

# Happy Thanksgiving

# CHOWAN HERALD

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## OLF PROPOSAL

### Local leaders defend Dole on airfield

By Sean Jackson  
Staff Writer

Local officials are wondering just what Gov. Mike Easley is thinking.

Last week, Easley sparred with U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole over a proposed Navy airfield in northeast North Carolina.

Edenton Mayor Roland Vaughan is trying to make sense of Easley's position.

"Gov. Easley must think we are idiots," Vaughan said, "to have his own committee recommend new sites in the northeast, where the OLF is not wanted, and then try to throw the blame on Sen. Dole for not objecting to his recommendations."

"He needs to join with us in helping to locate the OLF in Virginia, where the assets reside."

An Easley-appointed panel recently expanded the proposed list of sites in this area, adding locations in Gates and Camden counties.

But the governor, a Democrat, said Dole, a Republican, hasn't taken a strong enough stance in opposing having an outlying landing field in the northeast.

Chowan County Manager Cliff Copeland shares Vaughan's view.

"I don't halfway blame Dole for being upset," Copeland said. "She clearly said she'd be opposed to the sites if the counties were opposed."

Officials in Camden and Gates counties have said they oppose being home to the OLF, saying they would get jet noise without any economic benefits.

Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Richard Bunch said Easley and Navy officials made a mistake of naming sites in this area nearly six years ago.

"It's a wildcard at this point," Bunch said of where the OLF may finally land. "The Navy will do what it wants, and announce [a preferred site], whenever they get good and ready. It's a Virginia problem and the OLF should be in Virginia. It's that simple."

In a statement released last week, Easley said Dole had let down Camden and Gates residents

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An audience reacts to the final song of the afternoon at Acoustic Coffee. The Saturday event drew a crowd of nearly 60 to hear John A. Holmes students jam on guitars.

Sean Jackson/The Chowan Herald

## JAMMIN' FOR A CAUSE

By Sean Jackson  
Staff Writer

To Glenn Andersen, it was a little bit like an indoors Woodstock.

"It" was a group of John A. Holmes High School guitarists jamming on the stage of Anderson's downtown coffee shop.

A crowd of 60 teens, parents, grandparents, teachers and other rock music fans gathered at Acoustic Coffee for the jam session, which also served as a food drive for the Edenton-Chowan Food Pantry.

"We had no idea there was going to be a crowd like this," Andersen said. "It's great to see all the AC/DC T-shirts, and all kinds of rock-and-roll hair."

The axe-wielding rockers rotated on and off the stage, keeping their buzz-saw sounds to an acceptable level, only occasionally being

drowned out by the whir of an iced latte being made.

Holmes Guitar Club teacher and guidance counselor Phil Huey even joined students Nathan Surratt and Dylan Lamothe.

The trio cranked out versions of Oasis' "Wonderwall" and Guns N' Roses' "Sweet Child O' Mine" to enthusiastic applause.

Although the event brought in more than 80 pounds of canned food for the food pantry, it was the music that stole the show.

Eric Wellman opened the afternoon with a subdued version of "The National Anthem."

Surratt, Lamothe, David Lane, Dail Forehand, Paul Caputa, and Dylan Jackson all took turns on the stage.

Surratt's mother was beaming outside after the show, along with other parents of the young musicians.

"I think Nathan did awesome," Earline Surratt said.

The Holmes junior has been taking lessons from a Williamston teacher for the past year.

Proud dad Flynn Surratt said he was glad to see the teens have a public venue where they could showcase their talents.

Sporting a Slipknot T-shirt, Jackson said Surratt is the leader of the metal-heavy pack at the high school.

"He's the best one of us," Jackson said.

After Jackson, Forehand and Caputo banged out a version of All That Remains' "Regret Not," Andersen — himself a guitar player — praised the performers one final time.

"It's good to see kids playing good music," he said.

The students have worked hard on their chops since the school year began in August, Huey said.

"Hopefully, this will fuel the fire to keep them working hard on their music."

## Councilors explain votes on Edenton Commons

■ Four supporters say the shopping center is good for Edenton's future growth

■ Dixon, Biggs question what will be built, impact on downtown; mayor disappointed

By Sean Jackson  
Staff Writer

Lowe's is virtually a done deal at Edenton Commons Shopping Center, the developer says.

