

# THE CHOWAN HERALD

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## Public pool not a county priority right now

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

Although it's surrounded by water to the south and the west, there's not a public swimming pool to be found in Chowan County.

And local officials want that fact to change. But finding the money to build and operate a pool has proven difficult.

"The recreation department knows there's a tremendous need for a public swimming pool," Robbie Laughton, director of the Edenton-Chowan Parks & Recreation Department, said last week.

Currently, an indoor pool at the site of the old D.F. Walker

School is being considered. The county-owned property is currently being used by the recreation department and the Chowan branch of College of The Albemarle. An ambitious refurbishing of the old school — which contains a gym and cafeteria — is on the drawing-board.

But for some, the actual pouring of clear-blue water into a white-concrete basin can't happen soon enough.

Parents for the Edenton Aces' swim team have lamented the fact that their children face an 80-minute daily round trip during the season. They practice in a pool at Elizabeth City State Univer-

sity. Dr. Elizabeth York, whose daughter swims for the Aces and is herself a swimmer, says she has to travel to the new Elizabeth City YMCA pool to do a few laps.

"We certainly do need a pool," York said Friday. She, like others, said word of having a pool in Edenton or Chowan has been circulating for years.

"I hope that in the near future," she said in a recent letter to *The Chowan Herald*, "the leaders of our county can commit to the building of a pool."

County Manager Cliff Copeland said Hurricane Isabel has pushed a public pool from atop

the county's list of priorities. "It's not an active project at this point," Copeland said. Revamping the county's 911 system and buying emergency generators are top priorities, he said. And there's still a half-million dollars in federal reimbursements the county needs to collect before a capital project like a pool can be considered.

Copeland does support a public pool, only not in the near future.

"I think the community desperately needs a swimming pool," he said.

Robbie Laughton said discussions have been ongoing for about three years.

Laughton said the county-

owned portion of the old D.F. Walker property is suitable for an indoor pool. Forming a partnership with COA, Edenton-Chowan Schools, and the county would improve the chances of having a public pool, he said.

"The only viable way for a pool or aquatic facility to be a reality," he said, "is to have more than one party at the table."

Lynn Hurdle-Winslow, vice-president of corporate and continuing education at COA, agreed.

"It would make sense," she said, "if we talked to each other and looked at each other's plans."

But nothing has been finalized, Laughton added.

"The (D.F. Walker) location is not set in stone by any means," he said.

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said the Town Council has included studying the feasibility of an Edenton-Chowan pool in its vision statement. The pool issue has been floating around since she came to Edenton in the 1980s, Knighton said.

"Unfortunately," Knighton said, "we have not been in the position financially to pursue" building a pool.

"We need a facility where children can learn to swim," she added.

## Local man dies after cycle crash

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

An Edenton man died Saturday night after his motorcycle slammed into a concrete bridge rail on Dr. Martin Luther King Avenue.

Kareem Jernigan, 21, of Paradise Road, was traveling in the westbound lane when he reportedly lost control of his 2003 Honda motorcycle, a police spokeswoman said Monday. He died at the scene as a result of severe injuries, according to a report filed by Edenton Police Sgt. Tim Hickman.

