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Local retailers extend hours during holiday season

BY EARLINE WHITE
Staff Writer

The Christmas shopping season kicked into full swing this past Friday. With consumers flocking to early morning sales and parking lots full of cars waiting to be filled with purchases, signs of commerce abound throughout the nation. Only 24 days remain until Christmas and the clocks tick down on shopping hours.

Local downtown businesses hope to gain local money by hosting extended holiday shopping hours this season. Several businesses are taking part. Among those include Edenton Bay Trading Company, open for the extended holiday hours on Sunday from 1 - 5 p.m. The Christian Book Seller will stay open until 8 p.m. on Fridays. Likewise, Byrum

Hardware, Gifts and Crafts will remain open until 8 p.m. on Fridays. During the week of the Candlelight Tour, Byrum will also be open on Saturday until 8 p.m.

Soundfeet Shoes will extend their hours until 7 p.m. on Friday and open on Sunday from 1 - 5 p.m. Acoustic Coffee will also open on Sunday from 12:30 - 4 p.m.

The Shoppes on Broad will stay open until 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and also open on Sunday from 1 - 5 p.m. Super 10 extends hours on Friday and Saturday until 7 p.m., and also until 7 p.m. the week of Christmas. Peebles will be open from 9 - 8 p.m. beginning Friday. On Sunday regular business hours will be in effect.

Jennifer Harriss, Main Street Director, said, "Extended downtown shopping hours provide an important opportunity for us to

support our local businesses. I recently read in a 'Main Street News' article, that when customers were asked, what they wanted out of a shopping experience, their number one answer was 'Convenience!' With over 75 percent of all married couples being in house holds where both adults are working full time; extended downtown shopping hours are crucial in order that downtowns may achieve the goal of convenience.

"Our downtown merchants are working hard to make shopping convenient for everyone. Let's support them during this Holiday season!" Harriss said.

"We want to encourage everyone to shop locally this Christmas Season," said Jean Brown, manager of Byrum Gifts.

Henry Brooks, Chowan resident, will finish his shopping before the

extended hours take place. However, residents will find the extended hours helpful for those who have jobs to work around. Brooks was out on Tuesday with his wife shopping at various stores downtown. With a cart full of goodies, they headed back home, away from the commercial bustle and Christmas sales.

"Locally, our company exceeded our goals due to the kindness of the public," said Cherie Martin, manager of Peebles. "The locals have been great. They check here before going out of town to shop. That's what keeps Edenton going," Martin said.

For those not yet finished with their Christmas list, be sure to make your first stop for shopping downtown Edenton. Every dollar spent here in Edenton helps the local economy.



Photo by Bud Weagly for The Chowan Herald
Local shoppers flock to their favorite stores to stock up on gifts for friends and loved ones.

