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Ashley credited with breaking tri-county theft ring

BY SUSAN HARRIS
Cox NC Publications

Two Plymouth men have been charged in Perquimans, Bertie and Chowan counties in conjunction with what appears to be an antique theft ring.

Eric Andrew Peacy, 18, of 110 E. Main St., Plymouth and Douglas William Hewitt, 35, of 501 Wilson St., Plymouth were charged with second degree burglary by the Chowan County Sheriff's Department on July 11. The pair was subsequently charged with four counts of felony breaking or entering, four counts of felonious larceny after breaking or entering and possession of stolen goods by the Bertie County Sheriff's Department.



Deputy Rick Ashley

len goods by the Bertie County Sheriff's Department.

Perquimans charged Hewitt with felonious breaking and entering and felonious larceny. As of Monday, both Peacy and Hewitt were being held in the Bertie County Jail under a \$100,000 bond.

Peacy and Hewitt are believed to be responsible for at least eight break-ins and larcenies in the three counties.

According to Perquimans County Sheriff Eric Tilley, the suspects cruised rural areas in Perquimans, Chowan and Bertie counties looking for homes that appeared to be unoccupied. They allegedly entered the houses, stole antiques, then sold them to at least three dealers and a collector.

The case was broken by the Chowan County deputy Richard Ashley, who was killed in a plane crash in Tyner on July 16 while on a flight to search for marijuana. Chowan County Sheriff Fred Spruill said Ashley spotted intruders at a house in that county around 1 a.m. on July 11.

"Richard Ashley came by and saw them (suspects) at the house and was able to catch them," Spruill said. "He was able to hold them at bay until the other deputies arrived."

"Chowan County did an outstanding job actually catching somebody in a house," said Bertie County Sheriff Greg Atkins. The suspects were ques-

tioned after being apprehended in Chowan County, and the investigation led to a break in the cases in all three counties.

"I was just pleased with the way that the agencies came together and cooperated," Atkins said.

Atkins added that cooperation across county and town lines is critical to effective law enforcement.

Antiques allegedly taken from the residences have been recovered in Plymouth, Jamesville, Windsor and Washington, Tilley said. While a complete inventory with values on the pieces is not available, Tilley said the value of the items stolen is "in the thousands." Spruill said the most valuable piece recovered to date is worth \$30,000.

One piece recovered was a corner cabinet built in 1805 by slaves, Tilley said.

Tilley said the three dealers and one collector have not been charged in the incidents at this time. The dealers are cooperating with law enforcement agencies, he said.

While all of the pieces missing from the vandalized homes have not been recovered, the sheriffs said many have been, and they continue to follow leads on the missing items.

All three sheriffs said the case is still under investigation and they expect more charges to be filed.

Back to School breakfast held



Althea Riddick, chairwoman of the Business, Engineering and Industrial Technologies Division at the College of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City, speaks at the Edenton-Chowan Schools' Back to School Breakfast.

BY HELEN K. OUTLAND
Staff Writer

The 2002/2003 Chowan County school year officially opened with its annual "Back to School Breakfast" Thursday morning. The breakfast, held at Chowan Middle School, is held for teachers, county leaders, and friends of education.

While visitors dined on eggs, grits, bacon, and biscuit Althea Riddick encouraged teachers, parents, and administration to continue the quality education of Chowan County students. "The foundation you give to the students of Chowan County will pay you back in a highly skilled work force," said Riddick.

Althea Riddick serves as Chairperson of the Business, Engineering and Industrial Technologies Division at the College of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Rural Entrepreneur-

ship through Action Learning Institute in Durham, NC.

Riddick has also been selected as the North Carolina Community College Excellence in Teaching Award and the North Carolina Community College Professor of the Year for 2001.

Riddick reminded the breakfast attendees that while hard work and knowledge count, it is attitude that makes the difference. Riddick said that region graduates tend to stick close to home. Teachers and custodians and cafeteria staff will see the students whose lives they have touched in the community for years to come. "The investment in time, labor, and love that school personnel give to students will bring a local return," she said.

Dr. Allen Smith took this opportunity to deliver his "State of the School District" address. Smith said the state of the Edenton - Chowan school system is strong. "perhaps stronger than it has ever been," he said. "Reading and math tests reflect the highest overall achievement we've ever had."

Dr. Smith went on to mention several milestones for the schools in the past year that include the opening of the new D. F. Walker School, new roofs for Chowan Middle, the addition of eight more National Board Certified teachers, and the completion by seven system teachers of their three-year Initial Licensing Training. The system also continues its partnership with College of the Albemarle.

"Our dream of providing seamless student service from pre-K through community college is fast becoming a reality," Smith said.

Washington Co. named preferred site in new OLF study draft

BY HELEN K. OUTLAND
Staff Writer

Even as the OLF Steering Committee met this past Thursday news that the Navy was preparing to release a Draft Environmental Impact Study soon was filtering down to the affected counties.

