

CHOWAN HERALD

482-4418

Wednesday, December 17, 2008

50¢

CANDLELIGHT RAISES \$30,000+ FOR HISTORICAL COMMISSION



Cupola House Association member Liz Will serves Candlelight tourgoers Wassail at the Edenton Historical Commission's annual fundraiser. One thousand three hundred tickets were sold during this year's tour.

Rascoe proposes funding change

Ideas including hiring a full-time economic development director for community

By Rebecca Bunch and Vernon Fueston
Staff Writers

The Edenton-Chowan Development Council receives \$50,000 annually for its economic development efforts. But that could soon change.

County Manager Peter Rascoe is proposing that the town and county consider other ways of using the funds.

However, Mayor Roland Vaughan says he doesn't see that happening.

Ideas proposed so far include hiring a full-time economic development director or turning those responsibilities over to the Chamber of Commerce.

But the best option, said Vaughan, who chairs the ECDC board, involves giving the ECDC full control over its operations, including its budget.

Vaughan said the ECDC board is currently drafting a proposal calling for that to happen.

That agreement would need the approval of the town and county governments, as well as the Chamber board, to go into effect.

Vaughan said he could not foresee any circumstances under which the town would agree to help the county fund a full-time economic development position, although he emphasized the decision would be the town council's to make.



Rascoe



Bunch

Cupola House receives \$115,000 grant

From staff reports

U.S. Senator Richard Burr announced last week that the Cupola House in Edenton has been awarded a \$115,000 Save America's Treasures grant.

The purpose of Save America's Treasures grants is to preserve sites of cultural and historic significance associated with ideas, events, and individuals that shaped our national history.

"I am very pleased to con-

gratulate the Cupola House for being awarded these funds," Burr said. "This is a highly competitive grant, and the Cupola House should be proud of the work they did to secure these funds.

"This money will help preserve a location that has historic and cultural importance, to North Carolina and the entire



Quinn

United States."

Cupola House Association president Bob Quinn spent nearly two years working on the grant for the much-needed funding for repairs. Funds secured through the Save America's Treasures grant will be used to help repair the roof, brick chimneys, fireboxes, and foundation.

Built in 1758 and overlooking the bay, the Cupola House is a National Historic Landmark.

It is known for its historic and

architectural importance, and is considered the finest example of Jacobean design in the South.

The grant received by the Cupola House represents one of 31 grants chosen from 340 applicants.

Since 1999, 454 competitive grants have been given out through the Save America's Treasures program to preserve historically important buildings, art, structures, artifacts, and historic places.

Citizens promised early access to budget process

By Vernon Fueston
Contributing Writer

Citizens will have unprecedented opportunities to comment on the county's budget process as the commissioners try to hammer out a balanced budget by July 1, County Manager Peter Rascoe said.

Rascoe said the budget process would start in January, months earlier than in previous years.

He said the county would hold several hearings late this winter and early in the spring where public input will be welcome.

The hearings could be contentious, considering the stakes involved.

With its reserve funds below state-mandated levels, new loan payments coming due for the first time and shrinking revenue from land transfer taxes, meeting the state's requirement of a balanced budget looks to be a daunting task.

Commissioners passed an unpopular nine-cent property tax increase in August.

Rascoe told the commission at the time that combined pressures on the next year's budget could require another 6.5-cent increase if cuts or other new revenues were not found.

Since then, things have only gotten worse. In November the commission had to reduce its estimate of the money it anticipates from land transfer taxes as receipts fell by 50 per-

cent.

While the town has reduced its estimate of sales tax revenue for the year, the county is still keeping an eye on the situation.

Citizens angrily rejected cuts in county services during a hearing held in August, but also rejected a quarter-percent sales tax increase aimed at filling county coffers by a wide margin.

Rascoe said he's putting the numbers together on costs and revenue, and will present them to the commission, where final decisions will be made with input from the public.

Commissioners meet the first Monday of each month at 6 p.m.

Herald publisher resigns, management reorganized

From staff reports

Bob Piazza, publisher of The Chowan Herald, will be leaving at the end of the month to accept a position with Evening Post Publishing Co. in Charleston, S.C.

Piazza joined The Chowan Herald two years ago after working for more than a decade as a reporter/editor for the Richmond-Times Dispatch.

"I've been very lucky," Piazza said. "I've worked with extreme-

ly talented co-workers.

"And I've made many, many friends in Edenton and Chowan, many of whom give selflessly to this community.

"I'm leaving with a lot of fond memories. I'm going to miss it here."

"During his tenure, Bob worked diligently to improve the operations of editorial content of the Herald and elevate the editorial coverage," said Ann Hoffman, publisher of The Daily Advance.

"He initiated a successful destination magazine, Discover Edenton, worked closely with the Chamber on their directory and oversaw improvements in the Albemarle Magazine."

With Piazza's departure, The Herald's management structure will be reorganized.



Piazza

Hoffman will assume publisher's responsibilities.

Herald managing editor Earline White will oversee the editorial functions, working with Mike Goodman, editor of The Daily Advance in Elizabeth City.

Ashley Misseri will continue in her role as advertising manager, reporting to Gene Fowler, sales and marketing director of The Daily Advance.

In addition, Susan Harris, editor/publisher of The Perquimans Weekly, will assist with Herald operations on an interim basis.

"The staffs of the daily and non-daily newspapers have been

working collaboratively on an informal basis for some time," Hoffman said.

"We are taking this opportunity to make that process formal.

"Working as a group allows us to deploy our resources more effectively, tap a larger pool of talent to improve all of our products for our readers and customers, and gain operational efficiencies."

In other Herald news:

Office manager Sue Bunch was recently honored for 40 years of service at the local newspaper.

Production manager Debbie Collins received an award for her 26 years of service.

Staff writer Rebecca Bunch was honored for 31 years with The Chowan Herald.



©2006 The Chowan Herald
All Rights Reserved

WE CARRY BOOKS, STATIONARY AND GIFTS PERFECT FOR EVERYBODY ON YOUR SHOPPING LIST.
WATCH FOR NEW ITEMS DAILY OR CHOOSE TO PURCHASE A COMMEMORATIVE BRICK,
OR AN ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP...A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

IMAGES of America
EDENTON and CHOWAN COUNTY, NC

All photos in the Heritage House
display benefit the program of
the Edenton Historical Commission