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West Craven Highlights

News From Along The Banks Of The Neuse



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Coward grabs this week's Flying Eagle

Craig Coward doesn't make many headlines playing for the West Craven Eagles, especially playing with a team that has plenty of scoring talent.

But Craig Coward is the third-leading scorer on the Eagle football squad and a big part of the Eagles' 10-0 season, Coastal Conference championship, a No. 5 ranking in the state and playoff berth.

Coward is used mostly as a receiver, but he can burn a defense on reverses. His 17-yard touchdown reception last week against D.H. Conley gave the Eagles a 14-3 lead and moved him to fourth in the conference scoring standings with 40 points. Coward has five touchdowns and two two-point conversions to his credit.

Coward is one of five Eagles in the top 10 of the conference's scorers.

The senior receiver has a knack for making spectacular catches in must-have situations. On a team blessed with receivers like league-leading Kip Bryan (24 receptions, 509 yards and four touchdowns) and Adrian



Mike Voss photo

The Eagles' win over D.H. Conley for the conference crown may have shocked some, but not most of the Eagle fans. The cheerleaders, doing a takeoff of the movie "Shocker" by Wes Craven, may have come up with a sign of the times. Perhaps the most shocking item is the Eagles are 10-0.

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Eagles sink Vikings for league title

Hertford County brings Bears to town Friday

By Mike Voss
Editor

VANCEBORO — Pittsburgh had its "Steel Curtain." But 10-0 West Craven has its "Brick Wall."

And the wall stopped a rival with the number nine ranking in the state.

West Craven's defense put up a brick wall that D.H. Conley could not crack in the second half as the Eagles took a 28-6 win over D.H. Conley, won the conference title and finished the regular season undefeated last Friday night.

The fifth-ranked and playoff-bound Eagles will face Hertford

County, 16-12 winners over Washington last night, Friday night at 8 p.m. at Eagle Stadium in Vanceboro.

The Eagles' Lee Becton finished the night with 223 yards on 26 carries and two touchdowns on runs of 74 yards and nine yards. The junior running back holds the single-season rushing record at the school and finished the regular season with 1,589 yards and 21 rushing touchdowns.

The Eagle defense stopped Conley's top back, Mike Clark, by stopping him for minus two yards on 11 carries.

"This is the sweetest since I've

been here," said Eagle coach Clay Jordan, his voice choked with emotion and his eyes glistening. Before the contest Jordan discussed his nervousness, saying he wanted to get the game started.

"I think our whole defensive unit did a great job," said Jordan.

"We just got beat by a better football team. Well, let's say they played better than we did tonight," said Conley coach Steve Craft. "We'd love to have the honor" to face the Eagles again during the playoffs, said Craft.

"Their defensive line whipped us pretty good in the first half," said Craft. The Viking mentor credited

the Eagle defense with "taking away our momentum."

Conley had three shots at the Eagles inside the Eagles' 30 in the second half. And three times the Eagle defense kept the Vikings out of the end zone. A fumble at the four on fourth-and-goal stopped the first threat. The Eagles' Craig Coward broke up a fourth-and-eight pass from the 14 to stop the second threat. A fourth-and-goal pass at the seven from Scott Seymour to Hal Conger was caught but Conger was out of the end zone.

Conley appeared to cut the mar-

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Something new in the airwaves

By Kleth Hempstead
Special to the
West Craven Highlights

NEWPORT — David Adcock, promotion director at WFXI, is an old timer at the station. He's worked at the FOX network affiliate nearly a month, a long time considering the ground-breaking ceremony for the station was only in March.

WFXI, channel 8, is Southeastern North Carolina's newest television station, the first to be built in 26 years. In fact, the station is still being built.

The station was scheduled to go on the air Sunday, but missed the deadline. Adcock said last week everyone was working frantically to make it a reality.

"Staff keeps coming in waves; it's been a rollercoaster ride," Adcock said just five days before scheduled airtime. "We have 15 this week, but we're going to get more" people, he said. Adcock said the station, which is owned by a group of local businessmen, has hired a number of

local people too.

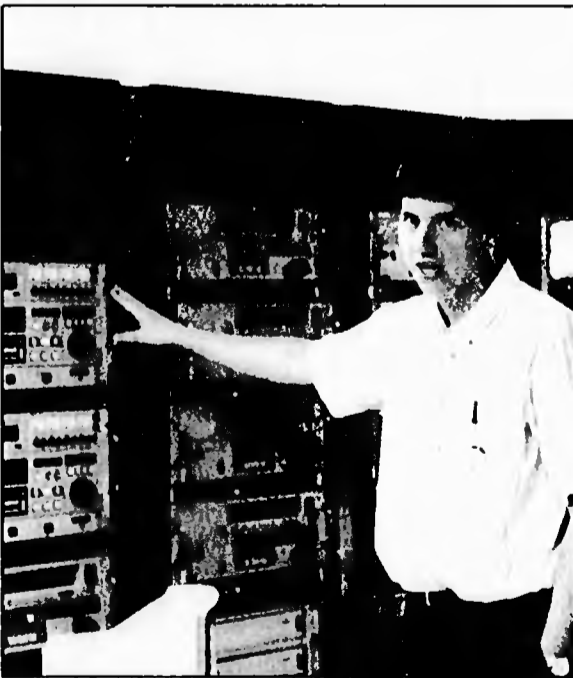
The general manager, who just came from a station in Philadelphia, is a native North Carolinian.

