

THE CHOWAN HERALD

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Navy picks Washington County for OLF site

BY RYAN BURR
Cox NC Publications

Even though local officials had lobbied for more than a year against it, the U.S. Navy has picked Washington County as the preferred site for a new airfield where its next generation of fighter planes can practice takeoffs and landings.

In a 1,600-page final environmental impact statement released Friday, the Navy said Washington was the best choice for its outlying landing field.

The Navy chose Washington, according to the EIS, because of the county's low population density, compatible land uses and central location between the two proposed home bases for the Navy's new SuperHornet jets — Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia

Beach, VA and the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point in Craven County.

Those findings did not impress Washington County Manager Chris Coudriet.

"We're disappointed with this decision," Coudriet said. "There should have been equity taken into consideration, and clearly there was none. The fallout to the tax base is going to be in one of the most disadvantaged areas in the state."

In addition, between 75 and 100 homes located in what the EIS refers to as Washington County's "noise contour area" will have to be moved," Coudriet said.

The Washington County manager wasn't alone in expressing dismay with the Navy's decision.

Edenton Town Manager, a member of a six-county coal-

ition opposed to siting the OLF in Washington County, said her group had supported locating the airfield in Craven County.

"Our reason for wanting the OLF in Craven County was that the negative part of having the noise (of the jets) would be offset by the economic benefits," Knighton said. "By sending (the OLF) to Washington County, they get all the negatives."

On the other hand, she said, Virginia Beach and Craven County will receive the economic benefit of having the 144 new SuperHornets based nearby — jobs — but none of the jets' less desirable side effects — noise, for example.

"It's unfair that Oceana and Craven County get the new squadrons, which have high-paying jobs, but don't have to bear the burden of having the

OLF," Knighton said.

Knighton said Washington County is more likely to be an economic loser from having the OLF built there.

"If anything, it would be devastating because there's no opportunity for growth," she said. Washington County "will get about 10 permanent jobs from having the OLF, and they're not high-paying; they're mostly maintenance jobs."

According to the Navy's EIS, Craven was at one time a preferred OLF site. However, later study determined that Craven wasn't an "operationally optimal distance" for SuperHornets based at Oceana.

The Navy also cited potential harm to wetlands in Craven, and said that an OLF would adversely affect air-

See OLF On Page 5-A

What local leaders think...

We...want to get the flight plan maps to evaluate if there is going to be any impact on Chowan County.

- Anne-Marie Knighton
Edenton Town Manager

"We are very concerned about the OLF being placed in Washington County but realize that the other sites within our region were closer to Chowan and would not have been good for our area either. The Tourism Development Authority Board awaits a briefing by the Navy to see how this decision will really impact Chowan and what it will mean to future travelers and people looking to relocate to our area."

- Nancy Nicholls,
Executive Director, Chowan County TDA

We will meet with the Navy and get a real understanding of what that site will mean to Chowan County. We are proud of the Navy does in defending our country and support that, however from day one we all have felt the OLF should be placed where the economic benefit was going and the Navy has not done this. That is just not right.

- Richard Bunch,
Executive Director, Edenton-Chowan Chamber



Last Thursday afternoon this 18-wheeler operated by a Sanford, NC truck driver was driven off the Hwy. 17 overpass when the driver fell asleep at the wheel. The truck struck the guardrail and continued off the overpass, crashing onto Hwy. 32 below. The truck landed on its side, blocking most of the traffic on the highway. The driver was treated for facial injuries and released the following day. (Staff photo by Angela Perez)

Driver asleep at wheel crashes off 17 overpass

BY ANGELA PEREZ
Staff Writer

Last Thursday at 1:09 p.m., a truck-driver going southbound on Hwy. 17 through Edenton drove his 18-wheeler off of the overpass and landed on Hwy. 32 below. Jesse James Bryant, Jr., aged 55, of Sanford, N.C., apparently fell asleep at the wheel while driving for J.T. Davenport and Sons, a convenience store merchandise wholesaler of Sanford, N.C. Bryant's trailer was empty as he made his way back to

Sanford after completing his delivery in Kill Devil's Hills. After falling asleep, Bryant struck the guardrail and drove off of the overpass at which time both the truck and trailer were airborne. The trailer hit the overpass lane going north and both truck and trailer crashed into Hwy. 32 below. The truck was wedged into the pier directly below the overpass and the trailer turned over on its side blocking most of the highway. Bryant was taken to Chowan Hospital and then transferred to Pitt Memo-

rial in Greenville, N.C. An official reported that Bryant only sustained facial injuries. J.T. Davenport and Sons confirmed that Bryant sustained no serious injuries and that he was released from Pitt Memorial on Friday, July 18.

Amazingly, no one else was hurt in the accident which occurred at a very high-traffic area during one of its busiest times of the day. Traffic was held up for several hours as crew workers struggled to remove the vehicle.

Chamber fundraiser nears

The second annual Shrimp By the Bay celebration will be held Saturday, Aug. 16 at the Barker House grounds on the downtown Edenton waterfront.

Live music is planned from 6-9 p.m. with dinner from 6-8 p.m.

Music will be provided by Andy Faircloth, Don Faircloth, Peter Boehling, and The Best

Life Band.

Those attending are asked to bring their own chairs.

The Shrimp by the Bay celebration is being sponsored by the Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce, Regulator Marine, and Tarheel Beverage Company.

