

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

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### A Look Back At 1992

## Reviewing The Past Year

By MARGUERITE MCCALL

Although the year 1992 will evoke specific memories -- pleasant or unpleasant -- for individuals, a recapitulation of highlights affecting the community and printed in The Chowan Herald follows:

**January** - Beginning in January and throughout the year until November 3, Edenton was visited by candidates running for state, national and judicial offices.

The Cupola House, a landmark in Edenton, decreased in perceived age when the Cupola House Association received a report stating dendrochronological testing indicated the house was built between 1757-59, not in 1725.

The first of four convenience centers planned for Chowan County opened on Highway 32-North. Many of the green dumpsters located at various sites in the county were removed.

**February** - The Town of Edenton was awarded a \$600,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to aid in extending sewer services to Barr-Mullin Wood Products on Midway Street, Cape Colony.

Chowan Middle School was evacuated twice in four days when someone called in bomb threats. The threats turned out to be a hoax.

County Manager Cliff Copeland announced the state's selection of Chowan County as its tentative site for a multipurpose youth home.

**March** - The Board of County Commissioners held a public information meeting to hear comments from several persons opposing construction of the proposed youth group home.

Law enforcement officers placed a police line around John A. Holmes High School for several days after serious

threats were made by a group of students against other students. A grievance committee formed of students and teachers was implemented to handle complaints.

Following months of a community drive to raise funds for bulletproof vests, officers of the Edenton Police Department were fitted for and ordered the vests.

Edenton Baptist Church concluded a month-long 175th Anniversary celebration with a homecoming service and the opening of a 1916 time capsule.

**April** - The Edenton Fire Department received an award from the National Fire Safety Council for five years of outstanding fire safety education in Chowan County.

The nine-month trial of Little Rascals Day Care Center defendant Robert F. Kelly Jr. ended when the jury found

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**TWO WINNERS** -- North Carolina Governor-Elect James Hunt Jr. (left) chats with Baseball Hall of Famer Jimmy "Catfish" Hunter during a fundraising event for Hunt held last July at Perquimans County High School in Hertford. (Staff photo by Marguerite McCall)

## SBI Launches Investigation

By REBECCA BUNCH

SBI Agent Bill Godley confirmed Tuesday afternoon that his office is in the process of conducting an investigation that involves alleged improprieties by members of the Albemarle Regional Drug Task Force.

"Our investigation has been going on for about two weeks," Godley said. He declined to say what prompted the investigation, but said the State Bureau of Investigation became involved at the request of members of the Task Force.

Agent Godley said that while he could not comment on specific details of the case, he expected that the SBI would wrap up its investigation soon. "Hopefully, we'll be in a position to give our report to District Attorney (H.P.) Williams within the next few weeks," he said. At that point, he indicated, a decision will

be made on how to proceed.

Godley, citing a need to "protect the integrity" of an ongoing investigation, declined to provide further details at this time.

Task Force Commander Greg Hassell also refused to say why the investigation was begun. "It's not that we're trying to keep anything from anybody," he said, "but this is a very sensitive situation. We

will certainly provide more information when it's appropriate for us to do so.

"The only thing I can say at this point is that there is an investigation going on and that the SBI began it at my request," he added. "I was the one who brought them in."

The Task Force is made up of law enforcement personnel from Chowan, Washington

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## New Procedure Implemented

By REBECCA BUNCH

A program of court-ordered arbitration of civil cases in the state's First Judicial District, which includes Chowan County, should be in place early next year, according to Franklin Freeman, director of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Under program guidelines, contested civil cases involving \$15,000 or less will be automatically scheduled for non-binding arbitration before a trial date is set. The program is already underway in 10 judicial districts.

In addition to Chowan, the counties of Camden, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Pasquotank and Perquimans make up the First Judicial District. The Fifth District, which encompasses New Hanover and Pender counties, will also begin using the program.

The 10 districts where the program is already in operation involve 26 of North Carolina's 100 counties. The number of counties will rise to 35 with the inclusion of the First and Fifth Districts. Freeman said plans are for his agency to have the program operational throughout the state within the next several years.

Freeman said that because

the majority of cases where arbitration would be utilized are District Court cases, the Chief District Court judges are in charge of supervising the program in the counties where it is used.

