

Chowan County gets \$100,000 grant to combat gangs

SEE BELOW

Gerrisha Moore makes all-state basketball team

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Rascoe to be next county manager

By Earline White
Managing Editor

Attorney and special projects officer for Chowan County, Peter Rascoe was unanimously selected Monday night to serve as the next Chowan County Manager to succeed Cliff Copeland.

Rascoe will officially take the helm July 1.

Three applicants were considered.

Commission chairman Ralph V. Cole Sr. said, "Mr. Rascoe brings lots of background knowledge and skills that will enable the county to

continue the same type of services and leadership that Cliff Copeland provided throughout his tenure as county manager.

"The Board also felt that Peter would help in making the transition as smooth as possible for all employees as well as the county."

Rascoe received a BA in history from NCSU in 1978, graduated from the University of South Carolina Law School in 1982 and has been a member of the N.C. Bar since that time.

Rascoe first began working with the county in late 1999 and since then has been instrumental in



Rascoe

of the Edenton Cannon, Bandon restoration projects and the restructuring of the Albemarle Learning Center.

Rascoe's immediate plans for the county include meeting one to one

with the commissioners and with the county manager to discuss the transition and outline future needs of the county.

Managing growth and capital assets are among his top concerns.

"Cliff and the county have done an excellent job in the last five years managing growth by adopting a county-wide zoning ordinance.

"We anticipate growth will come. Now we must plan for it so that it will not infringe on the lifestyles residents have enjoyed for 300 years.

"We will also have to look at managing and maintaining the county's

buildings and infrastructure. We have to take a hard look at the aging structures ..."

Copeland said Tuesday he was pleased with the board's decision.

"Peter has been excellent and is very well qualified for the job."

Copeland added that Rascoe's biggest challenge as county manager, as it was for him, will be meeting all of the county's capital outlay needs — the county office building, EMS, schools, etc.

Rascoe lives with his wife, a D.F. Walker teacher, Dianne Daniels and their five children in the Yeopim township.

Local voters go Republican

Nearly 100 people shift party before May 6 primary

By Connie Sage
Contributing Writer

In a county where Democrats outnumber Republicans by more than two-to-one, local voters are bucking state-wide trends and changing their registration to Republican or unaffiliated.

In the run-up to the May 6 primary election, 71 Chowan County voters had shifted from the Democratic to Republican parties or from Democrats to unaffiliated through the end of March, according to state Board of Elections statistics.

Only 27 voters here officially changed registration from Republicans to Democrats or to unaffiliated for the same period.

Statewide, however, more voters are reregistering from Republican to Democrat or unaffiliated, apparently so they can vote for either Sens. Barack Obama or Hillary Rodham Clinton in the primary.

Nearly 20,000 have made the change statewide, compared to some 11,000 who have switched from the

Local switch:
71 — Democrat to Republican/unaffiliated
27 — Republican to Democrat/unaffiliated

Statewide:
11,450 — Democrat to Republican/unaffiliated
19,800 — Republican to Democrat/unaffiliated

Holmes redesign concepts to be revealed in June



Architect Steven Triggiano receives input from school administrators on Holmes immediate needs.

By Vernon Fueston
Contributing Writer

Architects plan to present several concepts for the re-modeling of John A. Holmes to a committee of educators and school board members in about two months.

A preliminary meeting Monday afternoon kicked off a series of discussions aimed at determining just what the new high school must and might have.

Members of the commission will go through a three-step program just to gather enough information for the architects to draft a proposal.

Steve Triggiano, an architect with the Moseley firm, moderated a discussion with the Program Area Committee about the county's needs.

The committee is comprised of school board members and members of the high school staff.

The committee hopes to modify the high school to accommodate an increase in the student body from 750 to 1,000.

In deciding what the new high school will look like, the board must what determine what the

The goal is to build a high school to accommodate 1,000

community wants and balance that against what the state department of public instruction requires.

"This first phase is called the "space program."

The architects and the board will try to decide how much space and what kinds of rooms and facilities will be needed to meet the needs of a larger student body.

Members of the committee had a shopping list of features they hope the remodeled school will have.

