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Local search goes on for missing PA man

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

Local rescue workers continued to look for a missing Pennsylvania man Tuesday, two days after the search began for a man who fell off a barge in the Chowan River on Sunday.

Aaron Drew Cahill, 24, of Elizabethtown, Pa., was reported missing from a 68-foot barge Sunday morning, U.S. Coast Guard officials said this week. Cahill had been aboard the Nancy B, owned by the Norfolk (Va.) Tug Company, Chief Warrant Officer Morgan Dudley said Tuesday from his Cape Hatteras office.

The water temperature at the time of Cahill's disappearance was 39 degrees, Dudley said. It was estimated that Cahill could only survive about 2 1/2 hours in waters that cold, Dudley added. The

Coast Guard called off its search after nearly seven hours.

"Usually when we suspend a search," Dudley said, "there's no chance for survival, considering the water conditions."

Peter Rascoe, Chowan County's special projects officer acting as spokesman for Chowan's emergency management team, indicated Tuesday that hopes were dim for finding Cahill alive.

"It's a recovery effort at this point," Rascoe said.

Sonars were being used to scan the river bottom since late Monday, Rascoe said. Dragging of the riverbottom was called off Monday because of the arrival of the sonar equipment, he said.

Officials estimate Cahill most likely went overboard in

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School system making strides

BOE hears update on strategies

BY EARLINE WHITE
Staff Writer

Another semester opens and the new year promises more success stories in the Edenton Chowan school system. The instructors have taken large strides toward intensive teaching and learning strategies, and steadily implemented them into their daily curriculum. "This is Chowan's fourth year of learning teams," said Peggy Yates at Monday night's Board of Education meeting. "An integral part of what goes on in our system comes from the learning teams at each school. Through those facilitators within the teams, the in-

formation gets funneled through the system on how to improve the "best practices" in teaching. In the fall of 2002, Dr. Smith organized a K-8 Literacy Team that later became the K-12 Literacy Team. Our goal for 2004-2005 is that by the beginning of second grade and in each subsequent grade, 100% of students will read independently at a level whereby they may benefit from instruction in the regular classroom," Yates said.

Part of the Literacy Team projects for the upcoming year will be the development of Literacy Language Dictionaries at each school. By developing a comprehensive dictionary at each of the four schools, teachers at any level will understand the terminology used in the different classrooms. Another project that will be undertaken is videotaping teachers using effective teaching strategies. "So often we go out and spend money on tapes that

show teachers and their effective teaching strategies," Yates said. "Well our teachers are doing that here, everyday. There is no need to buy videos when we can make our own. We hope to one day have a collection of videos that our teachers can check out and watch their peers teach our children these strategies." Each school will also develop an on-going literacy assessment for monitoring student's ability. "By doing this we are deepening our understanding and strengthening literacy instruction," Yates said.

Linda Perry along with the National Board Facilitators, Ms. Palmer, Ms. Proctor, Ms. Timberlake and Ms. Hollowell, gave a brief presentation on the upcoming "Getaway to Work" weekend. Taking place January 14-17 at Hampton Inn, the weekend promotes teacher leadership by providing support for those teachers who are currently undergoing National

Board Certification. "We have a comprehensive support program to provide leadership for teachers before, during and after certification," Perry said. "Last year over 400 hours were given from Edenton-Chowan teachers during the weekend support program. Candidates from all over Eastern North Carolina have attended the weekend programs in the past and have positive things to say about the experience. By providing this support, we are impacting not only our students but also ones across the state. Edenton-Chowan Schools have approximately 43 teachers with national board certification and 7 going through at this point. It will be a wonderful thing when we can say that 25% of our teachers are nationally certified," Perry said. Ms. Timberlake also supports the weekend retreat by saying that she was most impressed

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Woman's body found



Staff photo by Sean Jackson

Deputy **Andy Bunch** cordons off crime scene at cemetery.

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

An elderly woman was found dead in and Edenton cemetery Tuesday, tragically ending the search for her whereabouts.

