

Weekly News Summary for Sunday, March 22, 2026.

On Saturday morning, Dare County presented the 2026 State of the County in the Braxton B. Hall Memorial Auditorium at Cape Hatteras Secondary School.

Board of Commissioners Chairman Robert L. Woodard made the presentation, organized around his 2025 monthly calendar.

He talked about revaluation and Buxton beach nourishment, the contractor for which is Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, LLC, out of Norfolk. The project is expected to start in April. Dare County has had a good relationship with FEMA on other nourishment projects but has yet to receive FEMA's response to the project. Woodard said "this one is making me nervous."

Woodard talked about Parks and Recreation needs in the county. A contractor was hired to gather needs and then make recommendations. The total cost of the recommendations is \$56 million. The county cannot put recreation projects in its Capital Improvement Plan, which already has needed priority projects through 2030.

The commissioners are proposing to add one-quarter of a cent to sales tax to fund a plan. The sales tax does not apply to groceries, gasoline, car purchases and prescriptions. Woodard asked the 30 people attending to keep an open mind about the referendum on the November 3 ballot.

Woodard said the Opioid Settlement Agreement results in Dare County receiving \$383,700 annually. One of the funded projects is Recovery Court, which recently graduated 18 people. Additional funding is spent on Naloxone, a drug that reverses overdoses.

Woodard said the issue of succession in key leadership positions resulted in the naming of Sheila Davies as Deputy County Manager and Dustin Peele, a Hatteras Island native, assistant county manager. "We've really been blessed," said Woodard with the hiring of Matt Motyka as Chief Financial Officer.

One of the big projects now underway is the Dare County Early College. The first class is already attending school on the College of The Albemarle Dare County Campus. The college's new building will be ready in December. Woodard touted the Dare County Guarantee Scholarship which pays the way for Dare County high school graduates to attend College of the Albemarle.

Scattered throughout 2025 were ribbon-cuttings for new Emergency Medical Services buildings. All EMS buildings are undergoing upgrading and modernization. The bill is \$90 million.

Woodard addressed erosion. Dare County has spent \$300 million on beach nourishment. Those funds come from two of the six cents collected through occupancy taxes. He flatly stated that Rodanthe cannot be helped with nourishment because maintenance of previous projects requires funding.

Woodard had praises for the Buxton Civic Association and the new district commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Both organizations went to work to get the Formerly Used Defense site in Buxton cleaned up. So far, the Corps has spent \$31 million on the cleanup.

He also praised Tess Judge, the representative for eastern North Carolina on the state's Board of Transportation. "She has done one hell of a job for us," said Woodard.

He ended the presentation with "we're fighting for you daily," which was followed by very warm applause.

Rededication of Secondary school's library

Cape Hatteras Secondary School students, staff, and community members gathered March 19, to honor the legacy of one of Hatteras Island's most influential educators, Charles "Charlie" Poole Gray, during a library re-dedication ceremony held at 10 o'clock in the school gymnasium.

All classes attended the ceremony, which also drew more than a dozen members of Gray's family, representing three generations of descendants, including grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.

The event marked the restoration of a long-lost dedication to Gray, whose name was historically associated with the school's library but had faded over time amid school changes and expansions.

Gray, widely regarded as a pioneering educator on Hatteras Island, dedicated more than five decades to teaching and school leadership during a transformative period in the island's history.

The event is extensively reported by Island Free Press.

Prescribed burn in Pea Island

A prescribed burn occurred Wednesday, March 18, and Friday, March 20, in the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge.

The burn reduced fuel loads and restored marsh habitat in the northern and southern parts of Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. Smoke was visible from Highway 12, Bodie and Hatteras Islands.

Large Item Pick-up for unincorporated Dare starts March 23

For the large item pickup, Dare's commissioners awarded a contract to Dupon Trucking, LLC from Raleigh, for the low bid price of \$242,200.

