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Nature Prevails

A mysterious vine threatens to engulf the front yard of The Tredwell House on West Eden Street, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Olin Sykes and family. Amid professional landscaping, the plant began to grow and grow and grow. Neighbors believe it might be a pumpkin, seeded from last Halloween's jack-o-lanterns. Whatever might issue from the creeping wonder should soon be apparent, when blooms turn to fruit. (Staff photo by E.N. "Pete" Manning.)

Four Cent Increase Proposed

By MARGUERITE MCCALL

The proposed budget for the Town of Edenton for fiscal year 1993-94 is based on a tax rate of \$.42, which represents a four cent tax increase.

Prior to adoption, the Town Council Finance Committee will preview and discuss the document on Tuesday, June 15, and a public hearing will be held on Tuesday, June 22, at 7 p.m.

If adopted by the Council at its Committees Meeting on Monday, June 28, the budget would reflect the first tax increase since July 1988, said Town Manager Anne-Marie

Kelly last week.

"It is significant," she said, "that there has been no increase in five years in spite of the state of the economy."

Ms. Kelly said the sales tax has been flat, as well as other taxes such as the beer and wine tax. Also, the bad budget crunch experienced two years ago by the state curtailed reimbursements to the Town.

"Intangible tax growth was taken away," she said, "and interest earnings have decreased. Three years ago, we were earning 7 to 8 percent on our investments, now we are earning 3 percent.

"If it were not for our capital outlay needs, I dare say no increase would be needed. But," she stressed, "we have held the line, deferred, and delayed capital expenditures over the last year or two and our needs continue to grow."

Capital needs funded include Police Department -- two vehicles (\$28,000), seven walkie talkie radios and ten mobile radios (\$33,825); Recreation Department -- a van (\$18,000) and replacement of lights at the Armory (\$12,000); Fire Department -- safety equipment (\$19,000); and

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Commissioners Approve Budget

By MARGUERITE MCCALL

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners approved Monday night the FY 1993-94 budget, which includes a five cent tax increase in the tax rate. That amount will produce additional revenue of \$235,125.

Items receiving an increase in the budget total \$275,715. These are:

- County Office Building -- \$25,643 for new wiring, a

safety issue, said County Manager Cliff Copeland.

- Emergency Medical Services -- \$15,000 for a new ambulance. Copeland said each of the two present ambulances record over 105,000 miles.

- Social Services -- Aid For Dependent Children (AFDC), \$10,967, mandated; Medicaid, \$50,000, mandated; Special Assistance Aid \$14,785, mandated.

- Industrial Development - \$12,500.

- Education -- \$146,820. Copeland said the amount includes six air conditioning units for John A. Holmes High School, two classrooms at White Oak School, additional lines at D.F. Walker School for heating, scheduled furniture, and roofs at Chowan Middle School and the Fine Arts Building.

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Commencement This Friday

Commencement exercises for the John A. Holmes High School graduating class of 1993 will be held on Friday, June 11, at 7 p.m. in the John A. Holmes High School Athletic Complex.

Co-Salutatorian Stephen Lowe will welcome the graduates and guests and present a "Senior Salute" to the Class of 1993.

Valedictorian Shannon Robertson and Senior Class President Darrell Armstead will each present an address to the graduating class.

Louis Belfield, assistant principal at John A. Holmes, will provide recognition of special achievements of the graduating seniors followed by the confirmation of graduation and awarding of diplomas by Dr. John B. Dunn, superintendent, and John A.

Mitchener III, board chairman.

Class Co-Salutatorian Lee Mayo will present the "Graduate Challenge" and the Turning of the Tassels.

Special music will be provided by the John A. Holmes Band under the direction of Otis Strother, the John A. Holmes Concert Choir directed by Shelby Strother, and a rendition of "We Will Stand" by graduating seniors Darrell Armstead and Tangie Chappell.

Marshals for this year's commencement exercises are Jenny McArthur, Laura Culbreth, Traci Huffman, Bryan Jackson, Amanda Kuykendall, Ruth Mitchener, Jim Nixon, Daron Satterfield, Melissa Swanner, Tomeka Ward, and Angie Winborne.

CMS Target Of Another Bomb Threat

By MARGUERITE MCCALL

Chowan Middle School was the target of yet another bomb threat Friday.

