

**This is Radio Hatteras. Hello. I'm Grace with the Weekly News Summary for Sunday, May 19, 2024.**

### **Formerly Use Defense Site in Buxton topic of meeting**

On Tuesday, May 14, 2024, representatives of three federal agencies briefed the public on the contamination on three-tenths of a mile of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore in Buxton. The meeting, called by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, featured Colonel Ronald Sturgeon and Glenn Marks from the Army Corps, Savannah District, Dave Hallac, Superintendent of the National Parks in Eastern North Carolina, and U.S. Coast Guard Sector North Carolina commander Tim List.

Sturgeon said the Army Corps had acted quickly once authorization and funding was available to examine an erosion-exposed pipe with petroleum residue and test surrounding sand for contaminants. A subcontractor was hired and showed up two days later.

That contractor is S L S C O, with headquarters in Galveston, Texas, and nine other offices in the United States. The subcontractor is Forgen, from Rocklin, California. Allocated for remediation is \$525,000, but no bill was presented as of May 14, 2024.

The project subcontractor removed a 70 to 80-foot floating pipe that was not attached to a tank. Sand samples were taken. On Wednesday and Thursday, May 15 and 16, the subcontractor cleaned up the site, sent equipment back and took down the Corps of Engineers sign. During his initial remarks, Sturgeon said if contaminated sand is found, "we will remediate." Sturgeon acknowledged the overall frustration of the public, individual speakers and Dare's commissioners.

The affected Buxton area was labeled a Formerly Used Defense Site in 1986. Sample testing will take 10 days before results are available. The community was promised the data.

As a Formerly Use Defense Site, authorization and funding can only be used for environmental remediation, which makes the existence of building infrastructure in Buxton problematic. Hallac made a very brief remark, stating that the National Park Service was "looking for complete remediation of the site."

Hallac commented that he would "not stop working until debris is removed....There's a lot of debris under the sand."

At least a dozen people signed up or stood up to speak and ask questions without time limitation. The Buxton Civic Association agrees with Hallac: complete remediation for the Formerly Use Defense Site.

Dare County and Current TV have released a video of the May 14, meeting that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, to address the Formerly Used Defense Site at the former Naval facility in Buxton.

To view the video of the community meeting, go to YouTube dot com slash Dare County

### **Graveyard of Atlantic museum opens to the public Monday**

The brand new museum gallery at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum is fascinating, intriguing and inspiring.

For 40 years, since 1984, the people of Hatteras Village have had a vision of what a museum could do to preserve and sustain the island's compelling maritime history and family heritage.

That vision is finally realized.

Visitors are reminded of island families at the very entrance to the gallery. A plaque is posted with the family names Burrus, Couch and Midgett, which all had a hand in pushing the vision forward.

At the entrance to the gallery, turn right. The exhibits are organized chronologically, starting with indigenous peoples, then colonial history. The World Wars are offered for study as is the Civil Air Patrol. A whole section and the most dramatic presentation is about life saving stations and life savers.

At every exhibit is a digital explanation. The items are numbered and explained.

Make it a destination once and repeat and repeat. No admission fee is charged.

### **Cape Hatteras National Seashore advises visitors to avoid the beach adjacent to Ocean Drive in Rodanthe**

Cape Hatteras National Seashore advised visitors to avoid the beach adjacent to Ocean Drive in Rodanthe, due to exposed wires, pipes and septic systems.

The national seashore staff is working with Dare County and the Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative on the exposed hazards.

Hazards, such as building materials and parts of septic systems, may also be present in other areas of the beach in Rodanthe, so beachgoers should use caution throughout the beaches in front of the villages.

### **Real estate market indicators**

The business news this week focuses on the island's real estate market indicators through April. April data for the island's residential market showed some encouraging statistics.

The trends suggest that the supply of houses for sale is finally starting to increase.

Until October of last year, the number of houses for sale was mostly around 70 houses. Since October, a relatively steady increase has pushed the houses for sale up to 112.

The number of homes actually sold has been flat with an average of about 20 sales per month.

The median sale price for houses showed a slight increase to \$586,000.

The 30-year fixed mortgage interest rates had been in the high 6% range for 11 of the last 16 months. In April, the rate jumped up above 7%, the first time in 2023.

For undeveloped lots, April was a relatively slow month with only five lots sold on the entire island.

Occupancy tax results for March show continuing weakness. Meal tax receipts were flat for the month when compared to 2023.

### **Shorebirds and sea turtles**

In mid-May, shorebird activity on Cape Hatteras National Seashore beaches increased. As of May 17, 2024,

American oystercatchers had 18 active nests with 2 at Cape Point and 5 on Hatteras Island.

Colonial waterbirds had 102 active nests with 65 at Cape Point and 8 on Hatteras Island.

Piping plover posted one active nest on South Point on Ocracoke.

Hatteras posted the first sea turtle nest of the season on May 11. The nest, found near Frisco, was a Loggerhead sea turtle nest.

Last year saw 380 total nests, the seashore's 2nd highest recorded nesting year. 2019 was the highest on record with 473 nests total.

A few other records were broken in 2023, reports the National Park Service:

- Highest number of Green turtle nests at 52 recorded in a nesting season.
- First successful Leatherback nest hatch since 2007.
- Highest number of false crawls recorded at 456.
- Latest sea turtle nest found for the seashore and the state was December 3, 2023.

