



THIS WEEK'S EDITION:
TWO SECTIONS, 20 PAGES

NEW COCKTAIL BAR
BEING PLANNED FOR
DOWNTOWN CONWAY, A8

AFTER PANDEMIC
SLOWDOWN, HORRY COUNTY
PROSECUTORS EXPECTING TO
TRY MORE CASES IN 2022, A8



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County mulls fireworks-free zones

BY CHARLES D. PERRY
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Jack Mooningham grew so frustrated with the amateur fireworks shows near his Shore Drive area home that he began keeping a log of them.

For 109 nights last year, the 79-year-old documented when he heard distur-

ing fireworks, regardless of whether the time was 9 p.m. or 3 a.m.

"If it was firecrackers and sparklers, it would be one thing," he said. "But it's these giant, loud, roaring boom rockets that are set off every night."

Mooningham lives near the stretch of Horry County beach between the cities of

Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach. It's illegal to shoot fireworks on the municipal beaches, but it's perfectly fine to blast them in the unincorporated areas. However, complaints from Mooningham and other county residents could spark a change in county policy.

County leaders are now

crafting an ordinance that if approved would clear the way for larger fireworks-free zones in the unincorporated areas. The idea is that council members who receive complaints about disruptive fireworks could go to the full council, which would have the option of voting for a resolution declaring a specific area fireworks free.

If someone is caught shooting fireworks in those areas, that person could face a \$50 fine, which would escalate over time. The county would consider the violation a civil infraction, not a criminal misdemeanor.

"As opposed to a \$500 fine and/or 30 days in jail, we have a \$50 fee, which is increased if you fail to pay it,"

county attorney Arrigo Carotti said. "Kind of like our parking violations. After 30 days, it goes up \$50 to a maximum of \$200."

Council members have already given the ordinance one favorable vote, and it needs two more to pass. However, last month

FIREWORKS. A2

22 STORIES TO WATCH IN '22

A look at what we plan to cover in 2022

BY CHARLES D. PERRY
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The year 2021 presented many of the same challenges as its predecessor, but there were some positive signs for the Grand Strand.

Despite the challenges of a labor shortage, tourism enjoyed a strong rebound.

Myrtle Beach International Airport saw a record number of travelers and average room rates for the peak summer season increased.

While COVID-19 variants continued to sicken people, vaccines became easily accessible, enabling people to protect themselves.

Meanwhile, the local real estate industry continued to thrive and Horry County's population grew along with the demand for new housing.

We have covered all of these stories — and others — and we will track them this year.

Here are 22 stories we will be following in 2022:

1. Will the tourism rebound continue?

After the pandemic ground tourism to a halt in 2020 — the Grand Strand lost \$1.8 billion in domestic visitor spending, a 34.6% decrease



JANET MORGAN | JANET.MORGAN@MYHORRYNEWS.COM

STORIES TO WATCH, A3 Grand Strand tourism enjoyed a strong rebound in 2021. Myrtle Beach International Airport saw a record number of travelers and average room rates for the peak summer season rose.

Horry County Schools revises quarantine guidance

BY KATIE POWELL
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Horry County Schools sent updated COVID-19 quarantine guidance to parents on Tuesday.

The information reflects the Centers for Disease Control's shortened quarantine duration of five days.

"If you test positive for

COVID-19, you need to isolate regardless of your vaccination status," stated an email sent to parents Tuesday.

Those who test positive must isolate for five days, and after day five they can return to work or school if they wear a mask around others for five days afterwards.

For those who are only exposed to someone with the virus and they have been fully vaccinated with a booster (completed initial vaccination series and booster for ages 16 and up, or completed initial vaccination series for ages 5-15), they do not have to quarantine. However, they must wear

a mask around others for 10 days.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control recommends testing on day five.

HCS said individuals are eligible for a booster six months after completing their Pfizer or Moderna vaccination series, or two months after their single

dose of Janssen.

Those who have not been vaccinated, have not completed their primary vaccination series or have not received the booster they are eligible for must quarantine for 10 days and no test is required.

However, that quarantine can be cut to five days if an individual tests on day four

or beyond and receives a negative result.

HCS says those individuals must mask up around others from days six through 10.

Of course, if symptoms develop, individuals should stay home and get tested, HCS said.

The district posted additional details on its website.

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