

## County, town seek economic partnership

Chamber's role uncertain

By Ritchie E. Starnes  
Editor

Leaders of Chowan County and the town of Edenton moved closer to an economic development partnership with the help of a consultant.

In a joint meeting Feb. 8, county and town officials met and col-



Biggs



Bunch



Goodwin

lectively interviewed Ted W. Abernathy, executive director of the Research Triangle-based South-

ern Growth Policies Board. Courtesy of a grant by Electricities, Abernathy was retained to evaluate the area's existing economic conditions and resources so the town and county could forge a new collaborative effort aimed at economic development.

A three-way arrangement between the town, county and Chamber of Commerce-Edenton Chowan Economic Development Commission (ECDC) - splintered in August 2009 when Chowan County terminated its involvement. County officials pulled the plug and stopped its \$46,000 annual investment after learning the county had already paid \$292,915 toward an Edenton - Chowan Economic Development Fund that included a Raleigh lobbyist. The town of Edenton contin-

ues to fund ECDC with its share of \$36,000 per year.

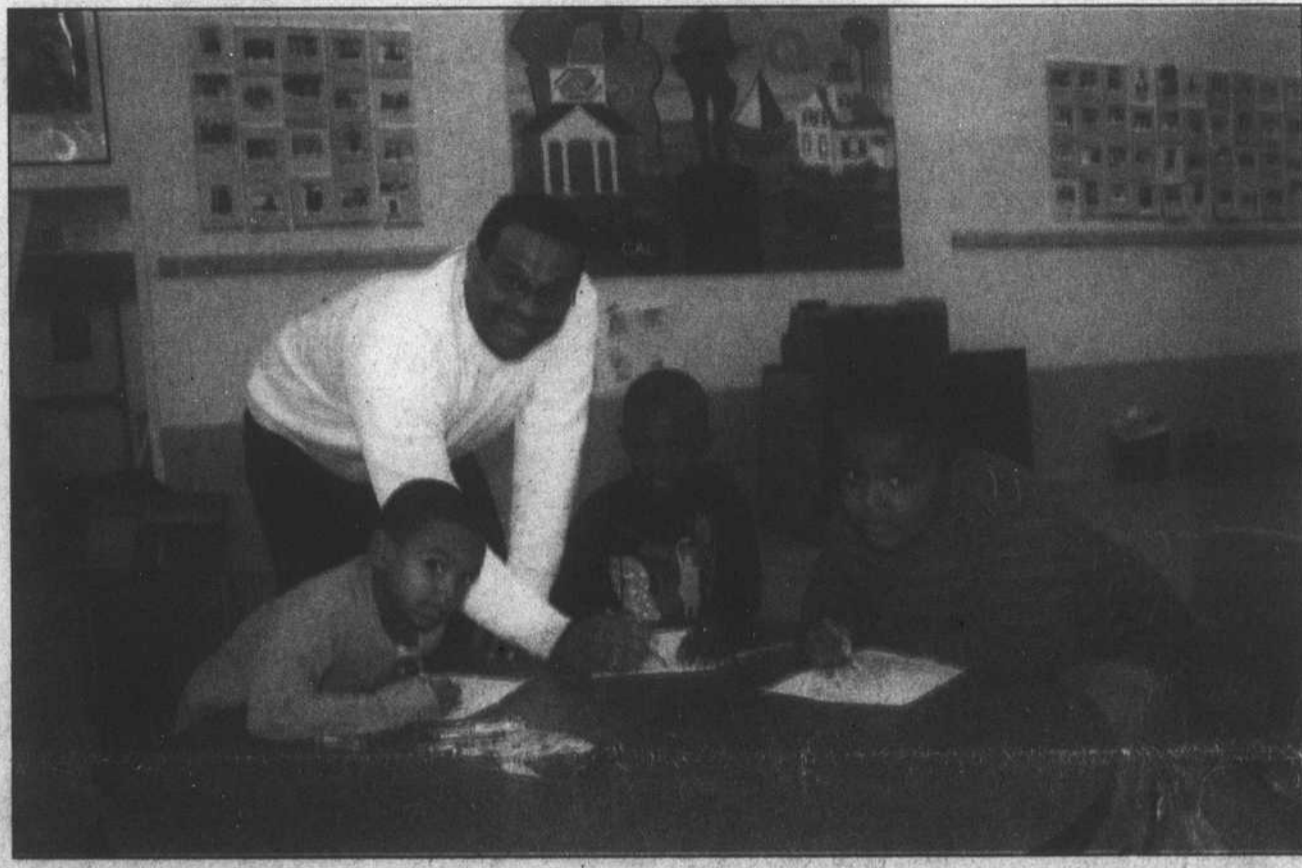
County and town participants called the meeting a positive step, worthy of additional meetings.

"I've been so impressed with the consultant," said Ann Marie Knighton, town manager. "I'm excited to have a fresh set of eyes looking at our assets and potential."