Art classrooms, a science computer lab, a video production lab, a larger kitchen and dining area were discussed.

One member described the gymnasium as seating "800 small people."

The architect recommended that the gym be sized to seat the entire student body for assemblies.

So session one of this first phase produced a series of numbers, the

"space program". Step two will bring in the engineers to examine ways the existing structure can be modified to meet the board's requirements.

Step three will have the architects presenting several alternatives that meet the requirements of the committee and the specifications provided by the engineers. It's then the all important cost estimates will be discussed.

Of course many of the items discussed from the board's wish list probably won't make the final cut.

It's all part of the creative process that brings something as complex as a high school from blueprints to reality.

A swimming pool probably won't be in the final plan. It will be interesting to see if a salad bar, vending machines and "grab-and-go" kiosks will be part of the new cafeteria.

This first meeting was the start of a process that will take about two months to complete.

Even then, the committee will have several plans to choose from and a final selection will still have to be made.

Initiative aimed at recruiting Special Ed. staff

By Rebecca Bunch
Staff Writer

There is an extreme shortage of exceptional children's teachers in the public school system.

Linda Hobbs, who directs the program in the Edenton-Chowan Schools, thinks a new initiative may be part of the answer.

"We have some home-grown people that I think would be great at something like this," Hobbs told the board of education Monday night during their monthly meeting.

"Somebody you know might have just what it takes to be a special education teacher, if you help plant that seed.

"It's not going to cost us anything; it's just an attempt to get involved in the community."

The program, which encompasses five school systems in the eastern part of North Carolina, including Edenton-Chowan, is being supervised by the state Department of Public Instruction in consultation with Georgia-based Watkins Group and the Personnel Center in Alexandria, Va.

Partnering in the effort are Elizabeth City State University as well as representatives of College of the Albemarle, the Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce and local churches.

Their goal is to develop ways of



Hobbs

identifying potential candidates who would make good teachers for exceptional children.

That information will then be turned over to the Personnel Center which will compile a list of possible candidates and provide it to participating school systems.

"It will be up to us to follow up," Hobbs said.

The need for such teachers is great, she said. "Last year, we had seven vacancies in the program out of the 20-plus teachers in our school system who teach exceptional children," she said.

Hobbs said she is already aware of two teachers in the program that the school system expects to lose next year.

"There is a real need for teachers," she said. "Somebody is all- See STAFF, Page A2 >

Millenium Marine hits snag in arrival

Wetlands found at anticipated location; project on hold until new permits okayed

By Connie Sage
Contributing Writer

Plans for a Canadian boat-building company that was to open in Edenton this month have been delayed or scuttled.

"Right now I'm very uncertain," said Millenium Marine President Cory Guimond, after wetlands recently found at the local industrial park put his and other projects there on hold.

Guimond signed a one-year lease for a temporary building in the first phase of the local industrial park. A second building was to be constructed in the second phase of the park as a permanent home for Millennium.

However, wetlands were found in February by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, one of the tenants of the second phase of the park. The Army Corps of Engineers was contacted and the project was put on hold until new permits can be issued.

Richard Bunch, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce, said he hopes Millennium will have the patience to work with the town and county.

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County gets grant to fight gangs

"We're trying to do anything we can to get services out there to prevent an onslaught of gangs here."
— Ben Rose, Chowan social services



By Connie Sage
Contributing Writer

The Chowan County Gang Prevention Task Force has received a two-year \$100,000 state grant that will be used to hire someone to work with high-risk local youth and to develop resources to prevent a rise in violence.

While there is gang-like activity in the town and county from "wannabe's," there are no organized links with known gangs, according to an assessment commissioned by the task force.

Members of the task force want to keep it that way.

"We want kids to go to school and feel like they're safe," said Social Services Director Ben Rose, who chairs the task force.

The goal is to employ someone who lives in the community — a social worker or even a retiree — to coordinate with local agencies to keep gang-like activity from escalating.

This person also would work one-on-one with high-risk teens and young adults through the courts and school system.

"We're concerned about borderline behaviors," Rose said. "We're trying to do anything See GANGS, Page A2 >

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