

"If any lesson has been learned from this history it is that we have to rely completely on God to carry us through all unpleasant situations ..."

— Haywood Coston on growing up during segregation C1

# CHOWAN HERALD

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Fred Spruill, Alex Stallings throw in hats for county commissioner SEE BELOW

Forest fire destroys 700 acres in county A2

## "I hate that word, closure"



Earline White/The Chowan Herald

Joanna Eddy shows photos of her relief station at which she and other volunteers worked following 9-11 in New York.

### Doug and Joanna Eddy still try to make sense of their time at "Ground Zero"

By Vernon Fueston  
Contributing Writer

Joanna Eddy remembers, like most of us, where she was when the twin towers fell.

A social worker with the Salvation Army in Syracuse, N.Y., she did something unusual that day.

Prompted by a news item on the car radio, she turned on the television set in her office.

The Today Show was on and Katie Couric was speaking, the image of smoke from one of the World Trade Center towers in the background. A tragic accident.

Then the second plane hit. Operation "Compassion Under Fire" was getting underway even before the towers fell.

In a recent presentation to the American Legion, Doug and Joanna Eddy shared their feelings about the stressful days following Sept. 11, 2001.

The Salvation Army was headed to New York to provide support to the fire, rescue, and construction workers dealing with the carnage.

Her husband, Doug, had just accepted a position as pastor to

the First Presbyterian Church in Edenton, but back in Syracuse he had been active with the Salvation Army, too. He was drafted to arrange lodging for families whose loved ones might be hospitalized following the disaster.

That was what everybody was expecting, a rescue effort to pull survivors and bodies from the wreckage. They prepared to treat the survivors and set up morgues, but it didn't work out that way.

When the Eddys arrived, the scene was organized confusion. What most of us have come to know as "Ground Zero" was referred to as "The Pile", a pile of smoking concrete, steel, and fluttering office paper between 20 and 30-stories high.

It was to yield few if any human remains and even fewer survivors.

Sticking from the debris were jagged panels of the towers' external skin that looked eerily like the gothic walls of a cathedral.

Crawling over "The Pile" like ants on a disturbed mound, were firemen, desperately looking for anything that lived, including their own.

Joanna and Doug Eddy set up a "Relief and Hydration Station" where they passed out comfort and bottles of water. Near build-



Doug Eddy

ing 20 they put up a table on a girder.

The first few days were chaos with everybody wanting to help. Churches set up tables and individuals dropped off sandwiches. Sometimes things got surreal.

Joanna remembers a chef. "This chef in a white, pristine uniform, hat, the whole nine yards came down with insulated bags full of gourmet sandwiches from the Tribeca Grill.

He picked his way through all this debris covered with gray dust and he was still absolutely white. I asked him how he managed it. 'I don't dare get dirty', he said. "The Chief Chef would kill me!"

There are those rescue workers whose stories linger in their memories.

One New York City Fire Chief, a man named Kane, dug out his own son's smashed fire truck and loaded the pancaked remains onto a flatbed.

"I just hope I find him so I can give him back to his mother," he said.

Eventually the girder that was Joanna's perch was removed and a tent erected. As the work site

began to change, some things remained.

All around "The Pile" were pieces of naturally-occurring twisted and broken pipe, girders, and rebar that resembled crosses.

By unspoken agreement, these were not removed until necessity required it. It just seemed like the right thing to do.

The New York Fire Department lost 25 percent of its leadership in one day. But it was the individual stories that seemed to bring the tragedy into focus and make it understandable.

Doug recalls one firefighter pointing to a pile of rubble and stating with certainty, "That's where my brother is." They worked around the clock, many refusing to leave.

Another fireman had to deal with the shock of finding things that will stay with him forever.

"One firefighter was off to the side sitting on a box. We got to talking and he said he'd found something relating to a young child very close to the age of his own child. He was very despondent.

"I asked him what's gotten him through things like this in the past.

He said, 'my family.' I told

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## Could an ice rink be in Chowan's future?

By Connie Sage  
Contributing Writer

Nothing to do on a cold winter's weekend but cozy up next to a fire?