"It was an opportunity that we couldn't resist, not just Chowan

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## Children compass a life's work



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Local Boys and Girls Club Chief Professional Officer Jerome Levisy enjoys interacting with the kids who go there after school. They get help with their homework, learn character and leadership skills -- and there's even time for coloring!

(In honor of Black History Month, the Chowan Herald will feature an African American in each edition during the month of February. Those featured include locals that have made significant contributions to their community.)

By Rebecca Bunch  
Staff Writer

Jerome Levisy's ties to the Boys and Girls Club organization go back

to his childhood in the tiny community of Rocky Mount, Va.

Today, he is the director of a thriving Boys and Girls Club located in Chowan County.

The program here started five years ago with an average of 75 children attending each day and a membership of 169. Currently, an average of 90 children come to the club each day after school. Membership stands at 264 this year.

"As you can see, we've definitely

grown," Levisy said.

As he speaks, his enthusiasm for working with children is obvious.

"Working with kids and watching them grow into productive, mature young people is my greatest reward," Levisy said.

Levisy knows a little something about being productive.

The eighth of nine children born to parents who both had an eighth

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## GOP official takes on Spear

From staff reports

Local columnist and Edenton resident Bob Steinburg is apparently ready to trade in the opinion pages of local newspapers for the halls of the state Legislature.

Steinburg, a columnist whose weekly take on politics, "A Conservative's Viewpoint," has appeared in both The Daily Advance and the Chowan Herald as well as other publications, announced Monday that he intends to challenge state Rep. Tim Spear, D-Washington, in the 2nd House District.

"After much prayer and consternation and after months of unsuccessful attempts at recruiting a candidate to oppose Tim Spear, including right up through 4 p.m. (Monday), I have decided at this time I must announce my intentions to file to run for the people's seat in North Carolina House District 2 before the filing deadline of noon on Friday, Feb. 26," Steinburg, a registered Republican, said in an e-mail to The Daily Advance.

Steinburg, chairman of the Chowan County Republican Party, said becoming an elected official was "never my true desire" when he started writing his column more than two years ago. His goal then, he said, was to write about local, state and national politics in such a way as to show local readers "how these events all tie together to shape our lives."

"(But) circumstances have now deemed that the time has come for me to embark upon a different path," he said. "Our government in Washington and Raleigh as well as in many of our counties, cities, towns and villages has run off the tracks."

Steinburg said he "would love to continue writing about all that's wrong at all levels of government while offering possible solutions to get us out of this mess, but that may not be enough."

Steinburg said he had decided to take on Spear,

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Steinburg

## DDE hires former chief as new interim director

Knighton: Public supports DDE

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

A former director of Destination Downtown Edenton (DDE) will serve as interim director while a committee searches for a permanent replacement.

Jennifer Harriss was hired Monday as a part time director for the next 90 days. Harriss served as DDE director from 2004-2008 after serving as Lumberton's Main Street director for two years. She currently owns and operates Urban Village, an Edenton business.

"Jennifer's familiarity

with our program and our merchants will enable her to keep DDE moving forward," said Chairman Jean Brown, DDE Board of Directors, who is spearheading the search for a replacement.

Harris' temporary post and the director search follow the Jan. 28 firing and subsequent Jan. 31 arrest of former DDE director Jennifer Moore. Moore was charged after she allegedly embezzled \$15,000 from DDE's annual budget of \$65,000.

Harriss is a certified Main Street Director, only one of five in the state.



Harriss



Knighton

She earned her Bachelor's degree from the College of Charleston in Historic Preservation and Community Planning and a Masters degree from Goucher College in Historic Preservation. Her Masters work included a thesis titled North Carolina main Street Communities and their experience with new construction.

"I love Destination Downtown and will do my best to ensure the success of this valuable program during this transition," Harriss said.

Harriss added that she recognizes the importance of DDE to downtown's overall success.

She will be paid \$2,000 per month for the next three months.

Brown touted Harriss' background as an ideal foundation for an interim to continue with projects already underway.

Her primary responsibilities will be to advance

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## Here We Snow Again!



PHOTO BY RITCHIE STARNES

Sam Christopher and her son, Patrick, frolic in Saturday's snow off Colonial Avenue in the courtyard that overlooks Edenton Bay.

## United Way in need of support

From staff reports

As if we needed another example, here's a telling sign that the economy is still struggling: The Albemarle United Way launched its annual campaign last September with a goal of \$400,000. Nearly six months later, total contributions are a few dollars over \$222,000. Albemarle United Way relies almost entirely on



employee campaigns at our region's businesses. Executive Director Susan Hoskins says the largest of these have been running several thousand dollars down from prior year. In one case, the company set the goal \$12,000 below 2009.

Furthermore, not every business conducts a campaign, and workplace giving does not include anyone not in the workforce, such as our retired residents.

With The Daily Advance's help, Albemarle United Way hopes to bridge these gaps. It's time we all Live United.

In today's paper, you

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