

# THE CHOWAN HERALD

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## Candlelight Tour this weekend

In this Bud Weagly photo for The Chowan Herald, Old Saint Nick is seen hitching a ride aboard a lovely carriage during last Saturday's Christmas at the Market which drew a large crowd to downtown businesses. This Saturday, those who missed Santa's first visit of the season will have a chance to see him in the Christmas Parade, starting at 11 a.m. On Friday and Saturday the Candlelight Tour will take place from 4-8 p.m. (See details on A-4 and A-5)



## Caroling on the Green

Local church choirs and civic choruses will lead in the singing of holiday music this Friday evening to kick off the Candlelight Tour. It begins at 6 p.m. on the Courthouse Green. Everyone is welcome.

## Oakum St. gets facelift



Staff photo by Sean Jackson

DOT is working to "spruce up" Oakum Street. Plans are to dramatically improve the north-south artery from East Church to East Freemason streets.

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

One of the main thoroughfares in Edenton is undergoing a major facelift approved by the Town Council in 2001.

The NC Department of Transportation has been working on Oakum Street for weeks. And plans are to drastically improve the north-south artery from from East Church to East Freemason streets, a four-block stretch, Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said.

Approved by the state Board of Transportation several years ago, the project has been a long time in the works, Knighton said. Edenton contractor Paul Waff helped secure funding for the project while he was a member of the transportation board, she added.

"The main benefit of the project," Knighton said Dec. 3, "will be the elimination of the gravel on-street parking and the installation of curb and gutters, tree boxes, driveway openings, new sidewalks, and defined — but limited — on-street parking."

Knighton estimated the project would cost several hundred-thousand dollars. The only portion the town will pay for is the purchase and planting of the new trees, she added.

"And we have paid to move some utilities," she said.

The town held an informational meeting in mid-2002 with property owners who would be affected by the streetscape project.

"The council has (since) received favorable comments

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## Privott 's devotion to Rescue Squad brings recognition

BY EARLINE WHITE  
Staff Writer

Willis Privott was recognized Monday by the Chowan County Commissioners upon his retirement from the Edenton-Chowan Rescue Squad where he served for 39 years.

Privott's wife, children, and friends he made during his time working with the Resuce Squad were on hand for this special occasion.

Chowan commission chairman Wayne Goodwin presented an engraved plaque to Privott recognizing him for his almost 40 years of service to the county.

Privott, who also serves on the Edenton Town Council, recalled the days before

the rescue squad. "I remember when there was no Rescue Squad. I always thought that there was a need for one, but there wasn't any money for it," Privott said. "So the citizens in the county decided that they would take up money themselves to have the emergency squad. When it began we covered all over Chowan and went to Perquimans, Gates and Bertie counties as well. We were always busy, always on the go," Privott said.

Commissioner Jimmy Allgood has known Privott since their days together on the Rescue Squad. Allgood joked, "You have been with the Rescue Squad as long as I can remember." Allgood spoke fondly of the times he

and Privott worked together, even revealing that several people on the team have kind nicknames for Privott.

Privott returned the compliment by saying that the squad is like a big family. "If it wasn't for this family, I couldn't have made it 39 almost 40 years," Privott said.

In conclusion Privott added words to live by, "When you climb the ladder and reach the top, it's better to come down on your own rather than have someone help." With that, Privott took the plaque presented to him for his years of dedicated performance and said, "I hope I can still be of service to the county."



Staff photo by Earline White

Edenton Town Councilman Willis Privott, left, is praised by Commissioner Wayne Goodwin for his almost 40 years as a member of the Edenton-Chowan Rescue Squad. Privott received a plaque commemorating his service as his family looked on.

## County regains financial footing

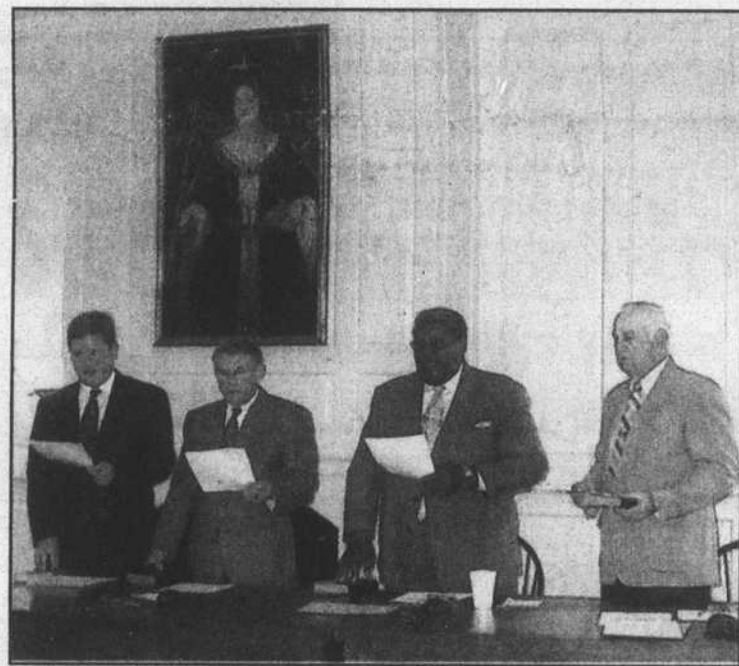
### Swearing-in highlights busy session

BY EARLINE WHITE  
Staff Writer

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session Monday, December 6 with many things on the agenda including celebration. After the destructive Hurricane Isabel scarred many residents emotionally and financially, Chowan County is happy to have numerous grants flowing in, according to Lisa Jones, Finance Officer. Cliff Copeland, County Manager was also happy to report that Chowan County's credit/bond rating has increased from a BBB+ to A-, one of the highest this side of NC.