Christmas at Market this Saturday



Chowan Herald file photo

BY JENNIFER HARRISS
Main Street Director

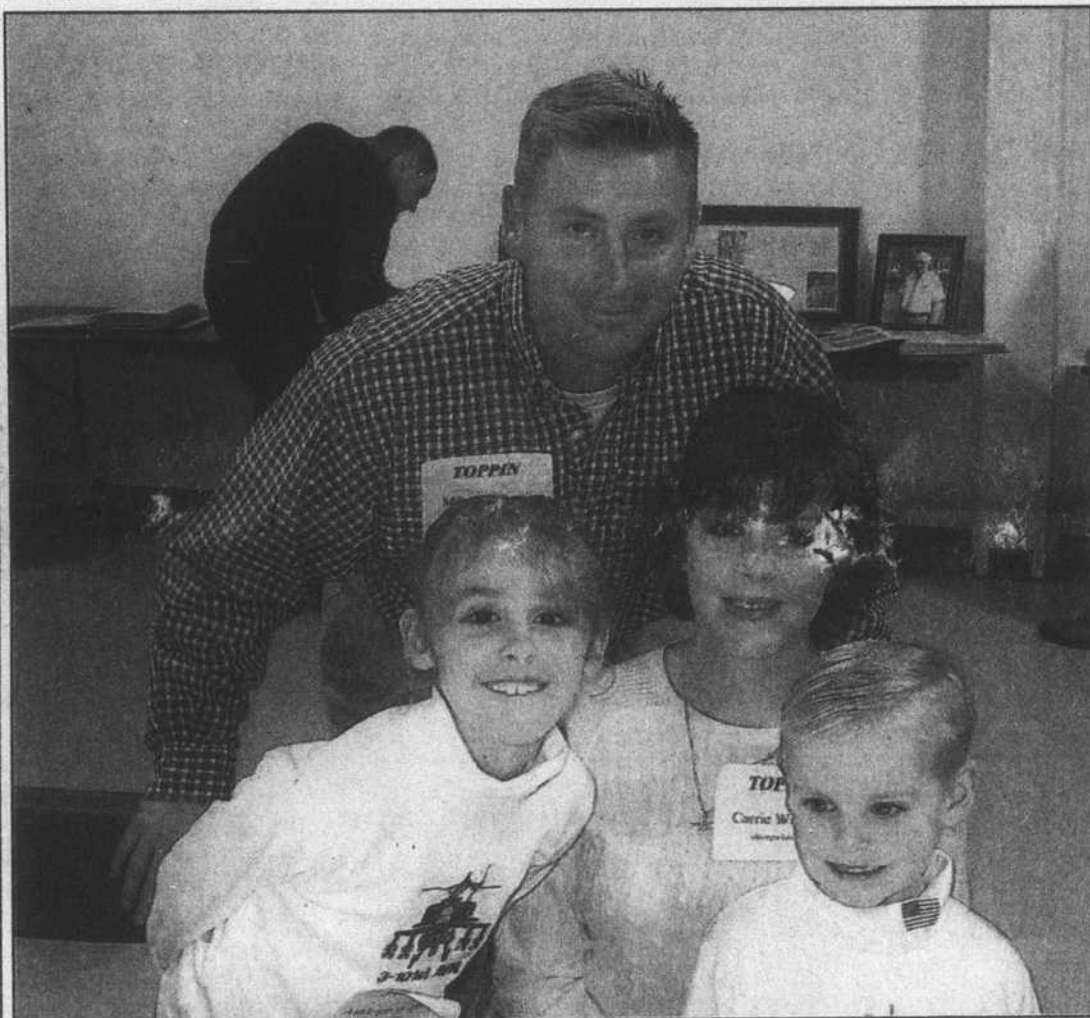
Downtown Edenton will be bustling with activities this Saturday, Dec. 4, as businesses kick-off the holiday shopping season.

The Marketplace Guild will be hosting Christmas at the Market. This year, activities will include a gingerbread house making demonstration at Acoustic Coffee, A Men's Fashion show at Fame's, Holiday goodies will be sampled at Sean's, Edenton Bay Trading Company and Byrums Hardware. Vaughan's Jewelry will be cleaning rings and inspecting them.

Children can have their pictures taken with Santa at Mario's Restaurant. The Christian Bookseller will be reading a Christmas to the children, while parents shop for holiday gift items.

In addition to the December 4th festivities, many of Edenton's downtown shops will be open for extended hours on Fridays until Christmas. For more information please call the Edenton Main Street Office at 252-482-3400.

GOOD TO BE HOME



Staff photo by Sean Jackson

Clockwise from top, U.S. Army Capt. Mike Williams, Carrie Williams, Hunter Williams, and Ashleigh Williams visiting with relatives Saturday during the Toppin family reunion. Mike Williams has already served a 13-month tour in Iraq and is scheduled to return in October.

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

Circumstances could have been better, but Mike Williams was just glad to be back home with family over the Thanksgiving holiday.

Williams, a U.S. Army captain who has seen duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom, joined a crowd of relatives at Nixon's Catering for Saturday's Toppin family reunion. His mother, Georgia Rice, has cancer. The Apache helicopter pilot with the 101st Airborne was

given time to visit her late last month.

