

Have A Safe and Happy Holiday!

# CHOWAN HERALD

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Nearly 200 letters to Santa from local kids

D1-10

Lady Aces' junior Gerrisha Moore scores 1,000th point

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## Chowan home sales down 27%

### Foreclosures are up in area, nation, but realtors say local market is still a good one

By Connie Sage  
Contributing Writer

Home sales in Edenton and Chowan County are down 27 percent this year compared to 2006, and foreclosures are up 51 percent.

Despite the slower sales, it's "not all doom and gloom," said Ann Perry of Perry & Co. Sotheby's International Realty. "It's a normal cycle."

"We've never had the craziness" with three or more bids on the same house like in some markets nationally, she said. "We were like the little engine that could, chugging up the hill, so we didn't have so far to fall."

Through the second week of December, 107 single-family homes, townhouses and condominiums had closed in Chowan County this year, compared with 148 for all of 2006, according to the Albemarle Area Association of Realtors.

In 2005, there were 165 home sales in the county, compared to 140 closings in 2004. Not included in the numbers are for-sale-by-owner or commercial properties, lots, or homes sold by builders who do not use a Multiple Listing Service database.

"It's still a good market, but not as good as it has been," said Stephanie Bateman, executive officer of the Albemarle area real estate association, which serves Realtors in Northeast North Carolina.

Homeowners unable to pay their mortgages accounted for 56 foreclosure filings as of the second week of December, compared with 37 foreclosures for all of 2006, and 31 for 2005.

It's hard to say why foreclosures are up, said Sharon Waff, assistant clerk of Superior Court for Chowan County. And those statistics don't reflect an estimated 20 percent of homeowners who filed for foreclosure but later worked out arrangements with their lending institution.

"An increase in the number of local foreclosures appears, however, to be related to the economy and not the sub-prime debacle that has cost lending institutions billions of dollars nationwide as homeowners with poor credit default on their mortgages," Waff added.

While there may be fewer prospective buyers, those who have been signing contracts of ten are purchasing higher-priced homes.

"People who want to move here, and would love to, can't because they can't sell what they have," said attorney Max Busby. When someone in the Norfolk-Virginia Beach has to move, for example, they may be forced to lower the price of their home.

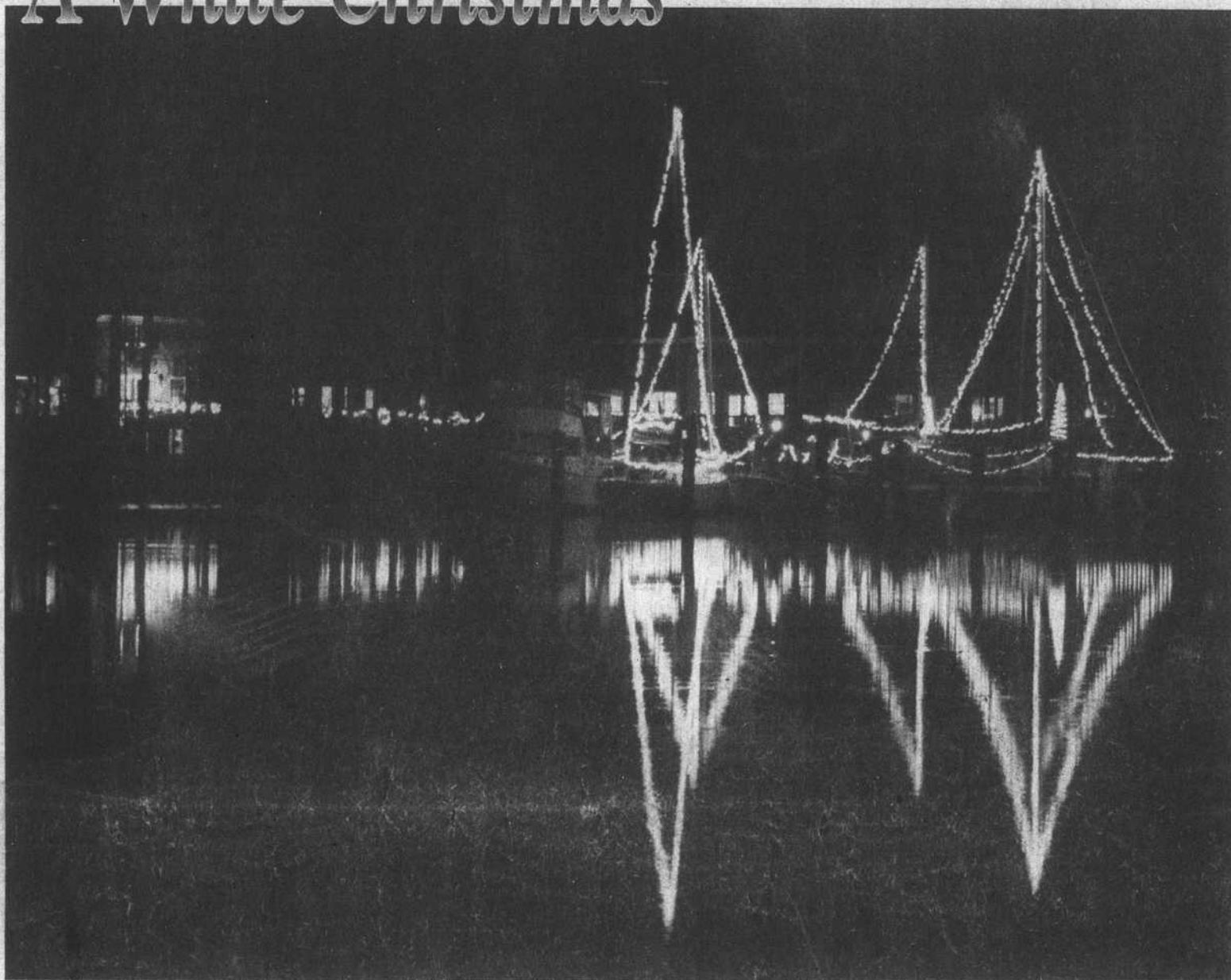
"Many here don't have to move so they don't have to drop their price," he said. "They're not pressured to sell."