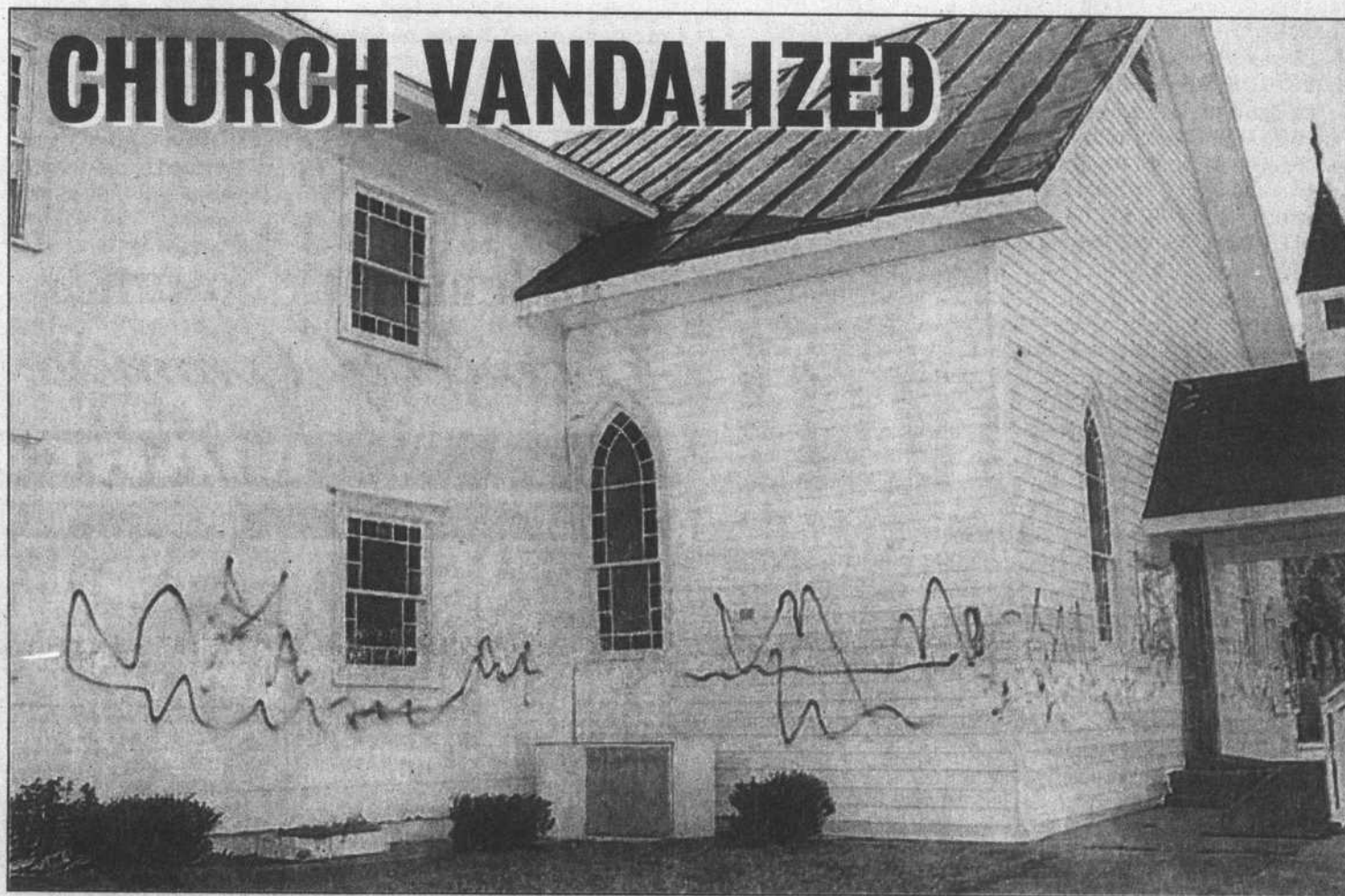
The crash has been ruled

an accident, the spokeswoman said.

Hickman estimated Jernigan was driving between 50 to 60 mph at the time of the wreck. The speed limit on Dr. Martin Luther King Drive is 35 mph.

A witness reported that Jernigan apparently lost control of his motorcycle just before the accident, the spokeswoman said. It hasn't been determined why Jernigan lost control of his motorcycle.

The crash occurred at approximately 7:30 p.m., just east of Beaver Hill Cemetery.



Staff photo by Sean Jackson

Police Chief Greg Bonner is investigating the vandalism of a church in northeast Edenton. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith was recently the target of someone who spray-painted a series of black wavy lines along the east and north sides of the church. The church is located at the intersection of First and Broad streets, just west of John A. Holmes High School's athletic complex and just north of the old D.F. Walker Elementary School. "I have questioned several people about it," Bonner said Tuesday. "I believe at this point it was the act of a juvenile." Bonner planned to canvass the neighborhood Tuesday to talk to residents as well as store owners who may recall selling spray paint to a "younger person". Anyone with information about the incident can call the Edenton Police Department at 482-5144.