Chowan County Sheriff Fred Spruill said the call, which came into the school at 12:40 p.m., was traced to a telephone booth in Edenton.

He said Center Hill-Cross Roads Fire Department Rescue Squad and school personnel searched the building.

"Nothing was found," Spruill said. "The regular school schedule resumed."

The investigation is continuing. Anyone having any knowledge pertaining to the incident is asked to contact the Sheriff's Office or Crime

Manhunt Continues

By JEANETTE WHITE

News Editor

Bertie Ledger-Advance

WINDSOR - An east-coast manhunt is underway for a self-proclaimed ex-cop who calmly and methodically executed three people and wounded two others during the robbery of a Windsor grocery store early Sunday evening.

One man in the store was not physically injured after he convinced the robber he did not know and could not identify his attacker.

"Tall man, this is your lucky day," the robber told the survivor, who was then bound with a piece of dog leash or chain from the store shelf.

Residents in the Town of Windsor remained in shock this week, trying to understand how such brutality could take place in their friendly community with neighbors unaware of what was happening until it was too late to stop the hand that wielded such horror.

Belo, a chain of 33 stores in North Carolina and Virginia owned by Camellia Food Stores, Inc., is offering a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of this assailant. There may also be a \$2,500 reward from the governor's office, but that possibility had not been confirmed at press time.

The Town of Windsor will also participate in the reward and amount will be determined when Town Council meets this week.

When the robbery was over, Belo Manager Grover Lee Cecil, Jr., 48, Country Club Drive, Ayden; cashier Joyce Coburn Reason, 36, Coburn Road, Windsor; and Johnny Rankins, Jr., 48, Albemarle Street, Edenton, a member of the store's cleaning crew, were dead.

Ms. Reason and Cecil were shot once in the head and Rankins was shot in the back.

Other members of the cleaning crew survived, but were listed in criti-

cal condition Monday at Pitt Memorial Hospital in Greenville, where they were flown by East Care Sunday night. The survivors are Sylvester Welch, Jr., 39, Route 2, Hertford, who was shot in the back; and Thomas Earl Hardy, 48, Granville Trailer Park, Edenton, whose throat was cut and a knife was broken off in his back.

The handle of the knife has not been found.

Jasper Hardy, Jr., 51, Albemarle Trailer Park, Edenton, was the man whom the attacker did not physically harm. Hardy was badly shaken by the attack. He was treated and released at Bertie Memorial Hospital.

Officers investigating the attack believe the triple murders and robbery happened this way:

The attacker went inside the store and browsed before closing time. Just before the store closed at 6 p.m., he hid inside the store until there were no customers. Then he walked toward

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Law enforcement officers confer in front of the Be-Lo Market in Windsor, site of the Sunday night robbery, murder of two store employees and an Edenton man, and the wounding of an Edenton man and a Hertford man. (Courtesy of Laura Harrell, The Bertie Ledger-Advance.)

Man Fatally Injured In Wreck

Ernie Ashley Swain, 72, of Soundshore Drive died in Pitt Memorial Hospital in Greenville Friday as the result of injuries sustained in an automobile accident Thursday afternoon at 3:10.

Sgt. C.D. Gould of the North Carolina Highway Patrol in Elizabeth City said Swain and his wife, Doris Clifton Swain, 72, were traveling South on NC 32 one and

one-half miles South of Edenton when the accident occurred.

Mrs. Swain was driving the couples' 1990 Cadillac passenger car, Gould said.

"As the vehicle approached the bridge," he said, "it ran off on the right and struck the concrete bridge rail end, spun around, and came to rest in the middle of the bridge."

As of Monday afternoon,

no charges had been filed, Gould said.

Both Swain and Mrs. Swain were transported to Chowan Hospital for evaluation by the Edenton-Chowan EMS, Unit One.

Gould said the investigating officer, Trooper W.F. Whitley, pulled muscles in his back trying to extricate Swain from the vehicle and,

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An accident Thursday on the bridge crossing Queen Anne's Creek on NC 32 South resulted in the death of a Chowan County man. Vehicles lined up on both ends of the bridge while emergency crews attended the car's occupants, Mr. and Mrs. Ashley Swain. (Staff photo by E.N. Manning.)