



Voters choosing county leadership

By **Vernon Fueston**
 Contributing Writer

Chowan voters will go to the polls Tuesday with more choices for county leadership than in any election in memory.

All five county commissioner races feature opposition candidates, possibly for the first time since the reconstruction period following the Civil War. Five Republicans and one unaffiliated candidate appear on the ballot.

Also appearing on the ballot will be two candidates for the school board, a soil and water supervisor and a register of deeds, all running for re-election and all unopposed.

Voters will have the chance to select at least one commissioner for their own district and also vote for another commissioner serving at large, representing the whole county.

THE AT LARGE RACE

Keith Nixon, a former paint store owner, faces John Mitchener, a retired pharmacist. Both men are currently real estate developers. Nixon rehabilitates residential properties and Mitchener has developed several downtown commercial locations.

Mitchener cited his previous service on the county's school board and his business experience as qualifications.

He said he would support better training for county commissioners and hoped to change the tone of discourse in the town. He also said he wanted to re-examine the town's bond obligations.

Nixon said his commercial experience would help him "run the county just like a business."

He stressed his desire to bring transparency to county government and said he would team up with district commissioners to hold community meetings and answer citizen's questions.

DISTRICT ONE, SEAT ONE

Although neither man is an incumbent, first district voters will be choosing between a political newcomer and a former commissioner for one of the district's two seats.

Dana Soles, a construction manager seeking his first political office, will face Emmett E. Winborne, a farmer and eight-year commission veteran who left office in 1998 shortly after the purchase by University Health Systems of the county's hospital.

Winborne said he hopes to restore trust in the county commission after the disappearance of \$20 million in reserve money received from the sale of the hospital. He said the county must live within its means and avoid new taxes.

Winborne also said he would work to bring new retail establishments to the county and develop its business community.

Soles said the county needs to change its accounting procedures to make sure audits are performed in a timely manner.

He also said the commission will need to restore its citizens' trust. He said he's heard of county employees afraid to bring information to the county's commissioners, something he said must change.

DISTRICT ONE, SEAT TWO

First district voters will select a second commissioner, choosing between Kenny W. Goodwin, an incumbent on the commission, and Alex Stallings, an emergency medical technician and political newcomer.

Goodwin said he was stunned to learn of the county's financial crisis and said he's learned not to trust the advice of others in conducting the county's business.

He said fixing the county's financial problems must be first on the agenda. Goodwin said the free flow of information he's been getting from the county's new manager, Peter Rascoe, is just what's been needed.

Stallings said the commission has been operating without letting its citizens watch the process. He said meeting times should be changed and locations selected to make things more convenient for the public.

He also stressed the need for the county to economize. Stallings said that big savings will only come by cutting many small but wasteful items.

DISTRICT TWO

Second district voters will choose between a child advocate and a retired federal law enforcement agent for the only district seat open on the ballot.

Edward Goodwin said his service as an agent for the Naval Criminal Investigative Service has prepared him for public service in the elected arena. He stressed his training as an investigator, asking the questions "who, what, where, when and why" in getting to the root of problems.

Goodwin said openness when it comes to commission business will be his first priority. He said votes by the commission with little or no discussion undermine trust from the community. Goodwin also said his status as a Republican on the board will ensure a new level of openness.

Gwendolyn B. Brown is running as unaffiliated candidate with the support of the county's Democratic Party. She said her experience as a child worker and advocate will be of use on the board. She cited the importance of recreation programs and other activities to combat juvenile delinquency.