## Brush fire destroys truck trailers

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

TYNER - A brush fire swept by strong southerly winds engulfed a pair of truck trailers Friday afternoon, destroying the trailers and their contents but injuring no one.

The Center Hill Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department

responded to the fire at 339 County Line Road shortly after 3 p.m.

"We had a tough one here for about 45 minutes," Chief Louis Nixon said at the scene.

A man burning trash behind a home on County Line Road was burning trash, Nixon said. The man left the site only to return later to find

the fire out of control. The man unsuccessfully tried to put the blaze out, Nixon said. Fueled by wind, the fire quickly engulfed the trailers, which contained clothes, the chief added.

"They're totalled," Nixon said of the blackened trailers sitting in the backyard between two homes.

Because the man was burning trash within 150 of a home, which is within the legal limit, no charges will be filed, Nixon added.

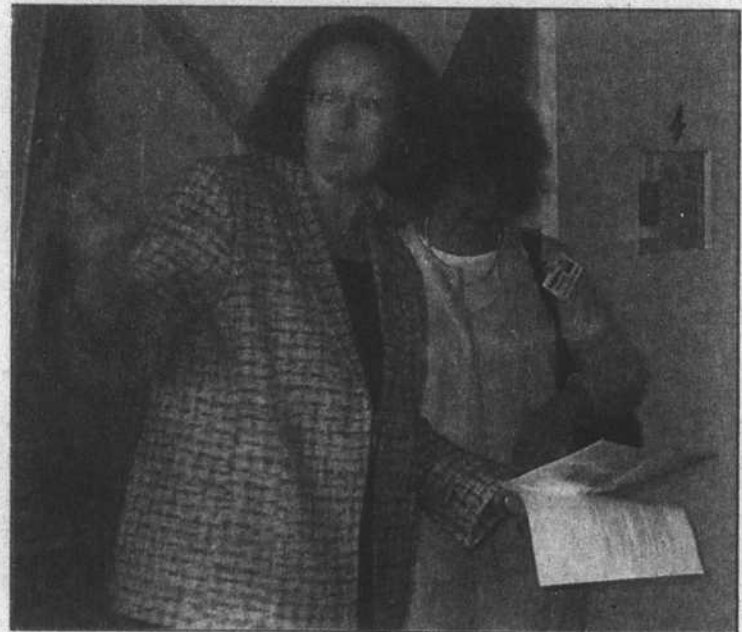
"It was an accident," he said. "Just one of those things."

The call was the fourth fire of the day to which Center Hill firefighters responded on Friday, Nixon said.



Staff photo by Sean Jackson

Firefighters from Center Hill Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department roll up their gear after extinguishing a blaze on County Line Road last week.



Staff photo by Angela Perez

COA Dean Lynne Bunch gestures as she talks about plans for the new college campus that will be created at the former D.F. Walker School

## Plans discussed on college tour

BY ANGELA PEREZ  
Staff Writer

Last week, the College of the Albemarle sponsored a tour and luncheon with local business leaders to discuss the future plans of the campus. The tour, lead by Lynne Bunch, Dean of the COA in Elizabeth City, focused on renovation and upgrade plans for the old D.F. Walker School, where work will begin in April to create a college-campus feel.

Renovations will begin after spring semester classes end. During the summer, supplies and

equipment will be moved to the former site at the Food Lion Shopping Center.

"We will move as much as we can to the old site during the summer and plan to have renovations completed by August so that we can be back in the building by fall," she said. "We are currently looking for additional funds to complete this."

The transformation of the former elementary school will be accomplished in phases as money becomes available. The center has already received a \$900,000 grant from the state to begin work.

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Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, and include light hors d'oeuvres, dinner, silent & live auction and full cash bar.

Tickets are available at the Chowan Arts Council, the Visitor's Center, the Barker House, and Selected Merchants.

CALL 252.482.8005 FOR INFORMATION.