The body of Joyce Lee, 64, of 201 Luke St., Edenton was found at Vine Oak Cemetery on North Granville Street after being spotted by state Highway Patrol Helicopter, Edenton Police Chief Greg Bonner said late Tuesday. Lee had last been seen Sunday and had been reported missing Monday by a relative who works at the police department.

Bonner said there were no visible signs of trauma on Lee's body, which has been sent to a state Coroner's Office in Greenville.

"It's unclear at this time how the body got there," Bonner said. "Preliminary investigation does not reveal that she just wandered over there."

Bonner also said foul play is expected, but a cause of death has not been determined.

Further investigations, including the autopsy and interviews with potential suspects and other witnesses, will hopefully unveil how Lee died, the chief said.

At press time, there were no arrests in the case. No suspects had been identified.

Early Tuesday afternoon, police and deputies gathered at the rear of the cemetery on North Granville Street. Crime-scene tape was being spread across two areas. Onlookers out on an exceptionally warm afternoon were steered away from the scene.

Police Det. Sgt. Rhonda Copeland and Det. Aaron Davidson are the lead investigators in the case, Bonner said. Anyone with any information about Lee's disappearance and death, call 482-5144.

WINTER WONDERLAND?



Staff Photo by Earline White

William Bond fishes at Queen Anne Park Tuesday afternoon waiting for his next big catch. Already William managed to reel in two white perch and a big catfish. No one could resist getting outdoors when January temperatures rose to 80 degrees.

Court allows OLF land purchases to resume

BY JONATHAN CLAYBORNE,
RACHEL BROWN HACKNEY
Washington Daily News

For at least a couple of weeks, the Navy will be allowed to proceed with land purchases around a Washington County site it has targeted for the installation of an outlying landing field, according to sources close to a legal battle to stop the OLF.

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued a stay Monday afternoon of a North Carolina judge's preliminary injunction stopping all OLF property ac-

quisition efforts. The stay allows the Navy to negotiate land purchases with willing sellers — if there are any — around the proposed OLF, according to attorneys representing the plaintiffs in a federal lawsuit filed in January 2004.

Beaufort County, Washington County and three environmental groups are suing the Navy to stop construction of the practice landing strip, which would be built over farmland and close to the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge.

A court date set for a judge to

hear motions in the civil trial is still set for Jan. 19 in U.S. District Court in Raleigh, according to Beaufort County Manager Paul Spruill.

"We're still feeling really optimistic because the stay effectively only allows the Navy to proceed until the outcome of the Jan. 19th federal hearing is determined," Spruill said. "The counties continue to look forward to arguing the merits of what we feel is a strong case in front of Judge (Terrence) Boyle in three weeks."

Local anti-OLF activist Doris Morris still was trying to de-

termine exactly what the stay entailed Monday night. Morris, the communications director for the grassroots North Carolinians Opposed to the OLF, said members of the group were disappointed but were still looking forward to the Jan. 19 court date.

"We were so close to going to court," she said.

Morris indicated she could not definitely confirm whether any landowners in the OLF area were willing to sell.

However, Michelle Nowlin,

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Employee charged in larceny

BY SEAN JACKSON
Staff Writer

A Plymouth woman was arrested in Washington County on Dec. 13 and charged with embezzling from her employer in Edenton.

Vera Birdo, 29, of 2992 U.S. Highway 64, was charged with felony larceny by an employee. She was placed under a \$5,000 secured bond. A Winn-Dixie employee said Tuesday that Birdo was no longer employed at the supermarket on Virginia Road.

Birdo allegedly made a false bank deposit on Dec. 10, Edenton Police Chief Greg Bonner said Monday. Birdo allegedly placed \$1 bills in deposit bundles typically containing larger bills, including \$20s, \$50s, and \$100s, Bonner said.

"(Birdo) was the only (Winn-Dixie) employee that had access to the money," the chief said.

Police Det. Aaron Davidson obtained warrants for Birdo's arrest after Winn-Dixie officials contacted police about the bogus banks deposit. That deposit was reported to Winn-Dixie by the bank where the deposits were made, Bonner said.

Birdo reportedly used the

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This map shows the area that will be affected by OLF noise.