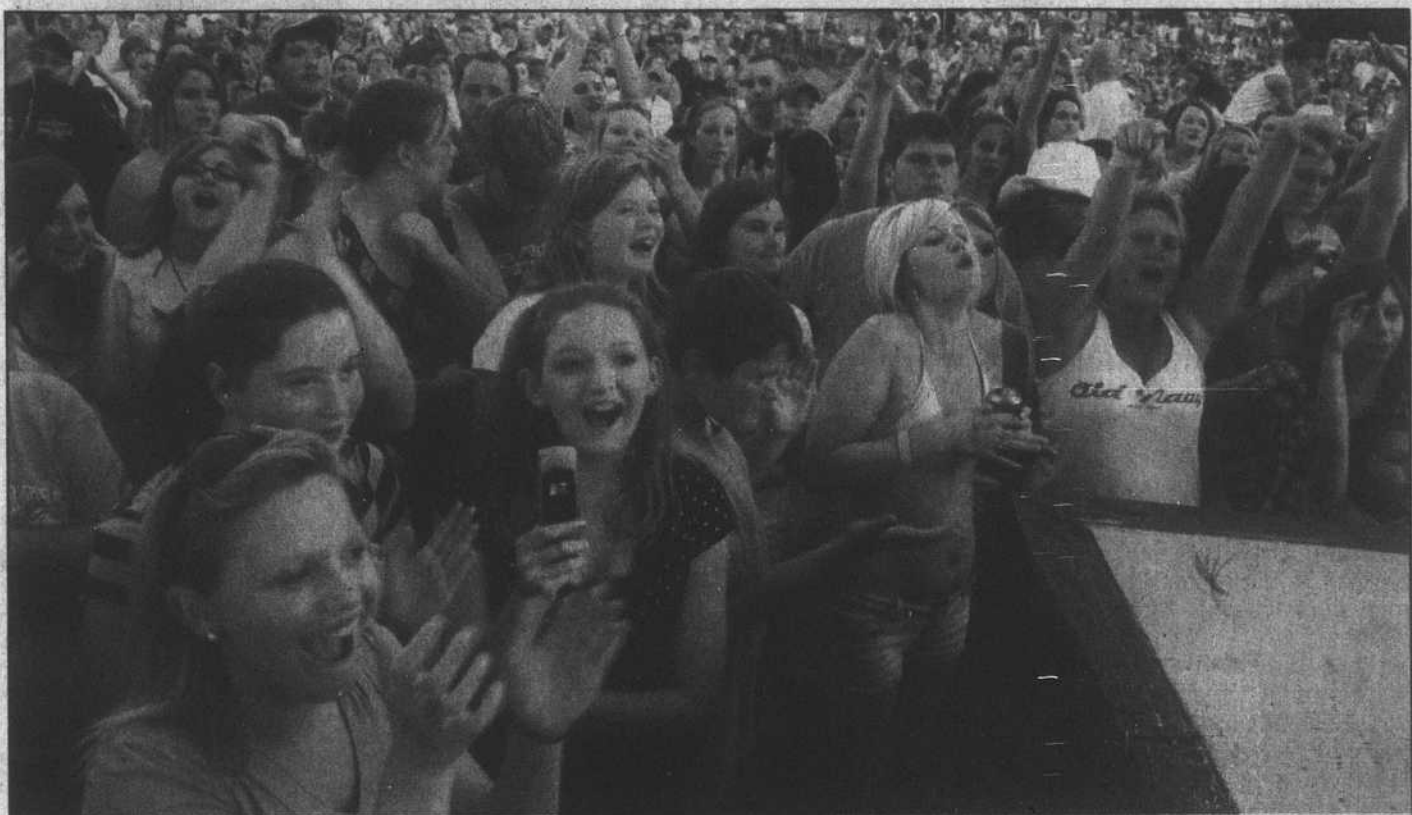
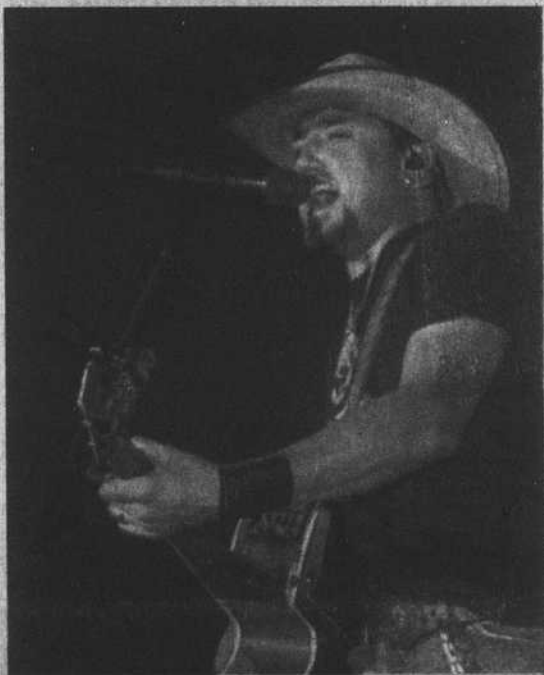