The pickup starts Monday, March 23, by which time all items for pickup must be on the side of roads in unincorporated Dare County, which includes all of Hatteras Island, including Hatteras, Frisco, Buxton, Avon, Salvo, Waves and Rodanthe.

Here's what will be picked up: Appliances (remove doors from refrigerators); furniture, mattresses and box springs, scrap metals, automobile parts, used tires with rim removed. All items must be sorted into separate piles based on their type.

What will NOT be picked up: old clothing, shoes, cardboard, yard-clearing debris, construction and demolition materials; Boats, trailers and jet skis; Propane tanks and fire extinguishers.

If items are left, owners must take the items to the transfer station in Buxton.

Only one pass will be made.

The large item pickup will run for about 12 to 15 days.

Any hazardous materials like oil-based paint and pesticides can be taken to the hazardous waste collection event on Friday afternoon May 15 from 2 to 4 o'clock at the Buxton transfer station.

Radio Hatteras and Cape Hatteras Elementary School announce an America 250 partnership.

Beginning Monday, March 23, 2026, students from Cape Hatteras Elementary School will start telling stories about historic moments in Dare County to celebrate the America 250 theme in Dare County: Land of Beginnings.

At Noon and again at 6 o'clock on Mondays and Wednesdays, 30-second broadcasts researched, written and voiced by Cape Hatteras Elementary students will be played on Radio Hatteras. Tune in to 101.5 FM in Avon, Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras or 99.9 FM in the northern villages to listen to A250 moments or go to Radio Hatteras website to listen, radiohatteras dot org.

Dare Challenge Open House Sunday

On Sunday afternoon, March 29 from 2 to 6, Dare Challenge will host an open house at the new Men's Dorm Facilities in Wanchese. Additionally, information about the Multipurpose Center construction project and an aftercare program. Executive Director Dustin Daniels will present information at 5 o'clock.

Trunk or Treastor will be held at the Fessenden Center, Saturday morning, March 28 from 11 to 1 o'clock. Visit displays for Easter treats.

An **Easter Egg Hunt** will be held at the Rodanthe-Waves-Salvo Community Building on Saturday morning, March 28 from 10 to Noon. The event is sponsored by Clarks Bethel Methodist Church.

Mighty Milly King events

Hatteras Islander Milly King is five years old. She is fighting leukemia at the Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters in Norfolk. Numerous events are scheduled to support the family.

March 26: Blood Drive at Cape Hatteras Secondary School, in Buxton from 10 to 3. Mighty Milly T-shirts for sale or pickup.

March 29: 24-Hour Prayer Vigil from Noon to Noon starting Sunday, March 29. Go to Hatteras umc charge dot org slash Events to sign up.

All of March at Waves Coffee and Candy, all Mighty Milly drink purchase proceeds will go directly to the King family.

April 4: Family Bingo at the Cape Hatteras Anglers Club with Pizza provided by Angelos. Starts at 1 o'clock, Saturday.

April 10: Spaghetti dinner from 5 to 7 at Buxton United Methodist Church. All proceeds benefit Mighty Milly.

April 18: Oceanas Bistro, Avon. Taco Eating Fundraiser. 4 o'clock.

On-going: Thursdays and Fridays, Alien Java in Frisco is offering Blue Room Roasters, Starlight Espresso. 50% of the proceeds from "Little Warrior Latte" goes to Milly and her family.

Saturday evening cruises aboard the historic *Albatross* during April and May will benefit "Mighty Milly." The cruises are hosted by Capt. Ernie Foster aboard the *Albatross*, a hand-built wooden boat originally constructed in 1937. During the trips, guests can spend several hours on the Pamlico Sound while learning about the history of fishing in Hatteras. Mighty

Tickets for the fundraising cruises are \$200 for the boat, with proceeds supporting Milly's family during her extended medical treatment. Legal maximum of 6 passengers. Bring refreshments is okay. Meet at the Albatross Fleet Dock, Hatteras, at 6 o'clock. Cruises can be booked by calling 252-619-0136.

Now, be safe out there. Thanks for listening. This is Radio Hatteras.