He said that N.C. court administrators are currently working with Chief District Court Judge Grafton G. Beaman of Elizabeth City to extend the program into the First District. Chief District Court Judge Jacqueline Morris-Goodson of Wilmington is assisting with its implementation in the Fifth District.

"Arbitration is an innovative and proven alternative to civil litigation," Freeman said at the program's inception. He added that a 1989

Institute of Government study indicated that cases where arbitration was used "were disposed of in two-thirds the time, and fewer required trials."

Freeman said he remained confident that arbitration "will substantially increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our court system as a whole and especially our district courts, where caseloads continue to rise."

In fiscal 1991-92, cases involving arbitration were settled with 30 days of the hearing nearly 75 percent of the time. In the remaining cases the parties involved were unable to reach a settlement and requested that their cases be heard in either district or superior court.

## Store Manager Is Mugged

By MARGUERITE MCCALL

Police are investigating a common law robbery that took place shortly before 8 p.m. Sunday night in front of Shoe Show in Edenton Village Shopping Center.

Shoe Show Manager John Chilcoat Jr. was outside the business locking the door when someone from behind grabbed a handful of his hair

and shoved him forward against the glass door.

Another person near Pizza Hut called out to the perpetrator, who fled after taking from Chilcoat two money bags containing an undetermined amount of cash.

Edenton Police Chief C.H. Williams said Chilcoat called in to the police department to report the crime.

Williams said Emergency Medical Services responded to check Chilcoat, who was not seriously injured, and Duke the Canine Unit dog was brought in. Rain made it too wet for the dog to track, Williams said. However, one bank bag, slit with the money gone, was found in a ditch behind the shopping center stores.

Investigating officers were Williams and Patrolmen Lewis Brothers, Wayne Forehand and Neil Baker. Although not on the scene, Captain Gregory Bonner is continuing with the investigation.

Williams said a break-in and entering occurred at Anand New York Hi Styles on S. Broad St. Wednesday, December 23. He said Patrolman Wayne Forehand, while on routine patrol, discovered at 5:05 a.m. that a large plate glass window had been broken in the store's front.

Clothing items valued at \$268 had been taken. It was the second time within the past few weeks that a window had been broken at the business.

In addition to Forehand, Sgt. Bill Phillips Jr. and Patrolman Neil Baker investigated the incident. Williams said an investigation is continuing.

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**THANK YOU** -- Ruth Rose (right), Business Manager for the Edenton Historical Commission, thanks Don Johnson of Union Camp Corp. for the donation his company is making to the Commission. Mrs. Rose said the Historic Edenton membership drive is upcoming. (Staff photo by Marguerite McCall)

### Values Stressed

## Celebration Is Tonight

By REBECCA BUNCH

A Kwanza celebration, based on African tradition and reaffirming the values of self-esteem, self-direction, progressive thoughts and deeds will be held tonight (Thursday) at the D.F. Walker gym, beginning at 6 p.m. The event is being sponsored by the Edenton-Chowan Civic League.

Mildred H. Vanterpool, League spokeswoman, said that this was the third year the celebration had been carried out locally. "This will be the first time we've had it in a public place," she said, "and we're hoping for a lot of interest and a good turnout." The celebration had previously been held at the headquarters of the Fannie Parker Woman's Club.

Mrs. Vanterpool said the event was based on seven important principals: Umoja, or "unity"; Kujichua Gulia,

"self-determination"; Ujima, "collective work and responsibility"; Ujamaa, "co-operative economics"; Nia, "purpose"; Kuumba, "creativity"; and Imani, "faith."

The word "Kwanza" itself comes from a Swahili phrase, "Matunda Ya Kwanza," which means "first fruits of the harvest." Kwanza is observed in many places between December 26 and January 1, she said.

"Hopefully, this will grow and become a tradition here in Edenton," she said. "We also hope it will instill a positive attitude in those who attend, especially our young people."

The observance is not of political nature. "It is not a religious observance, either," Mrs. Vanterpool said. "It is a time for us to pay homage to our ancestors and elders and focusing on the future."

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS -- A candle burning brightly at the Kwanzaa celebration. The light and darkness to guide each individual through the coming year. (Staff photo by Marguerite McCall)