

HOT JOBS

COA helps students find recession-resistant jobs in today's market C1

Two local boat building facilities to shut doors until January, 95 employees to be laid off SEE BELOW

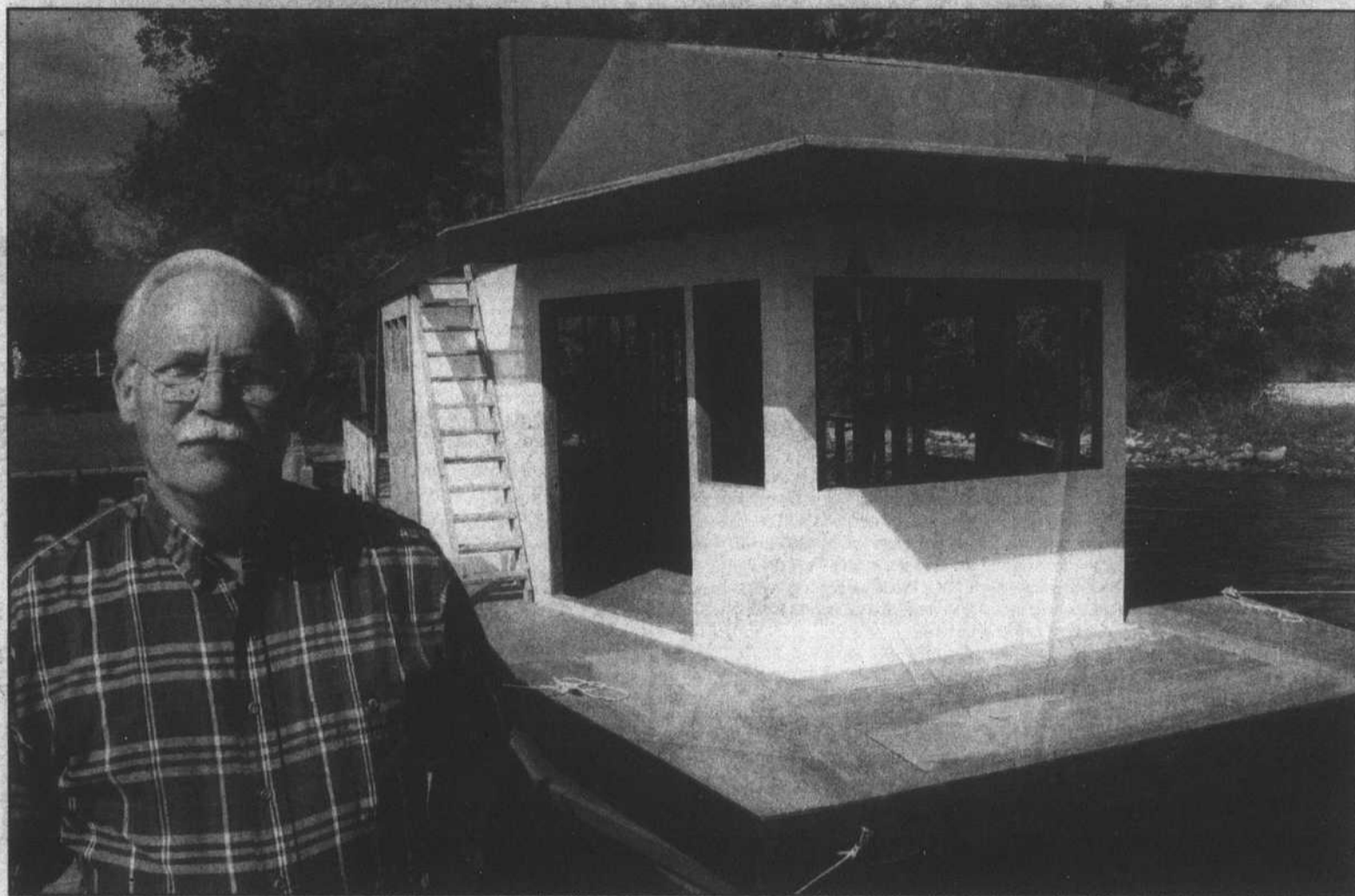
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Magnificent obsession



After three years of solitary effort, it's beginning to take shape. The pontoon platform Robert Reiheld built from scratch at a dock behind his home on Queen Anne Creek has grown a super structure and is beginning to look like a houseboat.

On Friday, Reiheld was painting the plywood that covers what he hopes will be the living quarters of his dream boat. He said he fell in love with the idea the first time he saw one.

"I was with my grandfather at the time, traveling through Canada," Reiheld said.

Robert Reiheld builds his dream houseboat from scratch in his back yard

held said. "He never got to build his, but I decided it was time to build mine."

When the craft is finished, it will have all the amenities of a home, complete with a kitchen and sleeping quarters.

Reiheld began building his houseboat three

years ago and said he hopes it will be able to take a short cruise under its own power next summer. But even then, the boat will still be several years from completion.

His wife, Amelia, can't wait. "I think it will be great fun," she said. "If I could just figure out what to do with the grand piano, it would be perfect. I'd love to go around the Eastern half of North America with it."

"If we make it to Charleston, it will be a success," Robert said.