For tickets and more information, interested persons may call 482-3400.



Knighton to serve on college board

Reappointed by vice-chair



Anne-Marie Knighton

Anne-Marie Knighton, town manager of Edenton, has been reappointed to the State Board of Community Colleges.

"Anne-Marie has done a fabulous job on the community college board," said Sen. Marc Basnight, who recommended to the Senate Education Committee that Knighton be reappointed. "I am so thankful for her willingness to serve our state in this role, and I know she will continue to make valuable contributions to our community colleges."

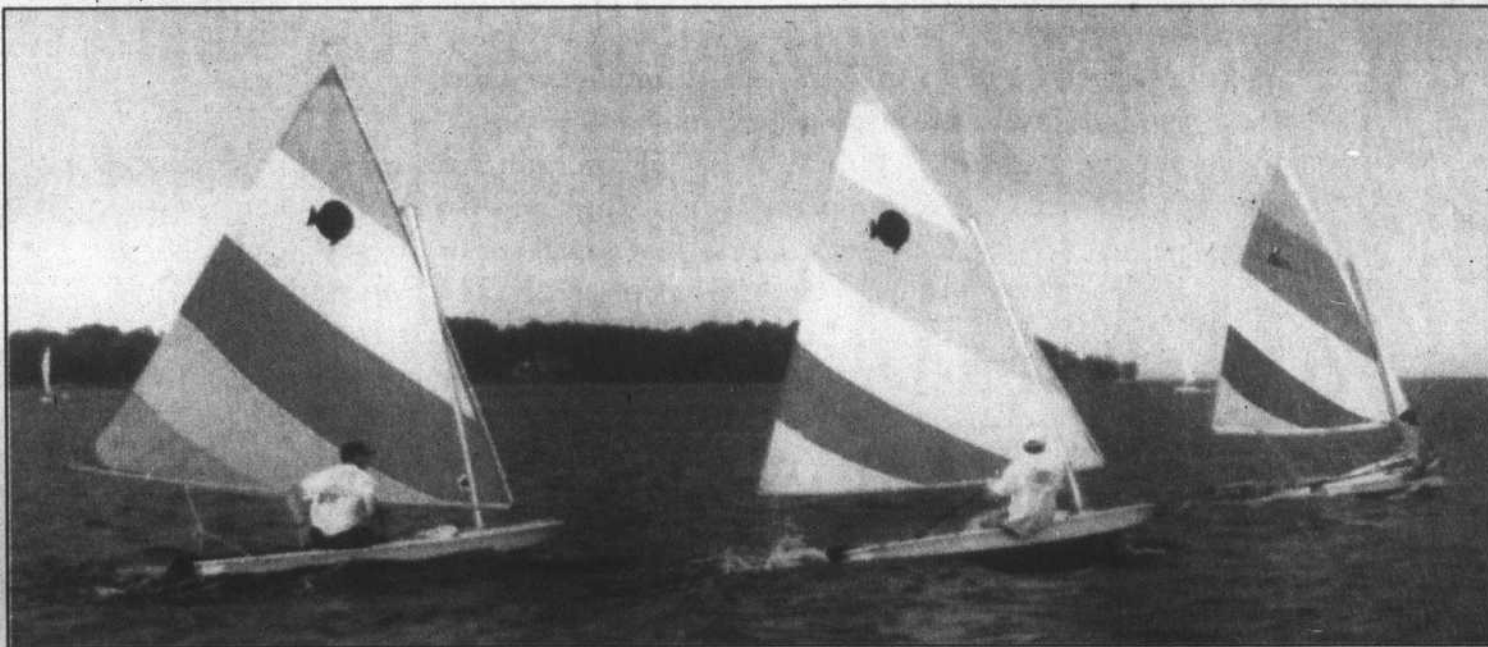
The Senate voted Saturday to reappoint Knighton and to name Dr. Linwood Powell of Fayetteville, NC to the board.

Knighton has served as Edenton's town manager since 1988. This will be her second six-year term on the community college board.

Sen. Steve Metcalf, co-chair

of the Senate's education committee, said having Knighton on the community college board would benefit North Carolina.

"Our community colleges are critical to getting our economy back on track, and we need strong, smart people serving on the board and leading our community college system," said Metcalf, who submitted Knighton's nomination. "Anne-Marie Knighton fits that bill perfectly."



Sunfish will join Tanzers, Windmills, and Optis in participating in the Edenton Bay Challenge (Kermit Layton photo)

Edenton Bay Challenge July 26-27

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, July 26

9 a.m. Late Registration; 10 a.m. Competitors meeting; 1 p.m. Race 1 followed by 2 and 3 (all Classes); 6 p.m. Social, Dinner and awards for Sunfish and Optimists

Sunday, July 27

9 a.m. Race 4 and 5 (Tanzers and Windmills only); Noon, Lunch - Everybody Welcome; 1 p.m. Awards Presentations.

One-design sailors may want to make sure and register for the Edenton Bay Challenge sailing event on Saturday, July 26 and Sunday, July 27.

Tanzers, Windmills, Sunfish and Optimist will line the bay on two different courses with the best finishing first, of course.

The Town of Edenton, the

Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce and the Edenton Yacht Club enjoy hosting this annual event with many racers returning to defend their titles. This year promises to be an excellent year for sailing and getting reacquainted with old friends.

Please give the Chamber a call at 482-3400 for details.