A statement released by the committee early this week states: "The Steering Committee has been told unofficially

to expect a release of the draft EIS for the location of the of the Navy's OLF either Thursday, August 1 or Friday August 2nd."

All of that changed early Tuesday morning when word came from sources that a formal notice had been placed in the Federal Register that a Draft EIS is available for review. Within a few hours a press release from the offices of Senator Jesse Helms and Representative Walter Jones stated they

applauded the Navy's decision to deploy F/A-18 Super Hornet Fighter squadrons to MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina.

"After considering four Navy and Marine Corps air stations as potential receiving site for the latest generation of F/A-18 fighter aircraft, the Navy has identified MCAS Cherry Point as a preferred alternative for the deployment of the newest combat-proven strike fighter," says the release.

The Navy had developed eight homebasing alternatives for this action that were subjected to detailed analysis. Of these eight, two were identified. One was Cherry Point. The Navy has also identified either Craven County or Washington County North Carolina as the preferred alternative for the site of a new Outlying Land-

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Herald is forming advisory board

The Chowan Herald continues to strive to be the best community newspaper possible, but we need your help to achieve this goal.

The Herald is looking for readers willing to serve on a newly organized 13-member Reader Advisory Board. For one year the board will include

folks from every walk of life and every description of responsibility throughout our community.

The group will weigh in on issues that affect our community and the way in which our newspaper covers those issues.

Board members will be asked to comment and give

feedback on the direction that the newspaper is headed with future plans.

The group will be asked for input on the way the Herald assesses the needs and makes contributions to our community.

We'll be asking for improvements that might need to be

made on how we handle news, how we handle area sports and how we handle local events.

We will also need your opinions and insight as to what readers in general expect from the newspaper on a week-to-week basis.

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Cole puts service to others above all

BY HELEN K. OUTLAND
Staff Writer

From the quiet of her office Judge Janice McKenzie Cole begins to speak softly about the people of the congressional district she would serve, and some of the issues they face that impact their lives so profoundly. Her fervent hope to be a congressional representative who would represent and protect those who can not always protect themselves.

Janice Cole's professional life has always been devoted to "protecting and serving", first as a police officer in New York City, and later as an attorney, a Judge, and then U.S. Attorney. Her entire life has been based on integrity, perseverance, and "what is right".

"This is something my parents instilled in all of us from day one," Judge Cole says of she and her two sisters. "My parents required the best from us and taught it by example." Cole goes on to say that her mother was a strong, soft-spoken woman who had no problems making herself understood. Her father, in her words, "is the most self-educated person I know"; adding that he is



Judge Janice Cole and her campaign manager, Staccato A. Powell, take time to discuss issues she will address during her campaign. (Staff photo by Helen K. Outland)

a prolific reader and someone with whom she has shared a strong desire to always learn. Her father also strongly encouraged her to do her very best.

"If I brought home a grade of 99, he would say that was wonderful and praise me, but then it was followed with, 'Now let's talk about what you got wrong,'" she adds with a smile. It was her parent's fortitude and strong faith in God

that has ultimately fostered her desire to serve others.

By working with local District Attorneys and the communities she set about to change the odds. Her unprecedented success as U.S. Attorney in crime prevention and neighborhood restoration and creating solidarity between federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies is perhaps the single most contributing factor in the successful

fight to keep drugs out of the backyards of America.

"Living in a rural community myself, I saw first hand that local law enforcement did not have the resources needed to fight the rising drug problems," Judge Cole says. "When you look at a sheriff's office or police department with limited staff you see they are responsible for many duties including covering some very large counties and keeping criminal activity out of some of these pockets. This was very evident to me as a judge on the bench." Judge Cole felt it was very important to bring in other resources, to work together, from the local, state and federal level. "The volume of crime may not be the same in the rural areas as the metropolitan areas, but I impressed upon the federal agents that it still had the same impact on the citizens," she says. "There was a need to help all the counties. We worked with each county to help root out the most egregious offenders. It did have an impact." Once the hard core offenders were taken

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School board term limits eliminated

The NC General Assembly this month passed a bill repealing term limits for three North Carolina county boards of education, including Edenton-Chowan.

Session Law 2002-18 on July 15 abolished term limits for board of education members in Haywood County and Iredell-Statesville as well as

Edenton-Chowan County. Board members here previously were limited to two consecutive six-year terms.

Section 1 of the new law reads "...members of the...Edenton-Chowan County Board of Education may serve for more than two

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 3
7 p.m. - midnight



Friends of Chowan Hospital 2002 fundraiser
RETURN TO HAPPY DAYS DANCE
Tickets At: Mario's Restaurant, Snooker's, Chowan Hospital or The Arts Council

Nixon's Catering
Hwy. 32, Edenton
\$15.00 a ticket