ended Oct. 1. The inspection wasn't finished yet, so commissioners voted Sept. 29 to ask to extend the deadline to Nov. 19.

They decided if Gil Bass, whose family is one of the pier's main stockholders, didn't respond by noon Oct. 1 the contract would be terminated. Bass sent back the contract, agreeing to the extension.

Commissioner Rick Smith made a motion to approve the request to amend the contract that was prepared by the town's attorney and pay the due diligence fee of \$50,000.

Commissioner David Sullivan said he is happy Bass agreed to extend the due diligence.

"But I don't think we

should have to spend \$50,000 more for that extended due diligence period," he said.

He said he doesn't think they should pay it because the reason they need to request an extension is mostly because of Bass' delay in signing the contract. Sullivan said he checked the email exchange between the town and Bass and saw the preliminary contract was given to the town June 23.

"We received a note on July 12 informing us that the contract was presented to Mr. Bass," he said.

He added he didn't know the actual date Bass received the contract but that's when commissioners were told he had it. Sullivan said it was obvious to him and commissioner Pat Kwiatkowski at the July 20 board meeting that the due diligence period was significantly shortened.

There was discussion because of a proposed ordinance amendment to change the budget. Sullivan said he asked Town Manager David Hewett

why there was no allocation for the inspection in the amendment. Hewett said there wasn't enough

specificity for him to do that.

Sullivan and Kwiatkowski said at the meeting the money should be moved so the town was ready to move once the signed contract was prepared. Sullivan said commissioner Brian Murdock suggested they wait to do this until there is a signed contract before worrying about other funds.

The amendment was approved 3-2 without moving any funds for the inspection. The signed contract wasn't received until Aug. 7, which cost them a month. Sullivan said they never had an opportunity to conduct the inspection until then.

"I don't think that because of that compression we should be allocating extra money to get what we could have accomplished if the contract was returned in a more timely fashion," he said.

Commissioners voted 3-2 to approve the extra money, with Sullivan and Kwiatkowski opposing the measure.

Meredith Willse is a staff writer at the Beacon. Reach her at 910-239-7452 or mwillse@brunswickbeacon.com.

FALL FLOWER FLYER



Steven Wingfield, Coastal Carolina Camera Club

Local photographer Steve Wingfield recently captured this colorful sighting of a monarch butterfly lighting on a fall flower.

Shallotte looks into testing unvaccinated town staff

By MEREDITH WILLSE
Staff Writer

Shallotte Aldermen met Oct. 5 and discussed testing for unvaccinated employees, police and fire department reports and the Christmas parade.

Previously, aldermen voted that unvaccinated employees would have to be tested weekly for COVID.

"We've been struggling since then to find a way to efficiently have that done," Shallotte Mayor Walt Eccard said.

Town staff found a company they can contract through that will supply enough tests for those employees. Tests would be done on-site, but that is

still in discussion now.

Eccard said he likes that the test is done on-site at no cost to the town or employees. Either the employees' insurance or the federal government will reimburse whoever is paid.

Eccard said the employees' insurance will cover it first. The federal government pays for whoever doesn't have insurance.

Alderman Gene Vasile said even though aldermen mandated it, it would be problematic if there was an impact on employees' insurance.

Town Manager Mimi Gaither said the town could pay and FEMA could possibly reimburse the town. Vasile said that

works as long as the mandate doesn't get scuttled.

Eccard said he noticed two more catalytic converter thefts in the town's most recent police report. He asked that this be announced on the town website to let people know it's still an issue.

There were also reports of thefts from a construction site, a few local businesses, identity theft, a stolen license plate, credit card fraud and indecent exposure to a 15-year-old girl. A juvenile also reported a robbery by a friend in Mulberry Park, and there was a missing 17-year-old who was located in Ocean Isle.

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Bolivia natives The Hatch Brothers release debut album

By CHRIS THOMAS
Contributing Writer

The Hatch Brothers hosted their album release party in Wilmington on Oct. 8 at Bourgie Nights and Oct. 9 at Mad Katz Bar & Lounge.

The trio, who have built a following playing covers, showcased their debut album, "Twelve Bar Grievances," allowing fans to experience brand new, original songs, performed live for the first time.

Stalled by the pandemic, this project has been ready for over a year, but only now has the time been right for a release that allows a first-look, live unveiling.

As lead singer and songwriter Sam Hatch says, "Who wants to release their debut album online?"

They want a chance to celebrate with a local crowd before their wide release.

"You've gotta have your hometown behind you," says drummer Phil Milligan. The bassist and backup vocalist Paul Hatch rounds out the trio, which formed in 2018, however, their origin story starts



Will Page Photography

The Hatch Brothers

many years before.

Like many great success stories, this one starts with an opportunity seized by passion, with a little push sprinkled in.

"My mom was, like, get a job," says Sam, recalling a conversation in 2010 as a sophomore in high school.

Sam, who grew up singing in his church choir, had started playing music with his brother in their garage when the Bolivia natives found out a restaurant in Magnolia Greens in Leland was looking for live music. That is when Sam, Paul and a high school friend decided to take a couple of weeks to learn a bunch of songs and found a job as a cover band at the restaurant.