This time next year, couch potato, you could be ice skating downtown.

Local officials hope to install a temporary ice skating rink that would be set up each winter, with skating available from Thanksgiving to the end of winter.

There are a lot of planned events that bring people downtown, said Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton, but between Christmas and the annual "Pet and Pedal" parade in March, there are few special activities.

"Our idea is to make it a draw for downtown," she said. "It would be a fun thing for families from around the region. I could see the moms saying 'Go skate; I'll shop.'"

The same folks who maintain the ice for the Admirals' hockey team in Norfolk, Va., this year worked with Currituck County to build a temporary skating rink there.

"The whole concept behind this is to bring new recreational outlets to counties in Northeastern North Carolina," said Rich Cubin, vice president of Rink Specialists, an eight-year-old company based in Chesapeake.

Edenton officials have invited Cubin and company president Benn Breton here to see if a similar rink would be viable.

If there's an appropriate site, Cubin and Breton would present a proposal on how much the project would cost. The town then would figure out a way to raise the money, Knighton said.

The Currituck County rink, the "Ice Haus," is part of the Weeping Radish, a brewery, restaurant and butcher in Jarvisburg, 60 miles from Edenton.

The Currituck County facility has been skated on 10,000 times in two months, he said, by individuals, church and school groups, and for birthday parties.

While the rink is under a tent, "as you're driving on Route 158, you're actually seeing people ice skating," Cubin said. "It's like a pond on a farm; it's not commercial looking."

"The overall theme is bringing the community together at a time (of year) that's typically stagnant," Cubin said.

"It's not a tourist product. It's to provide something for the locals to do — a safe, fun winter activity — and to stir up business for local businesses."

A typical rink would be the size of two Olympic-size swimming pools, with up to 150 skaters on the ice at any one time.

Rink Specialists likely would run the rink the first year until employees, hired locally, are trained to maintain the facility.

The charge to skate in Currituck County is \$5 for kids ages 12 and under, plus \$2 to rent skates. For children teenagers and adults, the fee is \$6 for two hours on the ice, plus \$2 to rent skates.

Between each two-hour session, the ice is groomed. Photos and a typical skating schedule, by month, are at [www.weepingradish.com](http://www.weepingradish.com)

The initial costs to establish a rink could run as high as \$150,000 for the first year, Cubin said. "That's the design, electrical, the rink and rental skates."

After the first year, the overhead would drop by a third, he said.

The money to build the rink could come from grants, advertising displayed beneath the ice and around the rink, and the fees to skate.

"It's great for families who live here and for people who visit here," said Nancy Nicholls, the town's tourism director. "Currituck brought it there. Wouldn't it be nice to bring it here?"

## Local elections gear up, filing begins

### Fred Spruill announces run for commissioner

By Vernon Fueston  
Contributing Writer

Fred Spruill, former sheriff of Chowan County, has filed his intention to run for an at-large seat on the Board of County Commissioners, now held by Jerry Downum, a Republican.

Spruill is a life-long resident of Chowan County and graduate of Chowan High School. An Army veteran of three years, he served as a police officer on the Plymouth, N.C. force for three years and with the Edenton Police for 9 years.

In 1986, Spruill ran as a Republican for the office of Chowan County Sheriff. He was elected and served until December of 2006.

Spruill said his objectives, if elected, would be to continue what he sees as a pattern of good government provided by the current Board. Support for the school system and controlled economic growth,

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### Stallings to compete for seat against Goodwin

By Vernon Fueston  
Contributing Writer

Alex E. Stallings filed to run as a Republican against incumbent Kenneth Goodwin Feb. 11 for the second seat, District 2.

Stallings, 22, is a native of Chowan County and a graduate of John A. Holmes High School. He attended the College of the Albemarle for three years in various technical programs.

He works in medical transport as an employee of the Bertie Ambulance Service.

This is Stallings' first run for public office.

Asked about the things that motivated him to run, Stallings emphasized the opportunity to bring a fresh perspective to county politics.

"Most of my concerns are the same anybody else would have," Stallings said. "I'm not mad at anything. I think the board could use someone with a

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Spruill



Stallings

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