— by Vernon Fueston

Two area boat plants furlough employees as economy slows

Albemarle Boats & Regulator Marine to stop production until January 5

By Vernon Fueston
Contributing Writer

Two local boat manufacturers will shut down temporarily as economic conditions slow nationally. Two other plants report stable and even increasing sales.

Albemarle Boats and Regulator Marine announced plans to close their plants and stop production over the next two months.

Carolina Classic Boats said it will continue production while watching developments. Calyber Boats reported an increase in its workforce over the last four months.

Albemarle Boats will cease production Oct. 27, laying off 35 employees until Jan. 5.

The company is hoping to reduce the number of boats held by its dealers, according to Dan Kubera, spokesperson for Brunswick Corporation, Albemarle's parent company. He said sales have been off double digits during this calendar year.

Regulator Marine is in the midst of a phased furlough that began in mid October.

The plant will close after the last boat in production is completed during the first week in November. Over 60 of the company's 78 employees will be laid off during furlough. Some workers will stay on during the closure, keeping customer service and sales functions going.

The company expects to re-open for business Jan. 5.

Rex Anderson, spokesman for Regulator said the closure is a product of several factors that have combined to hurt sales.

"There's an unprecedented downturn in the boating industry and a general malaise in the economy right now," Anderson said. "Added to that is a credit crunch. That impacts not only the consumer but also our dealers."

Anderson said he believes

the rescue plan just adopted by congress should provide some relief from tight credit.

"That should improve the economy," he said. "That's why we're optimistic about 2009."

Carolina Classic Boats is not planning to close its doors other than for a planned Christmas break, said Mack Privot, the company's president.

Privot said the company is operating with half the number of employees it had before the slowdown. He said the company has orders on the books right now, but is watching carefully for cancellations.

Calyber Boats is actually expanding its work force. Jim Murphy, spokesperson for the company, said they have hired one person each month for the last four months to keep up with demand.

Murphy credits Calyber's new line of "green" boats for the surge. He said the boats are produced using techniques that significantly reduce the release of greenhouse gases and also burn 50% less fuel than previous models.

DISTRICT THREE



Cole

Ralph Cole Sr.

DOB: Oct. 27, 1940; Age: 67
Political Offices Held: Chowan County Commissioners

Occupation: Former principal of D.F. Walker; Director of the student teaching program at ECSU

Party: Democrat



Willis

Earl W. Willis Jr.

DOB: Aug. 1, 1948; Age: 60

Political Offices Held: None

Occupation: Retired high school teacher, real estate broker.

Party: Republican

Race pits newcomer against chairman

By Vernon Fueston
Contributing Writer

Third district voters will decide between a former government teacher and political newcomer and an incumbent county commissioner who currently serves as chairman of the board.

The race has taken several new turns since Ralph Cole, Sr. and Earl W. Willis, Jr. filed their candidacies last spring.

The ballot of candidates this fall grew over previous elections with the introduction of a full slate of challengers by the Republican party.

Then voters were rocked by the news that the county's coffers, once considered cash-flush, are drained below legal limits.

No active campaign

In the months that followed that announcement, Cole did not actively campaign. When contacted for this article, he said he is not actively seeking re-election.

Cole said his name will appear on the ballot because the deadline for withdrawal from the race has passed. He said that if elected, he would serve on the commission.

Mr. Cole declined an interview for this article.

Offering a choice

Earl W. Willis said his best qualification for the job is his lack of experience on the commission. He spoke to the Herald before Cole's announcement.

"I'm not an incumbent," Willis said. "With all the events lately, that's really an advantage. I ran to give the voters a choice."

Willis also pointed to his high school teaching career. He taught history and government for over thirty years. Willis said he's learned a few things from teaching government that he hopes to apply to the county commission.

Plans if elected

"I want to make government more open and transparent," Willis said. "I'd change the meeting times to 7 p.m. and insure access by video on the public service cable channels."

He also suggested changing the meeting locations to outlying locations like the Northern Chowan Community Center on a rotating basis for citizen convenience.

Willis said the county needs to change some of its financial procedures. He suggested rotating the county auditor's contract every three years as one example.

Major issues

Willis said the new commission must restore a proper balance to the relationship between it- See ELECTION, Page A2 >

Senator Dole makes stop

By Rebecca Bunch
Staff Writer

Sen. Elizabeth Dole defended her 'no' vote on the controversial Wall Street bailout during a brief campaign appearance in Edenton in the final days before the election.

Dole said she and a small group of other Republicans in Congress "stood in front of the train" to try and prevent the measure from passing.

She said she objected to the way the plan was crafted, saying it did not do nearly enough to protect the interests of America's homeowners.

Chowan County Republican Chair Bob Steinburg introduced Dole.

He praised her for standing firm against the bailout bill.

"That," he said, "is someone we can trust."

Energy aid

Dole also spoke in favor of seeing a comprehensive energy policy developed that would include drilling for oil.

"I hope you all agree with that," she told the audience.

She said she thinks America needs to work harder to develop alternative sources of energy.

"The way I see it," Dole said, "everything is on the table, including the kitchen sink, because it (developing new sources) needs to be done now."

She also said she favors allowing See DOLE, Page A2 >



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