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Gang-like fights flare, result in assaults, arrests

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

What began as a dispute between high school students late last month, erupted into a series of violent confrontations throughout the town during a recent six-day span.

Although police are still investigating to determine if several recent assaults are all related, by Sunday 10 teenagers had been arrested, according to Edenton Police Chief Greg Bonner. Petitions for arrest on assault charges allegedly committed by two 15-year-olds are also pending, Bonner said.

Though police feel that one incident which sent a 17-year-old Edenton male to Chowan Hospital for treatment is related to a previous fight, an attack upon another Edenton teen last Monday afternoon remains a mystery. As a result of injuries sustained during a beating last Monday, Larry Boatwright remains in Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

Bonner, however, did not la-

bel the separate assaults as cases of gang violence, but called the incidents cases of "retaliation" between youths in east and west Edenton.

"Some of the persons were residents of housing on the west side of town, and some of them were residents of the east side of town," Bonner said Monday. "As a result, you had friends of both parties that were involved in the (initial) fight that were keeping the fight alive by having youths on the east side assault youths from the west side and vice versa."

The first incident began last Wednesday at John A. Holmes High School, shortly after the school day ended, and subsequently escalated into a fight behind the adjacent Edenton-Chowan Recreation & Parks Department building on North Road Street.

After responding to the scene at approximately 3:30 p.m., police questioned Lloyd Littlejohn, 17, about the incident. Although Littlejohn did not

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HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME AT MAY PLAY DAY

Many local craftspeople were on hand at May Play Day offering those attending many beautiful things to see and purchase. Mrs. Louise Harrell was one of those showing off her sewing and cross-stitch expertise. In addition to crafts, there were children's games, music and food. The annual community festival is sponsored by the Rocky Hock Ruritans and the Rocky Hock community.

Downtown arbors may be removed

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

If you've walked through downtown Edenton lately, chances are you've encountered the territorial bumblebees hovering around South Broad Street's six brick arbors.

However, if town officials have their way about it, those arbors will come tumbling down in the near future, paving the way for an update of the crumbling benches under the arbors as well, thus leaving the bees (and pedestrians) to seek shelter elsewhere.

During the Edenton Town Council's committee meeting last week, the council discussed tearing down the arbors in the wake of complaints about the arbors' inconsistency with the appearance of downtown His-

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Three plans for hospital are received

With the deadline for proposals expired, the leasing of Chowan Hospital has narrowed down to three candidates, while a fourth candidate awaits a verdict on a possible deadline extension.

Monday morning, Chowan County Manager Cliff Copeland revealed that Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Carolina Health Corporation (a joint venture formed by Albemarle Hospital and Sentara Health System) and Brentwood, Tenn.-based New American Healthcare had submitted proposals by last Thursday's deadline.

Copeland told the Chowan County Board of Commissioners that Province Healthcare, also based in Brentwood, Tenn., was unaware of the April 30 deadline and has requested an opportunity to submit its own proposal.

"They were just not aware that the process was underway," Copeland said during the commissioners' monthly meeting. Copeland said that the

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Harriet Jacobs in 1894

Former slave will be honored with marker

Author, abolitionist Harriet Jacobs an 'important figure'

The dedication of a North Carolina Highway historical marker commemorating the life of Harriet Jacobs will take place Friday, May 15, from 11-11:45 a.m. at the Historic Edenton Visitor Center, 108 North Broad Street. Dr. Jeffery Crow, director of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, will be the keynote speaker.

Jacobs (1813-1897) was a writer, abolitionist and reformer who was born a slave in Edenton. After escaping to the North and obtaining her freedom, she published the story of her life, *Incidents in the Life of*

a Slave Girl, Written by Herself, in 1861. The book helped to build Northern sentiment for emancipation during the Civil War and was probably the only slave narrative to deal with sexual oppression as well as oppression of race and condition.

On May 17, 1997, Harriet Jacobs was inducted into the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame, located at the Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities in Southern Pines, NC.

The Harriet Jacobs Highway historical marker was approved by the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Advisory Committee Dec. 5, 1997, and is the eighteenth marker to be placed in Chowan County. The marker was proposed to the North Carolina

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Edentonians may get three percent reduction on utilities

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

Effective in June, Edenton residents may see a three percent reduction in their electric bills as a result of a decrease in town's retail rates.

The decrease is due an estimated \$104,000 in savings to the town as a result of a 5.6 percent wholesale rate reduction — starting May 1 — from the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency (NCEMPA) and a contract with another energy supplier. That rate decrease, said Edenton Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton, will result in a three percent savings to town retail customers on June 1 for energy usages during the month of May.

According to an example sheet presented to the council at their monthly committee meeting, the average customer using 1,000 kWh (kilowatts per hour) on a monthly basis would

save nearly \$33 per year as a result of the new, lower rate. Under the new rate, the town will charge 8.75 cents per kWh as compared to 9.024 cents per kWh — for the first 1,500 kWh used. A similar cost decline occurs for electric usage in excess of 1,500 kWh.

"I feel like it (contract with SEPA) is really in our best interest to buy that power at that price," said Knighton.

According to Knighton, the town can purchase 775 KW per month from SEPA at a cost of nearly \$3,000 compared to the \$11,625 per month charge for

775 KW it would pay NCEMPA. The town cannot purchase more than the allotted 775 KW from SEPA, but Knighton said the town will save \$104,000 annually from the contract.

The town will have the option to pull out

of its contract every five years depending on the effect potential deregulation of energy supplies has on electric rates. This was good news to the council's utilities committee chairman, Willis Privott.

"I'm gunshy about something we're not able to get out of," said Privott.

Knighton said that deregulation will most likely take until

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'I feel like it is really in our best interest to buy power that that price.'

Anne-Marie Knighton
Town Manager
Town of Edenton

Knighton said the town and its electric consumers could expect more savings as a result of a contract with the Southeastern Power Administration (SEPA) which is operated by the federal Corps of Engineers. In signing a 20-year contract with SEPA, the town will be able to purchase 775 KW (kilowatts) per month of power at a cost of \$3.83 per KW compared to \$15 per KW of NCEMPA energy.



HELPING THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

The Edenton Lions Club recently held a dinner at the American Legion Building for a group of visually impaired residents of Chowan County. Helping out were Lions Club member Jack Revels, Sharity Jordan, Betz Blowe and Sam Cox, club president.