HOG FEST A SUCCESS



PHOTOS BY VERNON FUESTON

Clockwise from top, the crowd awaits the arrival of country music star Jason Aldean; Aldean performs to more than 4,000 anxious fans; Ed "Calhoon" Jordan at the grill during the Hog Fest cook-off; and Hannah Tyra Wood with her 1999, custom built Night Train Hog aka Harley Davidson at Hog Fest's motorcycle show.



By Vernon Fueston
Staff Writer

As the American Legion's Post 40 wrapped up Edenton's third annual Hog Fest Saturday, it was clear the event had been a hit.

The event collected 1,565 pounds of food for Edenton's Food Pantry along with over \$500 in cash donations from the public and \$348 raised from its Motorcycle Ride-in Show.

Winning the overall barbecue championship along with the title for pork barbecue was Checkered Pig, a team from Martinsville, Va., Tommy Houston, chief cook.

A local team, Tarheel Smokers II from Hertford with Louis DeVine as chief cook, took the honors in chicken. Chix, Swine and Bovine BBQ of Jessup, Md., Mike Richter, chief cook, took title for both pork ribs and brisket while Yeopim Callers of Edenton, Ed "Calhoon" Jordan chief cook, took the whole hog category.

Po' Boyz BBQ of Grifton, North Carolina, Matthew Sparrow, chief cook, took the honors for dessert and non-dessert.

Gerald Rahal, the events chairman, didn't have an attendance number, but he characterized the public's response as overwhelming. He said much of the credit goes to the cook teams, Holmes ROTC program, the Post 40 Legion family and community volunteers who made the program possible.

Cook-off winners at Hog Fest

- Spirit Award — Po Boyz BBQ
- Peoples Choice — Old Dominion Smokehouse
- Anything Butts — both non & dessert — Po Boyz BBQ
- Whole Hog — Yeopim Callers
- Chicken — Tarheel Smokers II
- Pork — Checkered Pig
- Ribs & Brisket — Chix, Swine & Bovine BBQ
- Reserve Grand — Chix, Swine & Bovine BBQ
- Grand Champion — Checkered Pig

Concert a big hoe-down

Between 4,000 and 5,000 fans turned up at the Chowan County Fair Grounds to hear up and coming country star Jason Aldean at a concert following Edenton Hog Fest, Saturday.

"It was by far the best show we've done in Edenton," said Jason Vick of Radio Media Productions, the promoter who brought the show to town.

Aldean, a native of Macon, Ga. and a phenomenon on the national country music scene for three years now, has produced three albums.

Also appearing was Mikele Buck.

Among the songs performed at the concert were the title song for his current album, "Wide Open," "Keep the Girl" and "My Big Green Tractor."

— by Vernon Fueston

"Art of a Woman" opens Friday at arts council

By Rebecca Bunch
Staff Writer

As a young child, Rebecca Lowe recalls, she began learning how to paint from her mother, Rebecca Askew.

In the process, her mother opened up a whole new world for her.

Now, Lowe, of Edenton, and Askew, of Ahoskie, are going to be showing their work together for the very first time.

The pair is among the gifted local artists who will be participating in the new Chowan Arts Council exhibit, "Art of a Woman."

The opening reception for the show will be held at 5:30 p.m. this Friday evening at the CAC Gallery in Edenton.

with her mother in Askew's art studio getting ready for the show.