While his mother and other kinfolk prepared for dinner, Williams recalled his combat missions — including being shot down by insurgents — and desire to return to the embattled nation where U.S. and coalition forces are trying to establish a democratic government.

Williams, 35, wife Carrie, daughter Ashleigh, 9, and son Hunter, 5, call Kentucky's Ft. Campbell home. He is currently training at Ft. Hood Texas. He returned to

the U.S. in February. He is scheduled to return to Iraq with his battalion in October. It's not something he fears.

"We love what we do," he said. "If you see the results, you want to be a part of those results."

And it's a job worth finishing, Williams said. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest degree of success, Williams rates coalition efforts so far at an 8. He's thrilled that women

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Outstanding men, women in agriculture honored at banquet



Staff photo by Earline White

Felisa Bass, left, was honored as Chowan County's Outstanding Woman in Agriculture at this year's Farm-City Banquet. Other honorees included: Alyssa Miller, Outstanding 4-H'er; Bryant White, Outstanding Young Farmer; and J.C. Nixon Jr., Top Peanut Producer Award. Not pictured is Holly White, also honored as an Outstanding 4-H'er.

BY EARLINE WHITE
Staff Writer

Those people who till the soil keep America's economy thriving. Farmers are responsible for the food we eat, the clothes we wear—all the foundations of survival. At the 2004 Chowan County Farm-City Awards Banquet over 300 attendees took time to recognize those special people within our community that keep America going.

Dave Parrotte, Chowan County Extension Advisory Board Member was the master of ceremonies. Dr. David Wright, President of the Edenton Rotary Club offered the Invocation. Harry Lee Winslow, Chowan County Commissioner, and Mayor Roland Vaughan delivered the welcome. Winslow offered sev-

eral jokes and congratulations for the hard work that area farmers put into the soil in order to keep Chowan County successful. Mayor Vaughan also offered praise, "What a difference a year makes," he said. "Last year at this time there was damaged equipment, blown down crops and market damage. Yet through perseverance and good insurance here we are to celebrate Thanksgiving much different than the last."

Richard Lichtenwalner, Extension Area Livestock Agent, was the guest speaker for the event and spoke on raising children in rural N.C. Lichtenwalner, Ph.D., is a resident animal science specialist at NC State University in Raleigh. "Out of the 125 incoming fresh-

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Crime rate rank in schools is misleading, officials say

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

Edenton-Chowan Schools' crime rate ranks higher than the state average, but violence is all but a non-issue in the system's four schools.

Statewide, the crime and violence rate in schools increased in 2003-04, according to an annual report issued Nov. 3 by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. Of its 21 reported acts — with 2,438 students on

a daily basis — Edenton-Chowan had just assaults, and both were against school personnel.

Mirroring the rest of the state, Edenton-Chowan's main problem is the presence of drugs in schools.

"Most of ours tend to be controlled substance-related," Assistant Superintendent Rob Boyce said, adding that marijuana is the drug most often seized from students.

Statewide, 91 percent of all

charges involved banned or illegal substances.

And the six weapons charges in Edenton-Chowan? Boyce said the majority are knives found on students.

"We get four to five of those annually," he said.

Just crunching the numbers and reacting to reported crimes is not what Superintendent Allan Smith and staff want to do. So they've been taking a proactive — if not outright preemptive — approach

at curbing crime and violence in Chowan schools.

The school system sends out a survey every spring to students, teachers and staff. The surveys aim to calculate how students and employees rate safety at D.F. Walker Elementary, Chowan Middle, and John A. Holmes High schools. Surveys are not distributed to White Oak Elementary School students, due to their young age, Smith said.

"For most groups that's been

very high," Smith said of the responses' safety ratings.

Boyce agreed. "We get positive responses about feeling safe," Boyce said.

Smith said the surveys indicate that parents rate school safety above 90 percent, staff is nearly 100 percent, and students grade safety "at 90 percent or above."

Nationally, that's not the case, according to a study by

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