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# THE CHOWAN HERALD

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## Northern Chowan Community Center dedication nears

Open House to be held Nov. 7; public welcome

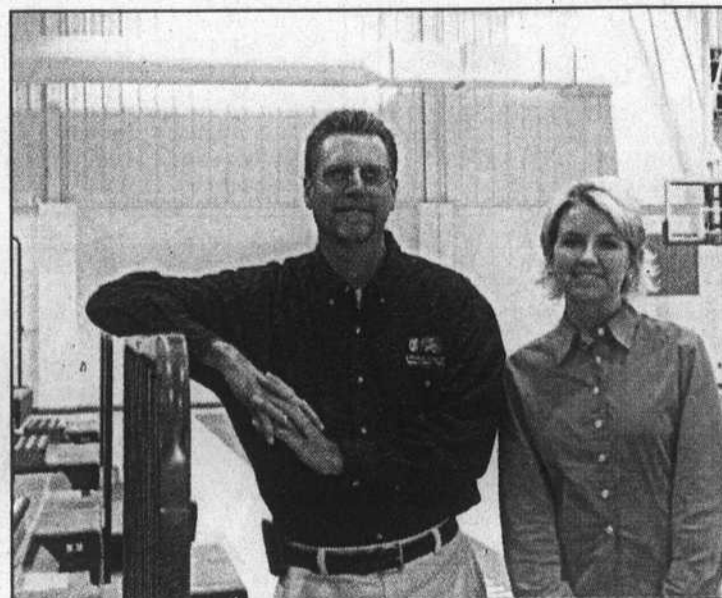
BY HELEN KERR OUTLAND  
Staff Writer

On Wednesday, Nov. 7, the Northern Chowan Community Center will officially open with a ribbon cutting and open house at 4 p.m. The public is cordially invited to attend.

The new facility, a 25,000 square foot building will include not only accommodations for the public, but for Chowan Middle school that is located next to the facility.

"This has been a long time coming," said Robbie Laughton, director of the Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department. "We are so pleased as well as grateful to many people."

The Northern Chowan Center houses an 8,000 square foot gym, with a bleacher capacity for 675 spectators. It supports a



Robbie Laughton talks with Meredith Broome in the new 8,000 square foot gym at the Northern Chowan Community Center where a ribbon-cutting and open house will take place next Wednesday. Laughton, director of the Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department, spearheaded the project; Broome will be one of two full-time employees at the center. The other position has yet to be filled. (Staff photo by Helen Kerr Outland)

regulation sized basketball court that can be divided by a partition to accommodate two practicing teams. "One of the

amenities of the basketball goals is the ability to raise them higher, lower them, or to move them completely out of the

way," Laughton said, pointing out the electronic system with which each goal is controlled. The bleachers work on a similar system and can be "stacked" against the walls to create additional floor space in the gym.

Architect Larry Deckard designed the new center which is being built by Davie Construction Company and General Contractor, Inc. The center will offer a variety of instructional classes and there are areas set aside for the weight room, another for aerobics, and a spacious community meeting room. "We also have a large laundry area available to us as patrons will be furnished towels," added Laughton.

Meredith Broome will be one of two full-time employees at the new center. Broome is a graduate of East Carolina University in Greenville with a degree in Recreational Administration. She is a native of Edenton. "I was going to move back home for a while anyway," Broome said. "I wanted to save up some money. I saw an ad in the Chowan Herald for

this position and I applied. I am very excited about the center and can not wait for it to open."

Broome's job will be to oversee the daily activities at the new facility as well as providing activities or classes the community may express an interest in taking.

The center will be open 6 or 7 days a week contingent on the needs of the community. For those who like exercising out of doors, there is a walking path that encircles the football field, 3 outdoor tennis courts, and basketball courts. The center is surrounded on three sides by spacious parking.

"Very simply put, the Northern Community Center will be a tremendous asset to Chowan County," said Chowan County Commissioner Cliff Copeland. "The beauty of the facility is that it benefits the recreation needs of the northern end of the county and the school system as well."

Chowan County Middle School sits next to the new center. As the student population

has increased over the years, so have their needs for additional facilities to accommodate a number of school functions.

"One reason we went back to make the gym larger so that the middle school could seat its entire student body. Before, they would have to hold assemblies in two different stages," said Copeland. "I am really proud of this project, as it will benefit the entire county for a long time to come."

Along with plenty of shower, locker, and changing areas the new facility also has a large and fully equipped kitchen and concession stand. Restrooms on that end of the center are designed to address the larger gatherings for community, school, or sports events at the center. "We will offer a variety of activities that include aerobics, martial arts, and exercise for kids," said Laughton. "Space has also been set aside for a future Racquet Ball court."

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## Natural gas to be available to some customers by July

BY CHIP ROMANOVICH  
Cox NC Publications

COLUMBIA, NC - State and regional officials broke ground on a long-awaited natural gas pipeline Thursday, a project they've long said will change the region's economic landscape forever.

Dozens of officials traveled to Columbia for the ceremony, and everyone who spoke promised dramatic improvements in the Albemarle once natural gas begins flowing through a maze of pipelines that will stretch from Ahoskie to the beaches of Dare County.

"This project will bring change to each of the counties represented here, (changes) that most of us dreamed would never happen," said Bob Spivey.

Windsor mayor and chairman of North Carolina's Northeast Partnership. "This is a giant step for economic development. Today, we face a new opportunity because we will become competitive. This is a special day for us."