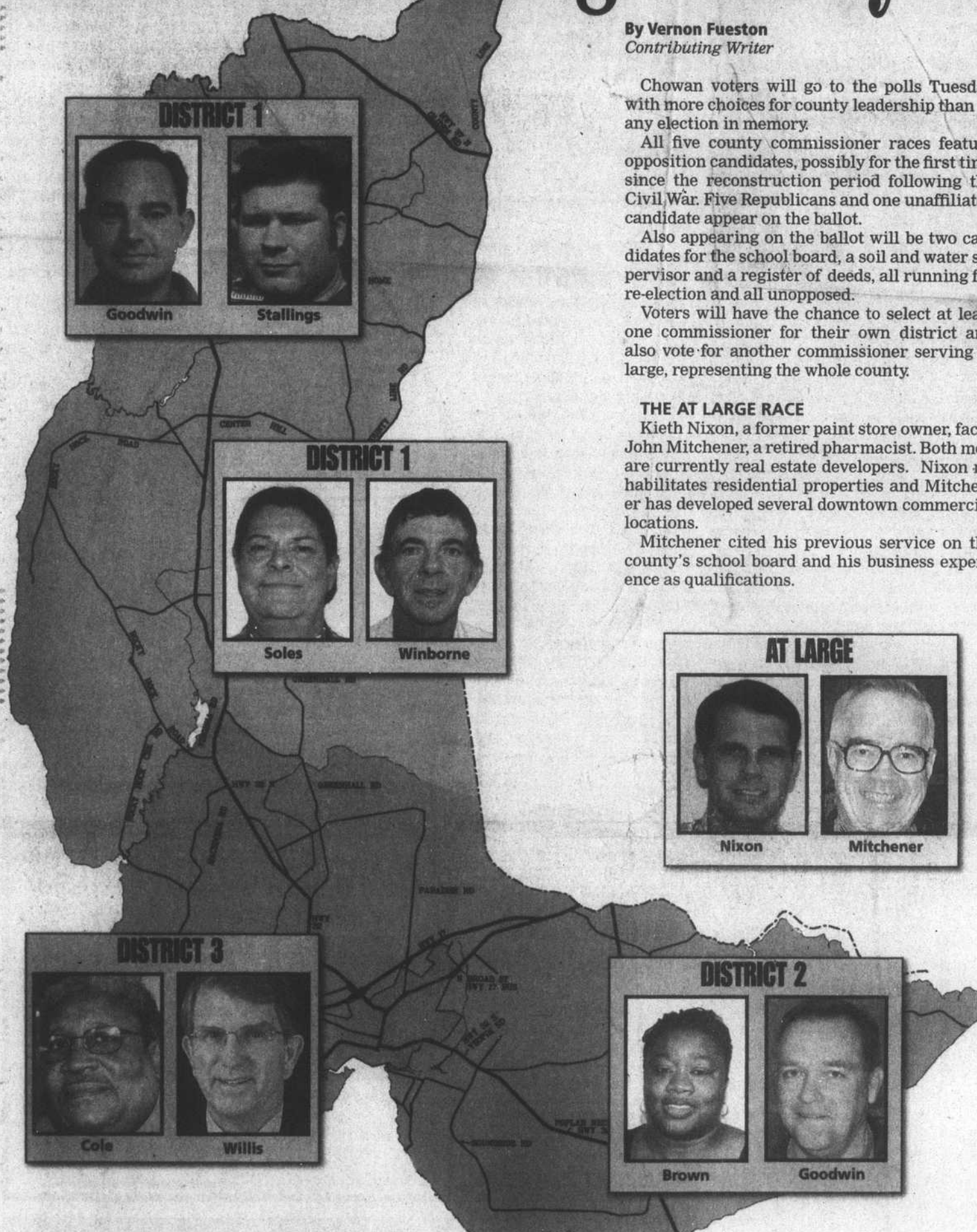
Brown also said she opposes any new taxes, but acknowledges that they may be inevitable. She also promised to work toward bringing new business and industry to the county.

DISTRICT THREE

The current chairman of the county commission is facing a retired school teacher and politician.

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Experts talk about how global financial mess affects Chowan

By **Vernon Fueston**
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Two business professors from N.C. State University and several local business leaders had a few things to say this week about the global economic crisis and how it may affect Chowan County.

What they said should be of interest to anyone who is a farmer, a business person, or who has a job.

Dr. Richard S. Warr and Dr. Mitzl Montoya, professors at NCSU, were asked to comment on the local aspects of the Wall Street crisis.

They said the meltdown on Wall Street has been big national news lately, but the local implications are just beginning to come into focus.

In other words, whenever it rains on Wall Street, water tends to pool on Main Street.

That means tighter credit for businesses, farms and homebuyers.

That could mean slower sales for retailers, fewer orders for manufacturers and layoffs for workers.

What about Broad Street?

Edenton and the surrounding county present some special economic conditions. The slowdown may affect the area in specific ways. Most of them involve credit, directly or indirectly.

Warr and Montoya said the economic engines that make

Chowan County work will be affected in different ways.

Financing the crop

Things may get dicey for some farmers this next spring when they go to borrow for chemicals, fuel and seed, Warr said.

He said whether or not those loans will be available will depend on the farmer.

"Small businesses and farmers that have long-established relationships with their banks may do better, but in many cases even relationships won't help because banks literally don't have money to lend," Warr said.

He said that, when faced with a money shortage, banks will be lending only to the best credit risks. Some farmers will do well, he said — others may not.

Glenda Jackson of Edenton's Southern Bank said she sees no major problems for most area farmers this spring. She said this has been a good year for farmers and most will have no problem qualifying for loans.

Jackson did say that farms with several years of marginal success may have difficulties getting loans as credit tightens.

Keith Warren of BB&T said his bank has had no problems with sub-prime mortgages and doesn't anticipate tightening credit to farmers.

Chowan's manufacturers

Edenton's manufacturer's tend to be small or medium sized operations with 25-250 employees.

While some are well capitalized, others, startups or compa-

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C.I.A. THE COLLEGIANS IN ACTION
 COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE, EDENTON-CHOWAN CAMPUS

YARD SALE & BAKE SALE - SATURDAY • NOV. 1ST
 Where: Edenton Shopping Center • 1316 N. Broad St. • Time: 6 am - 2 pm
 All proceeds will go to the Edenton - Chowan Food Pantry