#### Swearing-in held

The meeting began with Nancy Morgan, County Clerk, receiving the oaths of office for the recently elected commissioners, Ralph Cole, Jerry Downum and Harry Lee Winslow. Bill Gardner, Jr. was also excited to be among those commissioners since his defeat over Pruden and Sams in the November election for George Jones' seat. Jones addressed his fellow commissioners briefly saying that his time



Staff photo by Earline White

Bill Gardner Jr., left, newly elected commissioner, takes the oath of office along with his re-elected counterparts, Dr. Jerry Downum, Ralph Cole and Harry Lee Winslow during Monday's meeting of the Chowan County Commissioners

on the board was enjoyable and that he "got as far as I did by doing right by people". Jones firmly backs Bill Gardner Jr in his new position. Wayne Goodwin was then nominated to be the future Chairman of the Commissioners; Ralph Cole Vice-Chairman. Both nominations were approved. Della Rae Bass was appointed as a member of the Nursing Home Advisory Committee.

#### Holladay Island grant

Peter Rascoe informed the Commissioners of the grant received to assist in the development of five camping platforms and walkways at Holladay Island. The grants, accruing to \$22,800, will help develop the 6 x 6 platforms on which visitors may pitch tents and "enjoy the evening" Rascoe said. A CAMA permit

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## Attempted murder, assault charges filed

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

The suspects in a pair of separate assaults have been arrested by authorities, resulting in charges that include attempted murder.

On Monday, the Chowan County Sheriff's Office arrested Robert Keith Beasley, 26, of Travis School Road, Columbia, on charges stemming from the assault and robbery of an elderly Edenton man Monday at 4:25 p.m. He was arrested after fleeing the scene of the robbery, Edenton Police Det. Aaron Davidson said Tuesday.

"He's going to be charged with attempted murder and robbery," said Davidson, just prior to taking Beasley to the Chowan County Magistrate's office.

Beasley allegedly entered the Granville Street home of a 64-year-old man and hit the man "with his fists" and later "tried choking and strangling" the victim, Davidson said. Beasley allegedly stole an undisclosed amount of money, which he used to buy crack, Davidson said. Beasley was arrested at Leary Plant Farm on Rocky Hock Road, Davidson added.

"(Beasley) confessed to everything," the detective said. Investigating officers were Davidson and police Det. Sgt. Rhonda Copeland.

In a separate incident, police arrested a Gates County man on Dec. 3 at his workplace after the man allegedly beat a coworker, severely injuring the victim.

Robert William Wardle, 34, was charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. He was placed under a \$50,000 secured bond. Wardle was scheduled to make his first appearance in a Chowan County courtroom Tuesday. Wardle allegedly attacked coworker Stephen Briley



Robert W. Wardle

during a shift at Fueston Wood Products on Badham Road.

"Mr. Wardle struck Mr. Briley in the head with a wooden club several times," Davidson said, "stating that he was going to kill him."

Briley suffered a severe gash in his head during the attack and was taken to Chowan Hospital for treatment, Davidson said. Wardle also allegedly kicked Briley during the attack, Davidson added. He was later released.

Coworkers witnessed the attack, one of which "pulled Wardle off Briley," Davidson said. The incident occurred at approximately 6 p.m. on Friday.

Wardle has prior felony assault and assault on a female charges against him, Davidson said.

Davidson was assisted in that assault investigation by police Officer Dennis Smith.

It is common for larcenies and robberies to escalate during the holiday season, law enforcement officials have said. As a result, Police Chief Greg Bonner urges the public to assist law enforcement in curbing crime throughout the season.

"Certainly we want the community to be any assistance they can throughout the Christmas holidays," the chief said, adding that anyone with information about a crime can call the Edenton Police Department at 482-5147.

## Lane promotes local economy

### Businesses urged to buy locally

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

Saying northeast North Carolina would prosper by improving the region's business and industry relationships, Rocky Lane offered an example of how it could be done.

Lane, an existing industry



Rocky Lane

specialist with the Edenton-based Northeast Partnership, told Chowan County entrepreneurs at a Nov. 3 luncheon how his organization helped sway one company to buy locally. The company, which Lane did not identify at the annual appreciation luncheon held at Chowan Golf and Country Club, was looking to buy shipping pallets. A supplier in Rocky Mount — which is not in the Partnership's 16-county service area — was the company's first choice. Lane

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"Candlelight Cuisine"