

THE CHOWAN HERALD

season's greetings

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County among danger zones; town addresses traffic

Chowan ranks in top 25 most dangerous in NC

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

Chowan County was in among the 25 most dangerous counties in North Carolina for highway travel in 2003, according to statistics released Dec. 14 by AAA Carolinas.

With 314 vehicle collisions and five fatal wrecks that resulted in six deaths, Chowan

roads were the 24th most dangerous for collisions in the state, the report stated. Chowan ranked 49th in fatalities per vehicle miles traveled. Chowan held the distinction of being the fourth likeliest for a motorist to be killed in, following Graham (No. 1 best chance of being killed), Warren and Hoke counties. Gates County ranked fifth.

By comparison, neighboring Perquimans County ranked 93rd — meaning only seven counties were safer — in collisions among the 100 counties in the state. Perquimans had 214 accidents and three fatalities.

Statewide, North Carolina highway fatalities dropped 1.3 percent, to 1,552 deaths for 2003, a AAA Carolinas press release stated.

"Hopefully, these communities that continue to lead the state in traffic deaths, injuries and crashes will use their resources to address speeding

and other forms of aggressive driving that continue to play a major role in the state's accidents," said David E. Parsons, president and CEO of AAA Carolinas said in the Dec. 14 release.

Other area statistics included:

- Camden County was one of just two N.C. counties without a traffic fatality in 2003, joining Yancey County with that distinction

- Pasquotank County had 856 accidents, including three fa-

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Town to test methods for slowing traffic

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

Citing complaints by residents growing fed up with fast-moving traffic, the Edenton Town Council has agreed to test new speed bumps and 4-way stop signs in town.

"We have resisted that in the past," Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said Tuesday

of the "traffic calming techniques" approved by council on Dec. 14.

The experiment wouldn't be widespread. The speed bumps would be used in Edenton Housing Authority areas, while the 4-way stop is slated to go up at the intersection of Badham Road and Second Street. Temporary speed

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Council splits votes, okays club funding

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

In a rare split vote, the Edenton Town Council approved funding for a proposed Boys & Girls Club during the panel's Dec. 14 regular meeting.

With a 3-1 vote, council agreed to give Boys & Girls Clubs of America \$25,000 over three years, or roughly \$8,300 annually. Councilman Steve Biggs voted against the club's funding request. Councilors Jimmy Stallings, Sambo Dixon, and Willis Privott favored the request. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Parks did not attend the meeting.

Club officials and local supporters have said they have already raised more than \$600,000 to finance the new club. The club — which would be initially housed at the old D.F. Walker school on Oakum Street in Edenton — would serve youths from both Edenton and Chowan County, officials have said.

Local club supporters Scotty Harrell and Bill Whichard said the town was simply asked to join the private-sector donors who helped raise the money for the club, which is expected to open programs in January.

"We want the town to be involved in it," Harrell said Tuesday. "They need to be involved in it. It's a good thing."

Whichard agreed. "We have done this through private money because the need was there," he said. "We have got a lot of momentum behind us, that's obvious from the

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Make my wish come true



Photo by Bud Weagly for The Chowan Herald

Local youngsters snuggle close and share their Christmas wishes with Old Saint Nick during the annual "Day with Santa" celebration held Saturday in Edenton. The event is co-sponsored by the Recreation Department and the community.

No white Christmas for area, Nat'l Weather Service says

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

This past weekend's brush with wintry weather could be the only snow to be seen through the weekend, negating the chance for a white Christmas.

Dan Reilly, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service's Wakefield, Va. office, said Tuesday that a storm previously expected to brush northeast North Carolina on Christmas Day should stay further south and east than it had on prior forecast models. Snow is out of the picture "unless something unexpected happens," Reilly said. Saturday should be "cold and dry," he added.

Forecasts Tuesday offered differing high tem-

peratures for Saturday. The National Weather Service called for highs in the mid-30s on Christmas Day, while the Weather Channel predicted a high of 42.

