



Boyle recalls Monroe's trip to Edenton — 1B

## LGC talks to town council about water loans

Timeline for Conger building discussed

BY MILES LAYTON  
Staff Writer

Members of the state's Local Government Commission visited Town Council Monday to follow up on matters arising from securing loans needed to finance the improvements needed to get the town's drinking wa-

ter back in compliance with state law.

When the LGC approved Edenton's application for a \$2.6 million U.S. Department of Agriculture loan on Jan. 8, members expressed some criticism for how the town handles its finances. That loan, combined with a \$1.1 million USDA grant the town was awarded, will pay for \$3.7 million in upgrades and renovations to the town's

two water treatment plants.

LGC took issue with Edenton's most recent audit report that listed several material weaknesses in the town's accounting practices and internal fiscal controls. One finding from the audit, for example, was that purchase orders weren't always prepared before purchases were made but instead prepared afterward.

"The LGC team has been

extremely helpful and provided recommendations which we have implemented to strengthen our internal controls," Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said during Monday's council meeting.

Sharon Edmondson, LGC director of fiscal management, explained the loan approval process and why LGC members grilled Edenton.

"I do think a lot of the com-

ments made at the meeting were not directed at Edenton per se, you just happen to be in the room," she said.

Edmondson said LGC believes Edenton is taking the appropriate steps to address problems associated with the audit, and that the town is not the only governmental agency dealing with matters of compliance and accounting needed to secure loans needed to improve

infrastructure. She said because grant funding for such projects is harder to come by, more local governments are applying for financing — loans that require approval by the LGC before financing is made available.

Edmondson said in recent years, accounting standards have "tightened up and become more strict than they

See COUNCIL, 6A

## Family: Jones in hospice care

Congressman battling undisclosed illness

Adams Publishing Group

FARMVILLE — U.S. Rep. Walter B. Jones Jr., who has represented the 3rd District of North Carolina in Congress since 1995, has entered hospice care, according to multiple news sources.



JONES

Jones, 75, has been battling an undisclosed illness since last fall. He was granted a leave of absence that has kept him from casting votes in the U.S. House since September.

Adding to his health woes, Jones suffered a fall and broke his hip earlier this month. He underwent surgery at Vidant Medical Center on Jan. 15, according to his office.

The Farmville Republican missed taking the oaths of office with other members of the 116th Congress on Jan. 3, his staff reported. He was sworn in by Rep. G.K. Butterfield during a private ceremony in Jones' home on Jan. 4.

Speaking on Friday, Butterfield described Jones as "a very good friend and has been a friend for more than 20 years."

While taking the oath of office, Butterfield said, Jones' spirits were good "and he was mentally alert and he was physically alert." Butterfield said he thought Jones would return to the House soon.

However, the visit took place before Jones underwent hip surgery.

Jones first was sworn in to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1995,

See JONES, 2A



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## A STOP BEFORE HEADING SOUTH



PHOTOS BY MILES LAYTON/CHOWAN HERALD

Swans are familiar sight at the Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge.

## Give birds a peek at Lake Mattamuskeet

Chowan Herald

HYDE COUNTY — A few miles outside Fairfield along NC 94, migratory birds gather annually at Lake Mattamuskeet.

At the peak of the migrations, more than 250,000 birds, including tundra swans, snow geese, Canada geese, and more than 20 species of ducks, winter within the Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge. Established in December 1934, the park includes about 50,000 acres of marshes, woods and water. The dominant feature is Lake Mattamuskeet, which is 18 miles long, seven miles wide, and a swan's neck deep.

Observation decks perched by water allow bird enthusiasts to see and photograph all sorts of birds, but the tundra swans are the most striking.

December through February, large flocks of these giant white birds with their long necks gather in the marshes of lake by the road leading up to the lodge.

Sunday, a closer look at a swan that was nesting by



At the peak of the migrations, more than 250,000 birds, including Tundra swans, Snow Geese, Canada Geese, and more than 20 species of ducks, will be wintering within the Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge.

the water's edge revealed a very large elegant bird. Male tundra swans average 52 inches in length and 16 pounds in weight; females average 51 inches in length and 14 pounds in weight.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the swans breed in the high tundra across the top of North America. At the ref-

uge, they reside in the moist soil units and the lakes and forage on cropland on and around the refuge. They stay in large flocks when they are in the area. Tundra swans feed on aquatic plants found in shallow water by immersing their head and neck.

The plumage of adult tundra swans is completely

white, though their heads and necks are often stained a rusty color from ferrous minerals encountered in marsh soils during feeding. The bill is black and often has a yellow spot at the base. The legs and feet are black and the iris is dark brown. Both sexes are

See SWANS, 5A

## Chamber adds small business award

Annual banquet to be held Thursday at American Legion

BY MILES LAYTON  
Staff Writer

The Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce will host its annual banquet Thursday at the American Legion Hall on West Queen Street.

Social hour and silent auction takes place between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. with the dinner and awards afterward. Banquet's catering will be by Kelly's Outer Banks Restaurant and Tavern.

A new award will be presented, Small Business of the Year.

"The award came about after some on the Chamber Board began talking the impacts that our small businesses had on Edenton and Chowan County, and how they gave back to the community through volunteering, donations, and mentoring others," said Win Dale, chamber director.

Dale said the Chamber established the Business Person of the year award in 1984, but the Board talked and discussed about creating the new award to recognize an actual business and the positive impact it made on the community. The Chamber formally approved the creation of the Small Business of the Year Award and directed Dale to come up with criteria to be included in nominations for a 2018 winner. The Board approved this criteria, and the Chamber was able to include the award with its other award nomination announcements in October of 2018.

"We're excited about the inaugural year for this award, and we're proud

See AWARD, 5A

## Cycle NC seeks volunteers for spring ride

Coastal ride coming to Edenton April 27-28

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON  
Editor

Almost 2,000 bicyclists are scheduled to descend upcoming Edenton in April and the group putting their visit together could use your help.

Cycle North Carolina will host its Cycle NC Coastal ride April 26-28, with the historic town serving as the

### VOLUNTEER

To volunteer for Cycle NC Coastal, fill out the online form at [https://ncsupports.org/event/cyclenc\\_coastal\\_ride/volunteer/](https://ncsupports.org/event/cyclenc_coastal_ride/volunteer/).

central hub. The rides vary from 10-100 miles in length. Each day of the event, bicyclists will explore different areas of northeastern North Carolina.

See CYCLE, 5A



FILE PHOTO

Cycle NC riders will take to the streets of northeastern North Carolina April 26-28. The event is seeking volunteers to help about 2,000 bicyclists check-in and work at water stops.