"We'll paint a little and draw a little in mother's studio which is just off of her kitchen, and every once in a while one of us will go into the kitchen and stir a pot of whatever's on the stove," Lowe said, laughing. "We've had a good time together."

Lowe, perhaps best known for her outstanding nature photography, said her paintings also reflect her love of the outdoors. Oil is her preferred medium and she takes

photos of what she's planning to paint.

"One of my favorite paintings that I've done lately is a magnolia looking like it was caught in the wind, that has shades of pink and purple in it," she said.

Askew, who will soon turn 88, prefers watercolor and her art reflects that love.

She has had her own one-woman show on the UNC campus in Chapel Hill, and is a past member of the North Carolina Watercolor Society.

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Commissioners consider hike in water rates

By Vernon Fueston
Staff Writer

Chowan's commissioners will consider a water rate increase that would boost monthly bills for a typical homeowner by 56 percent and increase the fee for new residential water hookups by 40 percent.

The proposal was included in the county's proposed 2009/2010 budget.

According to memos included with the proposal, the rate hikes were recommended to more accurately reflect the cost of adding water capacity for new hookups and to encourage water conservation.

Monthly rate hike

If accepted, the hike in monthly water fees would increase the bill for a typical residential customer using 4,000 gallons of water per month from \$18 to \$28. That would be a 56 percent increase.

The fee is calculated in two steps. Customers who currently pay \$9 for their first 1,000 gallons of water would now pay \$10.

The second and subsequent 1,000 gallons would cost \$6. Customers currently pay \$4.50 for each additional 1,000 gallons, a 33 percent increase.

Offsetting the increase will be a change in metering, measuring customers' usage in 100-gallon units instead of 1,000 gallons. Customers currently pay \$4.50 for any fraction of 1,000 gallons they use above the first thousand.

Those changes, the proposal said, are to encourage conservation. The proposal notes that 25 percent of the system's customers use less than 2,000 gallons per month.

Increase connection fees

A memo from the county's consulting engineers, Diehl and Phillips, P.A. of Cary, said the county should raise the

"development fee" it charges a typical new residential customer for a new water connection from \$2,500 to \$3,500.

That fee is intended to cover the cost of expanding the county's water system as new customers come on line. The department charges a \$1,000 connection fee in addition to the development fee.

Engineers said the increase was based on the replacement cost of the county's \$10 million water plant and its 300 miles of pipelines worth \$40 million.

The engineers cited the county's present 10 inch main running along highway 32 as an example of the county's need to plan for, expanding its facilities to meet increasing demand.

They said the line currently runs at near capacity but suggested that building a new treatment plant in the southern end of the system could delay replacing or paralleling that line.

Why and how

Peter Rascoe, Chowan's county manager, said the water system currently operates with a negative fund balance, leaving it insufficient reserves. He said that the system has operated at a small loss in the past but expects revenues to meet or exceed expenses this year.

Rascoe said that increasing the water department's reserves will not make money available to the county's general fund and that the increases are not related to the county's efforts to balance its budget.

The increase in monthly rates is expected to expand the department's revenues from \$1.25 million to as much as \$1.7 million.

Also included in the proposal are provisions for increasing the reconnection fee for delinquent account from \$25 to \$40.

County officials mull 'middle' budget proposals

By Vernon Fueston
Staff Writer

As the commissioners reviewed five different budget proposals presented to them by their county manager, Peter Rascoe, it seemed there was little appetite for adopting either of the two options at the extremes.

One of those two proposals, Option A, seeks to keep the county's tax rate at its current 0.65 per \$100 levels. But the cuts that plan would require weren't drawing fans on the commission board.

Among the reductions option A would require are the closing of the county's recreation department, the elimination of 36 full and part-time jobs, and the closure of both campuses of COA.

But an increase of 41 percent in property taxes to

0.915 per \$100 under Option A wasn't winning any supporters either.

That leaves the commissioners looking closely at the middle three options for a balanced budget.

They paid particular attention paid to the service levels spelled out under the county's second most stringent budget proposal, Option B.

Here, beginning with the option that proposed the least painful reductions, is what the three middle-of-the-road options both cost and cut:

Option D — light cuts

In exchange for cutting \$776,000 from the budget by rolling back school money to this year's spending levels and cutting county mainte-

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A little 'me' time

Over the past few months, Lowe said, she has spent time

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