

Gunshot misses pregnant woman

Teen sister shot in road rage incident

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

An expecting mother en route to the hospital narrowly escaped injury Sunday evening when a bullet pierced the family's car, striking her 17-year-old sister, police say.

"The bullet went through the car's left rear passenger door and lodged in the girl's jeans," said Edenton Police Chief Jay Fortenberry.

According to the victim's father, who asked that his family not be identified for fear of retaliation, the bullet ricocheted off the zipper of his daughter's hooded jacket before striking her hip.

"When I heard the loud noise, I thought a rock had hit the car," the father



Fortenberry

See **SHOOTING**, 3A

Ghost busters probe old jail

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

A team of ghost busters descended into town Friday afternoon in search of paranormal activity inside the historic jail and its keeper's former quarters.

The group, Carolina Association of Paranormal Activity (CAPA), armed with various gadgets spent the night in both structures Friday in an effort to monitor any electromagnetic frequencies that might suggest ghostly spirits.

The team of four young men and two women from Rocky Mount chose the locations because of their steeped history, the jail dates back to 1825 and the jail keeper's house to 1905, and because the two sites were likely consumed with suffering and violence.



STAFF PHOTO BY RITCHIE STARNES

Members of the Carolina Association of Paranormal Activity enter the former residence of Edenton-Chowan's jail keeper, Friday. CAPA spent the night in the dwelling, and the historic jail in pursuit of ghostly spirits.

See **GHOST**, 3A

Tree falls on Pembroke



PHOTO COURTESY BILL MILLER

A tree fell Sunday on Pembroke Hall, an 1850-built structure located at 121 W. King St. in Edenton's Historic District. The home has seen rough days in the last few months, having suffered neglect from a previous owner and falling victim to foreclosure in November.

New business, costs doom in-house child support enforcement

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

Economic development and concerns of escalating costs prompted the majority of Chowan County commissioners to privatize its child support enforcement services, despite the director's guarantees that he could do better.

Pleas from Cliff Hardison, director of the Department of Social Services, fell on deaf ears within the majority of the Board of Commissioners. Although Hardison guaranteed that he could reduce costs and improve collections within child support enforcement over the next year, the board voted 4-3 on March 1 in favor



Goodwin



Hardison

of privatization. "They were telling us what they think they can do and not what they were doing," said Commissioner Kenny Goodwin, referring to Hardison's promises of improvement.

Before commissioners voted, Hardison told the board

See **CHILD**, 3A

Candidate delinquent on property taxes

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

A candidate for the Chowan County Board of Commissioners is delinquent on his property taxes by \$5,108.75, according to tax records.

Ellis Lawrence, a recently filed Democrat candidate for District 3, acknowledged his property tax delinquency on some 20 parcels Monday. He reconciled his due taxes later in the day.

"I don't see this as a problem," Lawrence said. "Compare the taxes that I pay with what the average person pays,

I bet I pay as much as anybody in Edenton."

Lawrence said that he had reached an agreement with the tax department to pay \$1,400 per month to catch up. But, he said after the revelation that he plans to pay off the delinquent balance by Friday.

One of the issues Lawrence cited as a reason for seeking county office was the county's wayward spending and budget issues.

He did not, however, blame the economy on his tax delinquency. Instead, Lawrence

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State among 16 finalists for share of \$4.35 billion grant

By **REBECCA BUNCH**
Staff Writer

Superintendent Allan Smith said Friday that the Edenton-Chowan school system was "very pleased" to learn that North Carolina is among the 16 final-

ists for a Race to the Top grant.

The grant is now in its first phase of funding. Phase 1 recipients will be announced in April.

States not funded during the first phase are eligible to seek funding

in June during phase 2 when additional monies will become available. Finalists for phase 2 will be announced in August and the selected states in Sep-



Smith

tember.

"Evidently the state's proposal was effective to be selected from 41 states and the District of Columbia that were vying for these funds," Smith said.

Smith noted that the local chapter of the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) and the Edenton-Chowan Board of Education formally endorsed the state's

efforts in submitting a proposal.

"North Carolina could receive \$400-million over a four-year period in Race to the Top dollars," Smith added. "If funded at this level, Edenton-Chowan Schools would be eligible to receive approximately \$100,000 per year for each of the four years."

Forty states and the District of Columbia submitted applications for the \$4.35 billion grant program, which is being fund-

ed by federal economic stimulus dollars.

North Carolina has applied for \$470 million for education and identified four areas on which to focus education reform. Those include adopting nationally benchmarked standards and assessments, developing data systems designed to measure levels of success and improve the quality of instruction, supporting the work of effective teachers and other school leaders,

and making low-performing schools successful.

The other states still in the running for Race to the Top funding during phase I are Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee and the District of Columbia.

According to a press release issued March 4 by

See **RACE**, 3A



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