In the meantime, warmer weather should spread across the region. Temperatures could climb into the mid-60s by Thursday, Reilly said. Rain showers, even a possible thunderstorm, could also move in Thursday, he said. Thursday's chance of rain is 60 percent.

That wet and warm air mass is a far cry from weather that pushed into the area late last weekend.

Early Monday morning, temperatures plummeted to 23 degrees, while Tuesday's overnight readings bottomed out at 30 degrees.

After reaching a high of 59 Sunday afternoon, tempera-

tures plummeted overnight, as a cold front barreled in from the northwest, bringing about a half inch of snow to Chowan County. Light snow began falling around 1 a.m. and ended around 5:30 a.m., according to weather data from Northeast Regional Airport in Edenton. No major accidents were reported in Chowan or the surrounding area Monday, according to officials with the state Highway Patrol and the Chowan County Sheriff's Office.

Reilly's office called for lows overnight Saturday to dip into the mid-20s in the Edenton area. Sunday night's lows are forecast to climb slightly, into the upper-20s. Highs Sunday and Monday are expected to only reach the low to mid 40s.

Would-be tragedy turns into a happy ending for students

BY EARLINE WHITE
Staff Writer

Strong winds, freezing water and a small boat made for an interesting experience for three Chowan County residents early Monday morning. Thomas Ward and Jonathan 'J.B.' Brower were home from college when the snow fell earlier this week. Excited about the season and hoping for a good hunt, they set off early for Bennett's Millpond where they frequented for ducks.

Thomas had overslept and told J.B. to go ahead and he would join him another day. J.B. set off but was surprised when Thomas called shortly thereafter and said to wait for him. J.B., Thomas and friend, Chris Brabble, all met at the pond and quickly commenced to setting up for the hunt. They left the guns and Chris at the nearby duck blind while J.B. and Thomas set off in the boat to set up decoys.

"The winds were coming out of the North at about 30 mph," J.B. said. "There was ice on the boat seat. Before we knew it a blast came and pushed us both to one side of the boat. The boat tipped, then another wind hit and the boat flipped over. The water was so cold it felt like being stabbed in the back

with an ice pick. I couldn't get my breath. I couldn't get to the boat. I could hear Thomas screaming about his chest wader so I got over to him and pulled it off. He's a tall guy, about 6'8" and when he got the wader off he could touch the bottom of the pond," J.B. said. Meanwhile J.B. struggled with getting a hold of the boat.

"I pulled him over [about 75 yards] to the duck blind where Chris was," Thomas said. "It was all me and Chris could do to get him out of the water. Thank god we had a third person there and a cell phone," Thomas said.

It was just a coincidence that the men had a heater in the duck blind, "I've been hunting for 8 years and have never taken a heater. The night before I decided that I would. When we got into the blind, Chris took his own clothes and gave them to us and we sat by the heater. After 30 minutes we had lost all feeling," J.B. said.

Chris put in a call to his brother at the Sheriff's Department that they were in trouble. All the while rescue was attempting to make their way to the men. Steve Taylor, owner of the duck blind, had tried to get to the men but his key broke in

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Main Street won't get hoped-for funds now

BY EARLINE WHITE
Staff Writer

Edenton's downtown will not be refurbished with new streetlights and trash receptacles at least for a while. The Edenton Main Street program had applied for a \$386,000 grant for Department of Transportation Enhancement funds to replace the current street lights, benches and trash cans as well as installation of underground wiring at the base of every tree and light. Unfor-

tunately, the program was not awarded the funds this year due to lack of state money. However, the group is encouraged to apply again in two years.

"We were considered eligible for the grant, but due to the number of applications the DOT received there was not enough money for our project," said Jennifer Harriss, Director of the Main Street Program. "Our plan is to work on im-

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The Chowan Herald will be closed on Friday, Dec. 24 for Christmas. All deadlines will be at noon on Thursday, Dec. 23.

St. Paul's Church
Christmas Eve Services
5:30 Children's Service & Communion
11:00 Candlelight Service & Communion

You Are Invited to our
Christmas Service

St. John's Church
Christmas Day Service
10:00 Holy Communion
Come Join Us!