Find out more about sea turtles on Cape Hatteras national Seashore here:

### **Speed limit slows down**

It's that time of year again! Speed limits on NC12 in several areas of Hatteras Island changed May 15 from 45 to 35 miles per hour. Change occurred in Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, Avon and Frisco.

Be aware and SLOW DOWN. Seasonal speed limits improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.

### **Wow!**

Shred Fest was fun Saturday, May 18. This year, the seventh, the Festival came to Rodanthe and the villages' Community Building and Rodanthe Skate Park.

The rain held off. Local bands played music outside. Vendors sold merchandise. Food was offered.

And, the live-action demonstrations by four professional BMX Riders were amazing with tricks launching the bike riders high in the air.

This free and family-friendly event also featured a Veterans Honoring Ceremony. Proceeds from the festival go to Mustang Music Outreach Program, Chicamacomico Lifesaving Station and Chicamacomico Banks Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department.

### **Veterans Benefits Administration reps in Dare County tomorrow.**

The Veterans Benefits Administration—an agency that provides an assortment of services and resources to veterans and their dependents—will host a free town hall event in Dare County from 1:30 to 3:30 Monday afternoon, May 20 at the Thomas A. Baum Senior Center, which is located at 300 Mustian Street in Kill Devil Hills.

Veterans Affairs representatives will give a presentation and be onsite to answer questions from service members, veterans and their families about the various benefits available, including disability compensation, pension, education and healthcare. These onsite VA representatives will also be able to answer questions attendees have about claims currently in progress. And, representatives from the Hampton VA Medical Center will be on site to enroll veterans in healthcare. Dare County Veterans Services representatives will also be available.

### **Pet vaccination clinic in Avon Wednesday**

The Coastal Humane Society is holding a Pet Vaccination Clinic Wednesday, May 22 in Avon. Dr. Mary Burkart from Roanoke Island Animal Hospital is the Clinic Veterinarian for the event.

The Hatteras Island Clinic will be held at the Avon Fire Department on May 22 from 3 to 5. No appointments are needed. Payment must be by cash or check. Clinics are popular so families should be prepared to wait. It is first come, first served.

The vaccination package for dogs includes Rabies, Distemper/Parvo, and Bordetella vaccines for a total of \$36. Heartworm testing is available for \$20. The package for cats includes Rabies and FVRCP vaccines for \$23. Vaccines are priced individually so families can choose whether they want the package for their pets or just some vaccines.

Families must bring their dogs to the Clinic on leashes and their cats in carriers

### **Passenger ferry service to Ocracoke starts May 23**

The *Ocracoke Express* passenger ferry between Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands starts service for the 2024 season Thursday, May 23. Online reservation are available for summer months.

The passenger ferry, now in its sixth season, takes passengers on a 70-minute trip between Hatteras Village and Silver Lake Harbor in Ocracoke Village. A free tram operated by Hyde County is available to carry visitors around the village to shops, restaurants, accommodations, and attractions, including Ocracoke's seasonally lifeguarded beach.

The *Ocracoke Express* will have the following departures from Hatteras May 23 through September 9:

Tuesdays through Fridays, departs Hatteras village at 8:30, 11, 1:45 and 5.

Saturdays through Mondays, departs Hatteras at 9:30, 1 and 4:30

One-way fares are \$7.50, with an additional \$1 charge for bicycles. Children three and under who can share a seat with an adult can ride for free.

For more information on ferry routes and schedules, and for online reservations, visit [ncdot.gov](http://ncdot.gov) and find the button for Ferry Services.

### **Memorial Day schedule**

All Dare County offices and facilities will be closed on Monday, May 27, 2024 in observance of Memorial Day. These offices and facilities will reopen and operate under regularly scheduled hours on Tuesday, May 28, 2024.

These closures include the Dare County C&D Landfill, Manns Harbor Transfer Station, Buxton Transfer Station and Manteo Recycle Yard.

However, there will be **no** changes to the Dare County trash collection schedule on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27.

All areas whose services are provided by the Dare County Public Works Department will operate on normal schedules during the week of Monday, May 27 through Friday, May 31.

Commercial trash collection will take place on Saturdays in the villages of Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, Avon, Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras, beginning on Saturday, June 1, and continuing through Labor Day weekend.

### **Hatteras Village Fish Fry opens next weekend**

Fish fry organizers posting this message: "We need your help! We need some volunteers for our Fish Fry this year. We don't require every week. Just sign up for what you can. Most shifts are an hour and a half or maybe two. But you can sign up for multiple shifts. Please help us out. So

many people and groups benefit from this traditional event. No experience or special talents are needed. Catch up with Linda O'Neal.

**Here are additional events on the calendar for the upcoming week.**

\*\*Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative annual dinner and meeting is tomorrow, Monday, May 20. Dinner starts at 6 o'clock followed by the annual meeting around 7.

\*\*On Tuesday night, the Cape Hatteras Secondary School Class of 2024 will gather in Hatteras village for the annual Senior Celebration and Scholarship Night. The gathering at the Civic Center starts at 6 o'clock.

\*\*On Wednesday, May 22, again at 6 o'clock, all Cape Hatteras Secondary bands will perform in the traditional year-ending concert, which will be in the campus auditorium.

\*\*On Saturday, May 25, the North Carolina Beach Buggy Association will host its Annual Meeting at 2 o'clock at the Rodanthe-Waves-Salvo Community Building in Rodanthe. The event has a silent auction and a barbecue following the meeting.

**Now, be safe out there. Thanks for listening to this news show. This is Radio Hatteras.**