

THE CHOWAN HERALD

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West Nile Virus is detected in Chowan County

BY HELEN K. OUTLAND
Staff Writer

Reports from the Albemarle Regional Health Services indicate there have been no verified human deaths or cases directly related to West Nile Virus in North Carolina. The virus has spread throughout the eastern seaboard and some cases have been reported in mid-west states such as Wyoming and Colorado.

As of August 22, 18 birds in nine counties have tested positive for the virus. A press release from the State Laboratory of Public Health and Public Health Pest Management on Monday afternoon added ten more counties, including Chowan County, to that list. A dead crow found on Indian Trail Road in Chowan County tested positive for West Nile virus. Experts are still stressing common sense precautions, and are encouraging citizens not to overreact.

According to Walker Rayburn, Environmental Health Specialist and Vector Control Coordinator there are several factors to take into consideration when dealing with West Nile or Eastern Equine Encephalitis. First of all, the West Nile virus is not known to pass directly from birds to humans, but is transmitted to humans when a mosquito bites an infected bird and then bites a



Standing water in fields, around homes and barns, or along roadsides create the perfect breeding environments for mosquitos. Homeowners are advised to check for areas of standing water in their yards that may draw mosquitos as well. (H. Outland photo)

human.

"The major mosquito that is tormenting people right now is the Rice Field mosquito," said Rayburn. "Experts are not sure that this mosquito spreads the West Nile Virus, and if it is involved in the spread of Eastern Equine, it is inefficient." Rayburn has looked for evidence of the Rice Field mosquitoes feeding on birds and has found none. The Rice Field mosquito is a short-lived variety and normally does not survive the two or three weeks it takes to pick up the West Nile bug. It thrives in dirt-bottomed ditches, muddy tire tracks, and wet fields. Experts are also addressing the issue as to whether or not the Rice Field mosquito spreads

Equine Encephalitis as it relates to a recent case. Rayburn goes on to say that their office is still waiting for confirmation from the Ames, Iowa lab that the pony in Pasquotank County, reported to have died from West Nile, actually died from West Nile disease.

"With more evidence of the virus in birds, residents should take steps to prevent mosquito bites," says State Health Director Dr. Leah Devlin in a recent press release. "But, people shouldn't overreact. In general West Nile virus usually causes only mild disease and most people who are exposed to the virus never even become sick."

See VIRUS On Page 6-A

Rabies clinic set for Sept. 21st

Chowan County residents who need to have their dogs and cats vaccinated for protection against rabies are urged to bring them to a Rabies Clinic to be held Saturday, Sept. 21, from 1-3 p.m. at the Chowan/Gates/Perquimans Animal Shelter, 138 Icaria Road, Tyner.

There will be a charge of \$5 for each shot administered. Please be sure to have your animals restrained. Cats should be brought in carriers, and dogs should be on a leash. Pet owners are responsible for keeping their animals under control while at the clinic.

Anyone having questions may call the Animal Shelter at (252) 221-8514.

New foundation head on the job

Chowan Regional Health Care Foundation has named Helena Szczesny of Edenton as its new Executive Director.

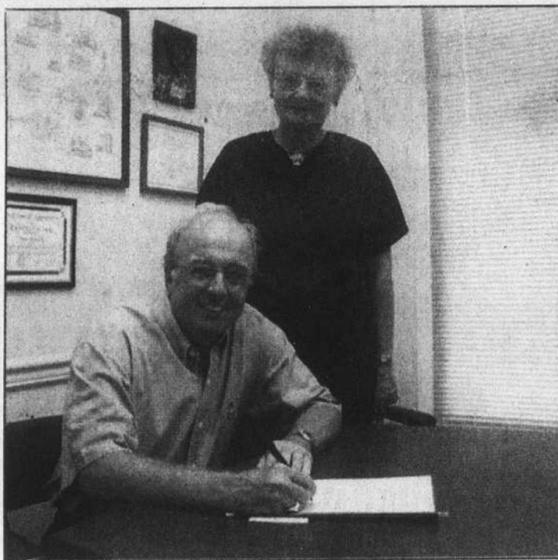


Helena Szczesny

"We are very fortunate to have someone as capable and committed as Helena to guide our growth and development" states Pierce Lawling, Chairman of the Foundation. "Helena has managed budgets and organizations with a much larger magnitude than ours. She has come forward in the spirit of service to the community to help us make our Foundation a leader in our community and region."