But not all Town Councilors are applauding. Councilors Sambo Dixon and Steve Biggs were outnumbered by four other colleagues last week. Mayor Roland Vaughan, who wasn't required to vote on the issue, is also not in a cheering mood.

"I am extremely disappointed that we did not pursue an economic impact assessment of our market," Vaughan said, "which would help us better understand what our retail strengths and weaknesses are before issuing a permit for Edenton Commons."

Originally approved by council last August, the developer tweaked his plans by adding Lowe's Home Improvement Center — and putting a Farm Fresh supermarket in doubt — before ushering the project back into council's hands.

It sparked contentious debate in the community and among local leaders, culminating in a marathon council meeting last week.

### The issues

Vaughan and others have questioned if a Lowe's-anchored Edenton Commons — there are plans for 37 smaller shops — could cripple the downtown business district.

"Without population growth," Vaughan said, "I don't believe we need another 200,000 square feet of retail in Chowan County."

Then there are those like Councilman Steve Biggs who are concerned that developer Jon Wheeler can't commit to what those other stores would be.

"My vote was not against Lowe's or Edenton Commons," Biggs said, "it was against rezoning a piece of property that no one would tell us what was going on the property."

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The Chowan Herald office will be closed Thursday, Nov. 22 for Thanksgiving.

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## Food Pantry's donation needs continue year-round

By Sean Jackson  
Staff Writer

Ray Wells is busy this time of year.

As director of the Edenton-Chowan Food Pantry, Wells and his staff of fellow volunteers are taking applications, stacking cans, storing frozen turkeys, and pushing food-filled carts to cars and minivans.

But the holiday season is only a slice of what the pantry delivers year-round.

"People don't realize the magnitude of this operation," Wells said as he awaited a shipment of canned goods from first-graders at White Oak School.

The North Broad Street facility distributes about 100,000 pounds of food annually, serving about 160 families each

month.

But business really picks up this time of year.

And Wells is just thankful that local youths have continued to join with their adult counterparts in the spirit of giving.

Last week, youths from Ballards Bridge Baptist Church gathered nearly 1,000 pounds of food for the pantry.

On Saturday, John A. Holmes High School students played at Acoustic Coffee. Entry was free to anyone who brought a canned food item.

Monday, kids from Andrea McNally and Tracy Faircloth's first-grade classes at White Oak School brought in 109 pounds of food and paper towels.

"It means our younger generation sees the need," Wells

### ELSEWHERE

■ Regulator Marine challenges local businesses to donate dollars to Edenton food pantry. A7

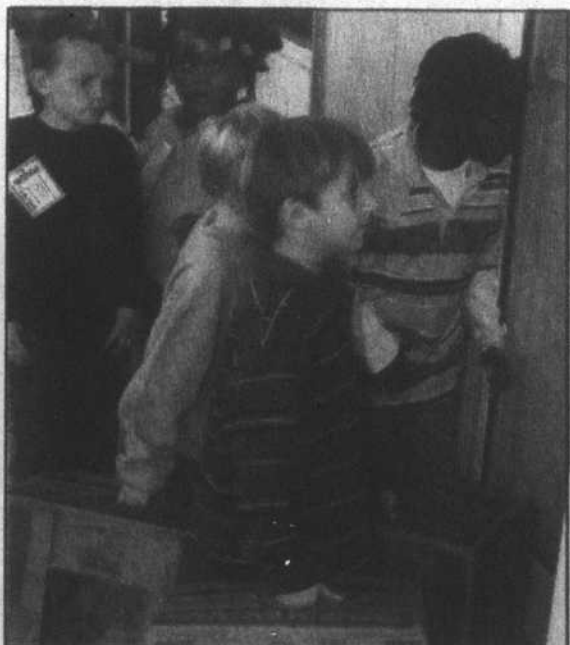
said, "and they're concerned about people other than themselves."

Every little bit helps, Wells said, as volunteer Barbara King busily signed up recipients in another room of the building.

Rarely a day goes by without a new applicant showing up.

The pantry is open on Mondays and Thursdays, from 9-11:30 a.m. both days. Call the pantry at 482-2504.

It is located at 1370 N. Broad St. In addition to food items, monetary donations are also accepted.



Sean Jackson/The Chowan Herald

White Oak School students prepare to deliver their donations to the Food Pantry.

Friday, Nov. 30, 7:30pm  
Saturday, Dec. 1, 7:30pm  
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