However, it wasn't until college that Sam started to view music as his life's work.

"I never knew music was going to be the thing that defines my life," says Sam.

A pre-med student, Sam

helped nurse his grandparents who were suffering from Alzheimer's. Sam fondly recalls hearing his grandmother play ragtime gospel on the piano in church, and his grandfather was a guitarist.

Musical ability runs deep in his family, and he learned it can be the one thing that holds it together.

"They couldn't tell me their name, they couldn't tell me my name," says Sam, referring to his grandparents, "I would set her in front of a piano and I'll be damned, she knew every single hymn she had played her whole life."

Playing music with his grandparents during their final days and witnessing the power of music had a profound impact on Sam. It was at that point that he switched majors, got his degree in music composition and voice and never looked back.

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Meredith Willse

The Hugh family stands in the middle of a group as those attending the Brunswick County Habitat for Humanity's home dedication celebration pray for them.

Habitat home comes with special meaning, blessing

By MEREDITH WILLSE
Staff Writer

A soon-to-be new homeowner said he and his family will love and enjoy their new house a long time.

"A lot of sweat and blood and tears were put in it," Nicholas Hugh said at Habitat for Humanity's home dedication celebration Oct. 6.

The family also literally put handprints into making the house. Hugh's daughters, Olivia and Lily, left their mark on the cement pad in front of their porch with their names

written and the year 2021 inscribed near their handprints. This doesn't get to happen often because some neighborhoods don't allow cement pads there.

Hugh and his wife, Victoria, applied to Brunswick County Habitat for Humanity in January 2020. They were approved and accepted as a partner family the following March.

Victoria Hugh said this will be the first time they purchased a house. But this is more special because they saw the house get built and got to know those who helped out on

the construction. "It blesses us," she said about the process, adding it provides more meaning for the family as well.

They had already finished their "sweat equity" into securing their new Habitat home, but they might keep helping the program in the future.

Nicholas Hugh said during the celebration he didn't know the spirituality of those who attended the celebration. He said he didn't know if "some were good or stuck in a rut."

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HABITAT

From page C1

Hugh said spirituality can be like the TV commercial where the woman falls down and says, "Help, I can't get up" while hitting a button to call for help.

"Some of us might be there," Hugh said. "We've just fallen, trying to dig ourselves out of the hole and we can't."

He said Jesus had a solution for this in the Bible. Hugh added God is a gracious and forgiving God. He said he knows no one in that group had done any worse deeds than him and

God still saved him. He asked his listeners to ponder on this every time they think about that celebration.

Victoria Hugh said she wanted to thank everyone who helped her and her family get to this point.

"It's so, so special to us, you guys don't even really know how special it has been to work and build this house and work alongside all the great volunteers," she said.

The family received a Bible and LED lighting in their house from Southport Trinity United Methodist Church. Oak Island Beach Quilters donated a quilt to the family and the Daugh-

ters of the American Revolution Brunswick Town Chapter gave them family a flag and flagpole for their home.

Rachel Waite, community and faith relations manager for Brunswick County Habitat for Humanity, said on behalf of the organization to the family, "We're truly grateful to have you as a part of our family."

All that's left to do is to close on the house, which Victoria Hugh thinks they will in the next few weeks. Then they can move in.

Meredith Willse is a staff writer for the Beacon. Reach her at (910) 239-7452 or mwillse@brunswickbeacon.com.



Will Page Photography

Brothers Sam and Paul Hatch, accompanied by drummer Paul Milligan, grew up in Bolivia and now live in Leland.

BROTHERS

From page C1

Milligan also came from a musical family. His Dad was in a touring gospel group. "I was born into it," says Milligan, who has been drumming ever since he could remember (or not), as he has pictures of himself drumming as a toddler.

"Every day there is something musical to be done," says Milligan, who possesses the same passion for the art form that the two Hatch brothers have.

They don't just play it – they live it. And much like the brothers, Milligan is a versatile musi-

cian with a range from rock to funk and everywhere in between.

They describe their sound as "genreless," inspired by greats like The Beatles, Kurt Cobain and Freddie Mercury. This inspiration, combined with their experience, gives "Twelve Bar Grievances" mass appeal.

"There's gonna be something for everyone," says Mulligan.

The title track is a great example of how the band is able to merge different sounds to create a well-crafted piece that defines their first album.

Written and performed in a day, the song features

a 12-bar blues progression. As the songwriter, Sam wanted to put his own stamp on this chord change saying, "If I were to do the blues, this is how I would do it."

The song features inspiration from the band's favorite heavy metal and funk artists and is surely a song that fans will keep on repeat.

To learn more about The Hatch Brothers go to thehatchbrothers.com.

If you missed the opportunity to see them live this past weekend, the new album drops online on Oct. 10 and is available via streaming platforms.

Chris Thomas is a newly transplanted comedy writer who lives in Calabash.



Meredith Willse

Olivia and Lily Hugh's handprints mark the concrete slab in front of their new home.



Meredith Willse

People bow their heads as First Baptist Church of Shallotte Pastor Bob Weathers prays for the Hugh family.



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