The \$49 million first phase of the project will see pipe laid in Gates, Perquimans, Chowan, Pasquotank, Camden and Currituck counties. Progress Energy and Albemarle-Pamlico Economic Development Corporation officials have been setting stakes and acquiring easements and environmental permits for several months.

Construction of the pipeline began in Ahoskie earlier this month, with the digging of 12-inch transmission mains. Smaller distribution lines, which will ultimately service businesses and homes, are currently being dug in Elizabeth City. Officials expect gas to become available to some customers here by July.

"We've got about a mile or so laid, out near Ahoskie," said Progress Energy Construction

Project Manager Chris Albers. "We just started yesterday (in Elizabeth City). In the next couple of weeks, you'll see a lot more work."

Rep. Bill Owens, D-Pasquotank, and Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight, D-Manteo, sponsored several key pieces of legislation over the past 10 years that helped bring the pipeline to the northeast.

"We've all looked for this for a long time," Owens said. "Our dreams are going to become a reality. We'll have industry that look at us now that would not look at us before. We're on the right road."

Owens and Basnight helped push a \$200 million statewide bond referendum to help fund the project, as well as the natural gas franchise bill that allowed Progress Energy to pursue the rights to distribute natural gas.

Basnight said the alternative energy source moves the Albemarle one step closer to providing what prospective businesses demand from an area.

"Natural gas ... just brings employers," he said. "It will bring other business and industry to Northeastern North Carolina. This is one of the components. Without the gas, none of it works; without the roads, none of it works. You have to bring all of it together, and we're doing that. Now, they'll be in a position to compete equally."

Winfall Mayor Fred Yates, Edenton Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton, and former Pasquotank County Commissioner Jimmie Dixon also attended the ceremony.

Yates praised the project's potential. "It's just like pouring water on a seed, cultivating it and watching it grow," he said. "We'll be able to get industry here, and keep our children here and find meaningful jobs. It's a dream come true."



DARE Officer, Deputy Carl Rabe, shown above with his wife Mary Ellen, was presented the Chowan County Outstanding Officer of the Year at the Annual Chowan County Law Enforcement Banquet. Deputies Tim Brabble and Greg Whitehurst (right) were presented the Edenton-Chowan Optimist Club Outstanding Officer Award for Youth. (Staff photos by Helen Kerr Outland)



## Outstanding law officers are honored

BY HELEN KERR OUTLAND  
Staff Writer

EDENTON - The preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion reads in part: "For God and country we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism... To promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles

of justice, freedom and democracy."

On Thursday, October 25th, nearly 300 law enforcement, fire, and rescue personnel were joined by families, friends, and dignitaries for the 31st Annual Chowan County Law Enforcement Banquet hosted by the Edward G. Bond, Post 40, American Legion in Edenton. It was an evening of reminders and gratitude for their service to their community and throughout the country.

Also on hand were representatives from law enforcement divisions' all over northeastern North Carolina. The honorable Justice Marc Martin of the North Carolina Supreme Court, guest speaker, addressed the audience, reminding them of the important role that law enforcement plays in the continued security of the United States. "These men and women make a commitment, every day, to give their lives if need be, for you," said Justice

Martin. "We must not forget their dedication and loyalty to us all."

The program for the evening began with the presenting of the colors with officers carrying flags representing their branch of law enforcement, marching in cadence, as "Amazing Grace" was played on bagpipes.

The entire evening was dedicated to honoring those

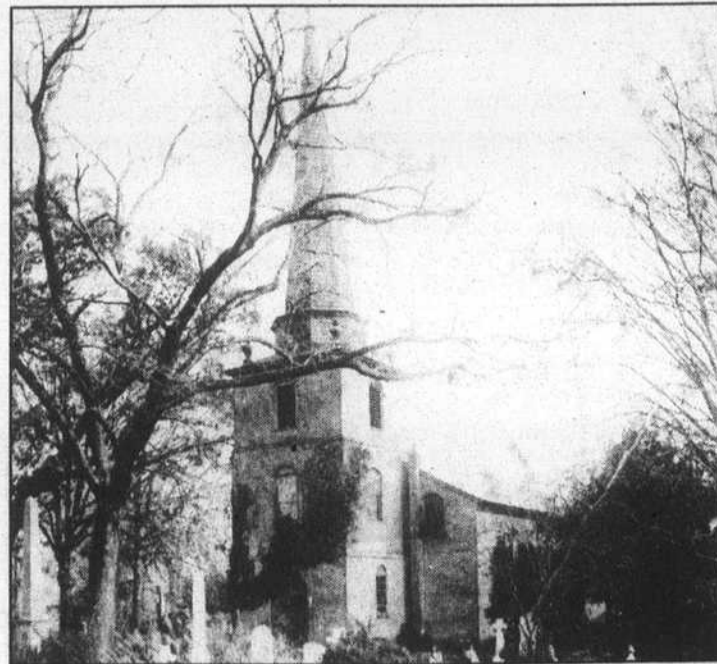
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## St. Paul's plans celebration

300 years of faith, history to be profiled

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Editor

Since the beginning of time, churches have provided a safe haven in troubled times and served as a source of faith and inspiration to people everywhere. In the coming months, the past and present members of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Edenton will celebrate the 300th anniversary of the found-



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## Burning ban is imposed

All burning permits have been cancelled everywhere in North Carolina. All open burning is also prohibited until further notice, even if a permit has already been issued, in all of North Carolina's 100 counties.

That announcement was made by William G. Ross Jr., Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Burning in protected areas is not affected.

Chowan County residents having questions about the announcement can call Forest Ranger Ferrell Banks at 482-4554.

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