



County lacks funds for COA consolidation

By Rebecca Bunch
Staff Writer

Officials with the College of the Albemarle learned that Chowan County lacks the funds to pay for a campus consolidation.

Tuesday morning's joint meeting between college leaders and county commissioners

revealed that the College of Albemarle needs as much as \$5.6 million to unite Edenton's two satellite campuses. At the very least, college officials say the consolidation will cost \$80,000. School leaders argued that option would come at the sacrifice of campus services.

"We think we could do it (using the least expensive op-

tion), said Jim Turdici COA vice president, "but it would not be the choice of the college" because it would have the greatest impact on programs and services.

Plans include moving the satellite campus from the Edenton Village Shopping Center to the former D.F. Walker campus where most classes

3 scenarios for the relocation of COA's Edenton offices

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are currently held. The lease at the shopping center expires in 2011.

The move would place all of the college's functions under

one roof.

"Our goal is to do this as cheaply as possible with somebody else's money, because we don't have the money," said Eddy Goodwin, commission chair.

Another option would cost \$620,000, however, that would



Hurdle-Winslow

Goodwin

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Herald taps new editor

By Rebecca Bunch
Staff Writer

Charlotte native Ritchie Starnes has been named news editor for the Chowan Herald.

Starnes said he has a strong commitment for community journalism, and prefers, he said, "to be a reporting editor."

Starnes is a 1985 graduate of UNC-Charlotte whose first professional career was as a private investigator. But after operating his own agency for several years, Starnes found himself developing an interest in writing.

"While I believe I had a talent for investigations, I also enjoyed writing," he said. "Investigative reporting seemed to be a logical transition."

That interest drove Starnes back to UNC-Charlotte where he earned a degree in communications in 2001. Starnes landed his first job as a reporter at the Enquirer-Journal, a daily newspaper in Monroe. He found that he enjoyed living and working in Monroe, and when an opportunity arose for him to launch a weekly newspaper there, he was quick to act on it.

In looking back on the venture, he said he was most proud of the quality of news that appeared in that paper, The County Edge. The newspaper had a strong community feel with a significant amount of hard news, Starnes said.

But after nearly four years of some of the most rewarding work of his life, Starnes reluctantly closed the paper due to the downturn in the economy.

That decision led him to seek out new jobs, a search that brought him to North-eastern North Carolina. "The opportunity with the Chowan Herald seemed like a perfect match with what I was looking for."

Starnes said that readers of the Herald should expect greater depth in the paper's editorial content under his leadership.

"I also understand the value of writing about slices of life," Starnes said. "Some of the best stories go untold and

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Edenton-Chowan ESCAPES storm's wrath

From staff reports

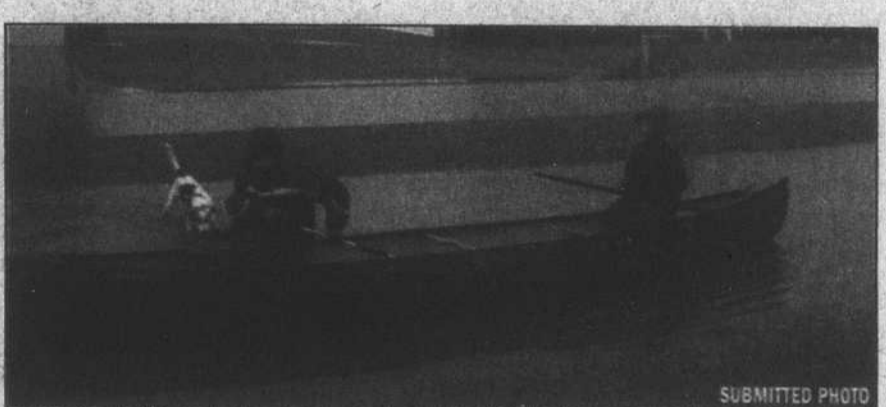
While Tropical Storm Ida's spawned nor'easter pounded the coastal border of North Carolina and Virginia, Chowan County escaped any serious damage.

The storm dumped seven inches of rain in the area, leading to localized flooding, primarily in the northern part of the county. Swollen creeks spilled over onto Mexico and Wildcat roads. Flooding led to the closure of the Edenton-Chowan County schools on Thursday and a two-hour delay on Friday. Students were required to attend class on Saturday as a makeup day for the cancellation.

High winds led to a few down limbs, including that of a large oak that fell across the cement wall of the Granville Queen, a local bed and breakfast. The limb narrowly missed the estate-like structure.

Chowan County Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin said another limb fell on a home in the Arrowhead Beach community, resulting in only minor

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SUBMITTED PHOTO



RITCHIE E. STARNES/CHOWAN HERALD

A large oak tree splintered and narrowly missed Edenton's Granville Queen, a bed and breakfast. Top: L-R, Brothers Drew and Brady Armstrong canoe outside their home off N.C. 32 where heavy rains caused localized flooding. Chowan County schools were closed Thursday due to the storm.

Rough economic seas anchor boat builders

By Ritchie E. STARNES
News Editor

Once considered Chowan County's most thriving industry because of its number of employed craftsmen and for its overall financial impact, the saltwater boat manufacturers have run aground in this downtrodden economy.

Those industries that cater to the financially elite find themselves among the most dormant of businesses during this economic downturn. The abrupt halt is in stark contrast to the climate area boat builders experienced as recently as four years ago when disposable money seemed endless among their clientele.

"I'm not expecting to get back to the levels of '05," said Birch Perry, general manager of Albemarle Boats.

Over the last 18 months, the number of employees at Albemarle Boats plummeted from 190 to 25. Boating competitor Regulator Marine went from 150 to 37, but only after a complete work stoppage for more



RITCHIE E. STARNES/CHOWAN HERALD

Craftsmen at Carolina Classic work to refurbish an offshore fishing boat. Refurbishing has helped provide work during the boating industry's economic downturn.

than two months. Carolina Classic shaved its staff from 80 to 10.

Regulator's co-owner Joan Maxwell, said her business has gone from building as many as eight boats a week to only one. Mac Privott, Carolina Classic president, said whereas he was building 80 to

100 boats annually, he counts the current production somewhere below 20.

"We build very expensive toys," Privott said. "None of us build inexpensive boats. Our customer profile tends to be small business owners or

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RITCHIE E. STARNES/CHOWAN HERALD

A tow truck pulls a submerged Ford Aerostar van from the Pembroke Creek near the Bolton Bridge in Chowan County, Monday.

Missing van found in Chowan creek

EDENTON — Divers found a stolen passenger van submerged in more than 20 feet of water in a Chowan County creek Monday afternoon.

Divers with the Perquimans County Dive and Rescue Team found the vehicle, a Ford Aerostar van, in the Pembroke Creek near the Bolton Bridge on Mexico Road, police Chief Jay Fortenbery said.

The van's owner reported the van missing on Nov. 5, Fortenbery said.

Fortenbery said investigators received information about the vehicle's possible whereabouts several days ago.

Police initially attempted to locate the van by using a johnboat and a long pole, but the water was too deep. Fortenbery called in the dive team once after he decided to expand the search.

Once divers located the

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