

# COASTAL OBSERVER

Vol. XXX No. 43

Pawleys Island, South Carolina ~ April 19, 2012

50 cents

## EDUCATION | Coastal Montessori Charter

### For startups, cash is critical

By CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

With 157 students enrolled, \$248,000 in grants approved and a first-year budget that projects a \$137,000 surplus, Coastal Montessori Charter School lacks only one thing: cash.

When it comes to finance, a school is like any other business. It needs capital. And although Coastal Montessori is in a more affluent community than some charters, it shares a

common problem.

The school is scheduled to open in August in a vacant wing at Waccamaw Middle School in Pawleys Island with students in grades one through six. Charter schools receive public funds, but have their own governing boards.

A \$75,000 federal grant for planning and implementation followed approval of Coastal Montessori's charter by the state Department of Education and the Georgetown County Board of Education. But the

grant funds are only available to reimburse money that has already been spent. So Kristin Bohan, one of the school's organizers and now its project manager, had to open a credit card account on behalf of the school, said Rob Horvath, who chairs the charter school board.

This week, the charter board approved a \$50,000 bank loan that had to be guaranteed personally by a school supporter.

"That's happened several times," said Mary Carmichael, SEE "CHARTER," PAGE 2



Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

The charter school has \$5,000 a month in the budget to lease a wing at Waccamaw Middle School.

### Waccamaw Middle principal resigns

By ROGER GREENE  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Bill Dwyer will step down as principal at Waccamaw Middle School at the end of the year to take a job in business. He sent a letter of resignation this week to Superintendent Randy Dozier.

Deciding to end a 13-year career in public education was not easy for Dwyer. But when an opportunity presented itself with Gray World LLC, Dwyer felt it was too good to pass up. Gray World is an asset protection company with offices in Chicago, Austin, Texas, and San Diego, as well as Charleston.

**"I was not looking to leave. This just kind of fell into my lap."**

Bill Dwyer  
Principal

"It was certainly not an easy decision to make," said Dwyer. "It was a very deliberate process that I went through. I was not looking to leave. This opportunity just kind of fell into my lap. But once I saw what it was about, I didn't think I could turn it down."

"I've been blessed to be at Waccamaw Middle. We have great students, parents, faculty and staff. And this is such a great community. It's hard to

SEE "PRINCIPAL," PAGE 2



Photos by Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

### Time is ripe for farmers market

Wednesday is market day in Parkersville, where a new season is under way for the county-sponsored farmers market. Ed Jayroe, above, waits for customers behind a display. Marilyn Malcolm, right, picks out some local strawberries.



### LOCAL SALES TAX

### Panel reviews county capital projects

By JACKIE R. BROACH  
COASTAL OBSERVER

A commission tasked with working out the details of how a proposed 1-cent capital sales tax would be spent will meet weekly until it has a handle on the best use for the funds.

The six-member group convened for the first time on Tuesday to learn more about each other and the task before them, and to come up with a plan for how to proceed. The real work will begin April 26 — the first of their weekly 5 p.m. Thursday meetings.

Commission members received a copy of the most recent version of the county's capital improvement plan to review before the next meeting, but there was minimal discussion of projects from the plan and how they might benefit from sales tax.

County Administrator Sel Hemingway explained how the plan was affected by the recession — some projects were scaled back and others were pushed out of the first phase of work. Restoring those projects has been brought up as a possible use of the tax revenue.

There was also discussion of dredging as a possible use for

SEE "SALES TAX," PAGE 3

### Students organize march to draw attention to bullies

By ROGER GREENE  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Students from the four Waccamaw Neck public schools will take an active part in helping to eliminate bullying next weekend.

The Waccamaw Middle School student council has organized STOMP Out Bullying. It will begin April 28 at 11 a.m. with a walk from the school. A family fun event will follow, including refreshments, face painting, a dunk tank and music, as well as information related to the problem of bullying in schools.

A series of events this year at the Waccamaw schools and around the district have focused attention on bullying. At the middle school, students met in small groups for discussions about the problem.

"It takes a lot of collaboration and cooperation to bring an event like this together," said Richard Gehrman, the student council advisor at Waccamaw Middle. "Bullying is a problem that we all must work together to solve. We have to create an environment where it won't be tolerated."

The STOMP Out Bullying program has been trademarked by Love Our Children USA, a

nonprofit organization that has been dedicated to curbing violence against children for more than a decade.

Blake Graham, a senior at Waccamaw High, serves as one of group's teen ambassadors.

Graham has worked alongside the middle school student council to help organize the anti-bullying activities, and the event has also drawn support from the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office, Midway Fire and Rescue, local PTAs and students and parents from all four Waccamaw schools.

"It's good that [the event] is taking place at the middle school," Graham said. "That is the level, along with later in elementary school, where bullying tends to start. We need to educate students in those age groups on what bullying is. The sooner they are able to recognize it, the sooner they will be able to put an end to the problem."

Participating students are asked to wear a school spirit shirt to represent their school and will receive a wristband to show their support for the anti-bullying effort. The event is not sponsored by staff, so students from the elementary, intermediate and middle schools must be accompanied by an adult.

### Inside this issue



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### BUSINESS

### Walmart deal spreads Palmetto Cheese in U.S.

Palmetto Cheese, known as "the pimento cheese with soul," will be added to shelves at 699 Walmart stores this month — a huge leap in the product's growth.

With the addition, the product is available in a total of 2,700 locations in 24 states, plus Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. Started in the Pawleys Island area and offered through Brian and Sassy Henry's company, Pawleys Island Specialty Foods, the deal with Walmart has been in the works for about six months and will introduce Palmetto Cheese into four states: Arkansas, Indiana, Missouri and Mississippi.

The expansion is "fantastic" news for Pawleys Island Specialty Foods and Duke Sandwich Co., the Upstate company that handles its product manufacturing and distribution.

"I can't tell you exactly how many cases they ordered just to get those 700 stores started, but the first two orders were just incredible," Brian Henry said. "It was just eye-popping."

The increase in production means Duke will need to add 10 employees. The expansion



Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer

The cheese will be available in 2,700 locations

will also subsidize 699 temporary positions as samplings and demonstrations are scheduled in Walmart stores to help roll out the product, Henry said.

The stores will carry the regular Palmetto Cheese, as well as the jalapeno and bacon flavors. "We've been at it since 2006 and this is kind of the culmination," Henry said. "It's not the end, but it's a major step. It's a milestone and we're celebrating."