"It's really interesting," Adcock said of getting a group of people who have never worked together before to work closely as if they've always known each other. Work days can last up to 14 hours or even longer.

But Adcock is used to it. This is his second start up of a new station. "You have to understand this is fun, we're pulling together as a team." Not to say nerves become raw at times. "Obviously, you're going to sweat if someone's got a gun to your head," he said. He's hoping, however, that all the hard work will pay off. "And it's going to look effortless to you in the audience. When you flip us on, it's going to be good," he added.

And with the state-of-the-art equipment the station has, it's hard not to believe that it won't look good. The station was so new, you could

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David Adcock shows off the central control room.

No opposition in Vanceboro for aldermen

By Mike Voss
Editor

With no opposition, incumbents for elected offices in Vanceboro were returned to office after a day of light voting.

Incumbent Mayor Jimmie Morris collected 51 votes of the 64 who voted in Tuesday's town elections.

Receiving one write-in vote each for mayor were Alderman Roy Buck and Bob Thorn.

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Draft environmental report arrives late; public hearings beginning soon

A draft environmental report on Mobil Oil Corp.'s proposal to drill an exploratory well off the North Carolina coast was presented to the state last Thursday morning.

The report, written by the federal Minerals Management Service and due last Wednesday, was late because the commercial airline flight it was to arrive on was cancelled.

Staff members of the state Outer Continental Shelf Office and representatives of several environmental groups throughout the state will begin analyzing the document immediately.

The report, some 938 pages, reviews the potential environmental and economic effects of possible fu-

ture exploration and production of natural gas and oil, said Angie Graziano, a spokesman for Minerals Management Service.

The first 500 copies of the draft report have been mailed to state offices, including two in Washington where the two-volume document can be read by members of the general public, Ms. Graziano said.

Copies should be available for inspection this week at the Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources Washington regional office and at the Mid-East Commission office, she said.

Public hearings on the document will be held in Manteo, Beaufort, Raleigh and Washington.

The Washington meeting will be 3 to 6 p.m. and 7 to 10 p.m. Dec. 6 at Beaufort County Community College.

The document includes a study of Gulf Stream currents as requested by three state environmental groups — the North Carolina Coastal Federation, the Sierra Club and LeaSea, a Dare County-based environmental group, Ms. Graziano said.

The report also includes a description of the drilling proposal, results of recent public hearings on the Mobil proposal, alternatives to drilling, a description of biological resources and an oil spill conting-

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TIP bringing improvement to roadways

U.S. 17 is targeted for major four-laning, by-pass projects

By Mike Voss
Editor

Millions of dollars in highway and ferry improvements for Craven County are included in the newest version of the N.C. Department of Transportation's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The improvements were included in the recently adopted \$5 billion update of TIP.

The most expensive project is the \$74.9 million U.S. 17 bypass around New Bern. The project calls for the highway to be four-laned for 8.3 miles and to begin next year. A second multi-lane road covering 18.8 miles between the New Bern bypass and the Washington bypass is expected to cost \$41.6 million and con-

struction is slated to begin in 1996.

TIP also budgets \$26.5 million for a nine-mile bypass at Havelock. The bypass will be a four-lane road, according to TIP specifications.

Several bridge replacements are planned. Bridges over the Neuse River, Trent River, Swift Creek, Cove Creek, Sloum Creek and the Neuse River Overflow will be replaced under TIP. Also in TIP is a provision to provide two ferries for the Neuse River crossing at Minnesott Beach.

Because of Highway Trust Fund monies, more than 400 new projects were added to this year's TIP, and about 400 projects from last year's program have been accelerated.

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Betty Gray photo

George Whitehurst examines his sling cyclometer.

Local weather is no mystery to Whitehurst

By Betty Gray
Special to the
West Craven Highlights

An interest in the weather and its effects on people has followed weather observer George Whitehurst all his life.

From his days as a student in a nearby high school to his career as a radar observer in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War to his current activities as manager of the family farm, Whitehurst has enjoyed watching the weather.

He also believes in the importance of accurate weather information to area farmers and businesses.

"By knowing the weather, you know what is the pulse of the day," Whitehurst said.

As a member of the N.C. Agriculture Extension Service weather program, and, as a weather observer for an area newspaper, Whitehurst is on call 365 days a year.

Whitehurst set up his own weather station in 1971 and became part of the agricultural weather system in 1979.

"North Carolina has one of the best agriculture weather programs in the nation," Whitehurst said.

Whitehurst takes his readings and sends the information to Raleigh, where agricultural

weather observers compile information from the state's 100 counties.

"The more input they can get, the more precise they can be," he said. "Accurate information can be extremely beneficial to the farmers."

Eastern North Carolina, like many areas, has its own microclimate, a small geographical area whose weather patterns fluctuate from other areas, Whitehurst said.

From his home in Core Point, Whitehurst has nearly a 180-degree view of the Pamlico River, both upstream and downstream, and the microclimate it produces. He can usually see storms as far away as Rocky Mount. He can see the rise and fall of the river and the effects wind and waves have on boaters.

Whitehurst, who graduated from high school in 1961, continued his interest in meteorology as a biology and basic science student at East Carolina University.

During his service with the Navy, Whitehurst "used the weather to keep my sanity in war time."

"Any seaman has a definite feel for the weather," he said.

After the Navy, Whitehurst worked for Texasgulf and con-

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