The housing market isn't dead, said Cindy Twiddy of Cindy Twiddy Small Realty, it's adjusting, just like in any other industry.

"Markets go up and markets go down and you adjust with it," she explained. "If you listen to the media, it's a terrible time to buy — it's not; it's a buyer's market."

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## A White Christmas



Earline White/The Chowan Herald

The Pembroke Marina is alight for Christmas. Several captains have taken the holiday spirit to their boats, docked in the creek.

## Cat finds home and love

By Earline White  
Managing Editor

Lisa Butler will have one more stocking to fill this Christmas.

Butler, a well-known animal advocate, has taken in her 16th rescue — a tabby cat named Tigger.

Tigger was born three months ago to a stray living at a local business. The mother cat unfortunately had been killed and left behind four babies only two days old.

By the time Butler's friend called her, only two kittens were still alive.

After a month of feeding Tigger with a medicine dropper, then moving on to a baby bottle, Butler noticed that her cat looked Chinese.

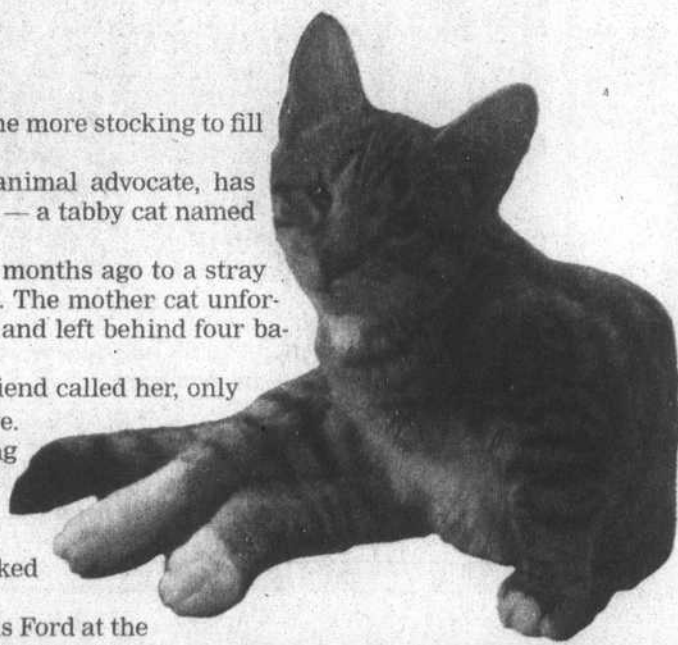
She took Tigger to Chris Ford at the Chowan Animal Hospital who told Butler that Tigger had a genetic birth defect that caused the kitten's inner eyelid not to form. It was only the second case like it Ford said he had seen.

"It's like having a four-legged child," Butler said. "And I don't want her to go blind, so I'm going to take her to Chesapeake Animal Eyecare in January where they will freeze the hair follicles around her lids and do what they need to do."

Tigger jumped on the chair as Butler prepared her lunch.

Later Tigger found a secret corner in which to do her business. Afterwards she looked at Butler lovingly as if to say she was sorry. She purred.

"The doctors have said that her condition is painful, but looking at her you couldn't tell," Butler said.



Tigger, Lisa Butler's 16th rescue animal, and newest four-legged child, will have surgery after Christmas.

"But sometimes when she looks at you, you can tell what she's looking at is distorted. She'll linger, move her head just a little bit and go on her way."

Even though Butler will be facing a nearly \$1,000 doctor's bill in January, she does not regret taking Tigger in.

"There just aren't enough homes. I have two hunting dogs that I rescued. When I found them they were 20 pounds. In one week they had put on nearly that. It's the same with Tigger — you bring them back from near death, you take them to the shelter and HOPE they get a good home? No, I can give them one."

## New chamber president named

### Promises to work to help fledgling businesses survive

By Rebecca Bunch  
Staff Writer

Linda Ashley is a woman with a mission.

Next month, she will become the new president of the Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce.

Ashley, the general manager at Ashley Welding, says a big priority during her time in office will be figuring out ways to help new businesses have a better chance for survival.

Collaboration between the town, county, the chamber and other organizations such as Destination Downtown and the Downtown Business Association will be crucial to keeping the business community strong and the downtown area viable, she says.

"The chamber has always been, and will continue to be, pro-business," Ashley said.

"We want to work closely with others to help pursue ideas to promote local shopping."

She said that she favors innovative ideas such as partnering with the Small Business Center at COA to help those interested in starting businesses develop solid strategies that will boost their chances for success.

Ashley said another strategy she thinks has merit is to develop a mentoring effort between existing and new business owners.

"Experience is always a great teacher," said Ashley, who years ago owned her own downtown business.

"I think there is a lot we can all learn from each other."



Ashley

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