Helena holds a Bachelor's Degree and has more than 20 years professional experience in program development, business management, marketing, and information man-

See JOB On Page 6-A



Mayor Roland Vaughan signs a proclamation declaring Sept. 17-23 Constitution Week here. Looking on is Beth Taylor, Regent, Edenton Tea Party Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. (See story on 6-A)

Local schools' test scores up

Edenton-Chowan Schools continue to improve, according to the state ABCs accountability standards results released Thursday by the NC Department of Public Instruction.

Chowan Middle School was recognized under the standards as a School of Distinction, the second-highest status possible.

"Of course, we're pleased," said CMS Principal Brenda Winborne. "Educating our students is a team effort that involves every employee on the Chowan campus. The students, staff and teachers are all to be congratulated for their efforts."

Each of the county's eligible schools increased their percentage of students scoring at or above a Level III on the state's four-point End-of-Grade and End-of-Course test achievement scales.

"Edenton-Chowan Schools continue to make strides toward excellence," said Supt. Allan T. Smith. "We believe students can meet high expectations, and our students continue to prove us correct."

The ABCs system of accountability, begun in 1996, measures individual schools' growth and performance over the course of a year. End-of-

See SCORES On Page 6-A

Cycle Speedway season opening

Get ready for some extreme family fun next Saturday, Sept. 28, as Cycle Speedway returns to Earnhardt Field (across from Edenton Motors on N. Broad St.) beginning at noon.

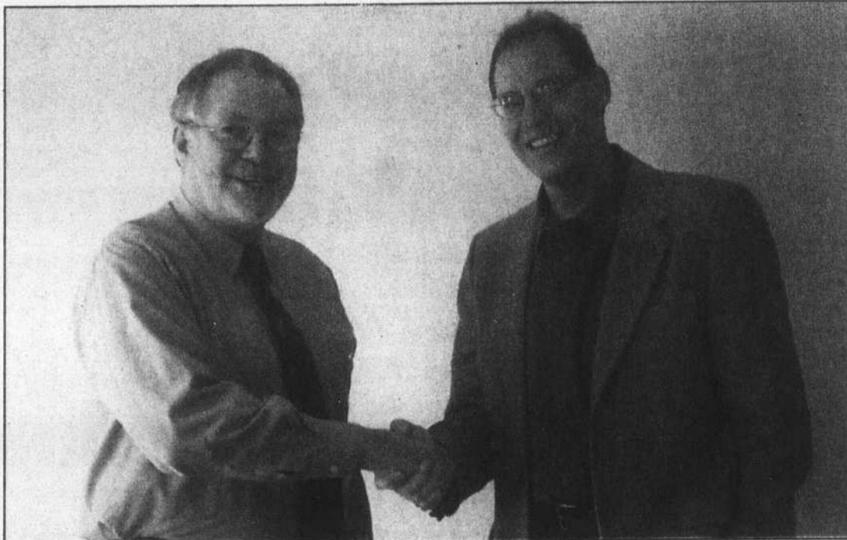
Live music, race car displays, remote control race cars from South Moonlight Speedway, games, a petting zoo, and much more will be open to the public throughout the day and night.

All ages are encouraged to bring out their bikes and race next weekend's events; registration forms are available at the Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department (482-8595) and from Cycle Speedway (482-7989). Admission to the event

is absolutely free, so come out for some great fun in Edenton.

"Coca-Cola Presents Cycle Speedway" at Earnhardt Field is the largest event of the season for Cycle Speedway, a bicycle racetrack for all ages located in Edenton. "Last year's event drew over 500 people," said Brian White, organizer. "This year's larger and improved event promises to be the best yet. Attractions and music for all ages will make the show even more special for everyone."

All ages are needed to participate; all you need is a bicycle and helmet. There are eight classes for the event. For more info, call 482-7989.



Mill owner addresses Rotarians

Frank Lea, left, president of the morning Rotary Club, greets Dr. Thomas Wilson at last Wednesday's meeting. Dr. Wilson, owner of the Edenton Cotton Mill, was on hand to discuss plans for the site and an open house set for Sept. 19. (See story on page 6-A)

Special insert in paper

Readers will find a special insert in this week's edition of the newspaper, The Chowan County Fair Book.

Among the special items in the book are a schedule of planned fair events, profiles of the entertainers, and details on a kids' coloring contest.

Also included will be advertisements from area businesses supporting the Chowan County Fair, which takes place at the American Legion Fairgrounds in Edenton in October.

CENTER HILL
CROSS ROADS FIRE DEPT.
Anniversary Supper

Fire House Chicken
SATURDAY • SEPTEMBER 21ST

4:00 - 7:00 PM
\$6.00 PER PLATE