

St. Paul's anniversary series 2-A

Oakfest celebration held at schools 1-B

Aces win homecoming match-up against the Knights 1-D

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Archaeologists seek help from public at excavation site

BY HELEN KERR OUTLAND
Staff Writer

As Charlie Watts shakes the wire mesh basket, the soft soil sifts through and falls to the ground. What is left in the basket, caked in several hundred years of clay and dirt, turns out to be a very large tooth. "It looks like the molar from a cow," says Dr. Linda F. Carnes-McNaughton, State Archaeologist. The tooth measures about one inch square and shows signs of grinding.

McNaughton and her associates are on site at the old Chowan County Courthouse in Edenton. "We are here for two reasons," she adds. "One, any time there are to be any renovations to be done at a historic site, our office is contacted. We come in and do an archeological evaluation of the surrounding grounds to make sure that nothing of historical importance is overlooked or damaged. Our treat here came when we began digging underneath the courthouse and discovered three time layers consisting of an earlier structure and artifacts, and Native American inhabitants."

According to McNaughton the foundation structure of the old building is remarkable in

itself.

The huge, hand hewn beams that rest on the nearly three hundred year old brick foundation shows clearly the marks of lathe and planing. The beams are joined in the tennan and mortis fashion. The beams were cut to interlock. Some of the wooden pegs used to secure them can be seen through small gaps. Chips of wood and curls of oak can still be found in the earth under the building. The crawlspace is cool and smells of dirt from the digging, but otherwise is quite dry. "This area is like a cave," says McNaughton. "It has preserved anything that was left in here." The curls of wood and pieces of artifacts show little or no color change or deterioration from hundreds of years in the earth.

McNaughton and her co-worker Tom Beaman have continued to be amazed with what they have unearthed. "The building that once stood here must have burned," says Beaman. "The earth around the area where the chimney fell was blackened with charred residue," says Beaman. "We have evidence that a lot of meals were prepared on site as we have the remains of a variety of animals in the form of bones and teeth."



Susan Myers and Linda McNaughton carefully examine the particles left in the wire mesh baskets to make sure that nothing of historical importance is overlooked. (Photo Helen Outland)

The shards of pottery, wine glasses, bottles, and china found on the site have been dated and indicate that they



Linda McNaughton and Tom Beaman (above) point out the tool marks in the hand hewn beams that make up the old Chowan County Courthouse foundation. (Staff photo by Helen Kerr Outland)

are from all over the world. "There are pieces of Delft made in Holland," says McNaughton. "There is evidence of stemware made in Germany and England."

However, once underneath the archeologists confirmed that not only had there been another building, the original four-room meetinghouse, but below that they have also found evidence of a Native American settlement. "What we have found so far does not indicate what tribe or nation of Native

Americans were in residence here, but we do believe they left in the very early 1700's," McNaughton says. "Tribes could be identified by the particular styles and decorative markings on their pottery. We have not found anything large enough to help us determine a specific tribe."

"We do know from early documentation that there was a building here and what it was used for," adds McNaughton.

See SITE On Page 6-A



Reviewing proposed Hwy. 97 plans

Doug Jeremiah of Department of Transportation (center) talks with local residents concerning proposed routes for truck traffic around the town of Edenton during a community meeting. Highway 97 is one of several routes being proposed for this purpose.

Police focus on careless drivers

BY HELEN KERR OUTLAND
Staff Writer

EDENTON - Edenton Police were busy this weekend responding to seven vehicle accidents within the city limits. One accident very early Sunday morning, at the intersection of Church and Oakum Streets, involved a city squad car.

According to Chief Greg Bonner there are several contributing factors surrounding the increase in these accidents. "Number one, people are exhibiting total disobedience to stop signs and traffic lights," says the Chief. "Drivers are either running the lights or they do not come to a full stop at the stop signs, if they stop at all."

The police department has also seen an increase in the number of alcohol related wrecks involving underage drinkers. Some drivers may have been consuming alcohol but are not considered legally impaired. "We only get a few convictions for those who are arrested and blow less than a .8 on the Breathalyzer." Usually, anyone blowing below the legal limit (.8) is charged with careless and reckless.

Records indicate that the driver arrested in the accident involving the squad car was driving under a provisional license only. He was also charged with driving while impaired. A provisional license usually limits the holder to driving

See POLICE On Page 6-A

Northern Chowan Community Ctr. opens

The public is cordially invited to attend the dedication of the Northern Chowan Community Center Wednesday, Nov. 7 (today) at 4 p.m.

An open house and reception will follow. The center is located at 2869 Virginia Road.

Guild plans spectacular holiday events

Merchants host open house, offer bargains

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Editor

Spending Christmas in "The South's Prettiest Town" is an experience to remember. Just imagine the magic and excitement of the holiday season accented by the festive warmth and quiet charm of Edenton, guaranteed to make your holiday shopping a pleasant adventure.

In the spirit of the holiday season, the Historic Edenton Marketplace Guild will join with other local businesses to usher in Christmas on Satur-

day, Dec. 1, with a variety of special events during a "Christmas at the Market" celebration.

At 10 a.m. that morning, a panel of judges will begin evaluating entries in the Window/Storefront Decorating Contest. Prizes for first, second and third place will be awarded to participating downtown businesses. "Those winners will be announced during the 'Lighting of the Monument' ceremony that evening at 6 o'clock," said Marion DesJardins, Guild president. A photo of the "best dressed business" will also be published in The Chowan Herald.

DesJardins noted that music and events for children would also be a part of this season's downtown shopping

See GUILD On Page 6-A



Merchants Guild President Marion DesJardins, right, talks with Susan Wilkerson, special events chairperson, about plans for the Christmas season being hosted by the Guild in downtown Edenton Saturday, Dec. 1. (Staff photo by Rebecca Bunch)

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The Kitchen

Starting in November, The Kitchen will be serving the new "Kitchen Burger," served on a homemade roll, baked fresh each day in our kitchen.



NEW EXTENDED HOURS!
Thursday, Friday & Saturday
7 AM - 8 PM

...Down Home Country Cooking!