

# CHOWAN HERALD

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## SPORTS

Former Camden star named new Aces' football coach **2A**

## ALSO INSIDE

**Progress 2010** A look at the Albemarle's Progress in the new millennium **50¢**

# Sheriff's budget irks chairman

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

Not only did the Chowan County Board of Commissioners reject the sheriff's budget wish list, its chairman raised questions about the department's efficiency.

Thursday's budget retreat exposed a bitter exchange between Commission Chairman Eddy Goodwin and Sheriff

Dwayne Goodwin. With the sheriff seeking funding for two more deputies and four new patrol cars in a budget \$144,000 more than last year, Chairman Goodwin questioned why department expenses are ballooning in a county with a declining crime rate.

"The crime rate is going down in the county and we have more deputies than any other county our



D. Goodwin

size," Eddy Goodwin said.

Sheriff Goodwin said his 17 full-time deputies responded to 6,745 service



E. Goodwin

calls last year, compared to 4,198 calls for Bertie County's 25 officers. Chowan's call volume exceeds Per-

quimans' other counties in the area," Sheriff Goodwin said. Not all of the sheriff's calls relate to law enforcement, such as jump starting car batteries and accompanying Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls.

Eddy Goodwin took issue with the sheriff about an incident when a deputy

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See **BUDGET**, 4A

# Break-in suspect nabbed

By **REBECCA BUNCH**  
Staff Writer

An Edenton man has been arrested in connection to a Sunday spree of car break-ins.



Moore

Police charged Jamal Terrell Moore, 21, Monday on one count of breaking and entering a motor vehicle, reports show. Investigators suspect, however, that Moore is responsible for the 34 vehicle break-ins. Additional arrests are expected, police say.

Edenton Police Chief Jay Fortenbery said his department and the Chowan County Sheriff's Office are working jointly on the cases. Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin said 21 cars were targeted in the Cape Colony subdivision with only four losing valuables.

"Some were ransacked with nothing taken, and others lost property," Goodwin said.

Items were stolen in all 13 cars in town, Fortenbery said. Cash, jewelry, electronics, and credit cards were among the items stolen.

The area of town struck includes the Cotton Mill parking lot, Queen, King, and South Oakum streets. Fortenbery said the break-ins in town occurred between 2 a.m. and 7 a.m. Sunday morning.

The county spree occurred Sunday night.

Goodwin and Fortenbery offered preventive advice.

"Leaving items of value in a car where they are clearly visible to anyone walking up and shining a light inside is just tempting someone to take them," Goodwin said.

Fortenbery recommended that citizens park in well-lit areas and not enter their vehicles if it appears a break-in may have taken place. If they do, he said, they might destroy any physical evidence left by the suspect. Instead, they should call police

See **SUSPECT**, 4A

# County OKs half schools' budget

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

County leaders voted to allocate enough funding to cover only half of Edenton - Chowan schools' request to pay projected operating costs for the next school year.

In need of an additional \$441,296 over last year's operating budget, the Chowan County Board of Commissioners voted 4-3 to earmark only \$220,000 toward the expanding budget. Commissioners Jimmy Alligood, Ralph Coles, and Louis Belfield dissented.

"Let's go back and offer them half of the amount," said Commissioner Keith Nixon at Thursday's budget retreat.

Next year's school operating expenses call for projected costs of more than \$3.5 million, not including various capital projects for needed facility renovations.

Among the requests, Superintendent Allan Smith had called for enough funding to restore last year's 2 percent employee pay cut.

Smith also cut his salary by 5 percent and school board officials opted to forgo their monthly service stipend. In addition to the pay cuts, last year's budget crisis led to the elimination of 24 positions.

Smith said Monday that he had not heard about the county's recent funding vote from the retreat. He chose to defer comment until he had a chance to review the funding proposal.

"The impression that I got is that they're going to put it back either way," said Commissioner Kenny Goodwin, referring to the probability that the system will again dip into its reserves.

Edenton-Chowan schools took \$510,000 from its reserves last year to balance its budget.

Since February 2009, the schools have lost roughly \$3 million in state and local funding. Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided relief for the finan-

See **SCHOOLS**, 3A



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# Call for help

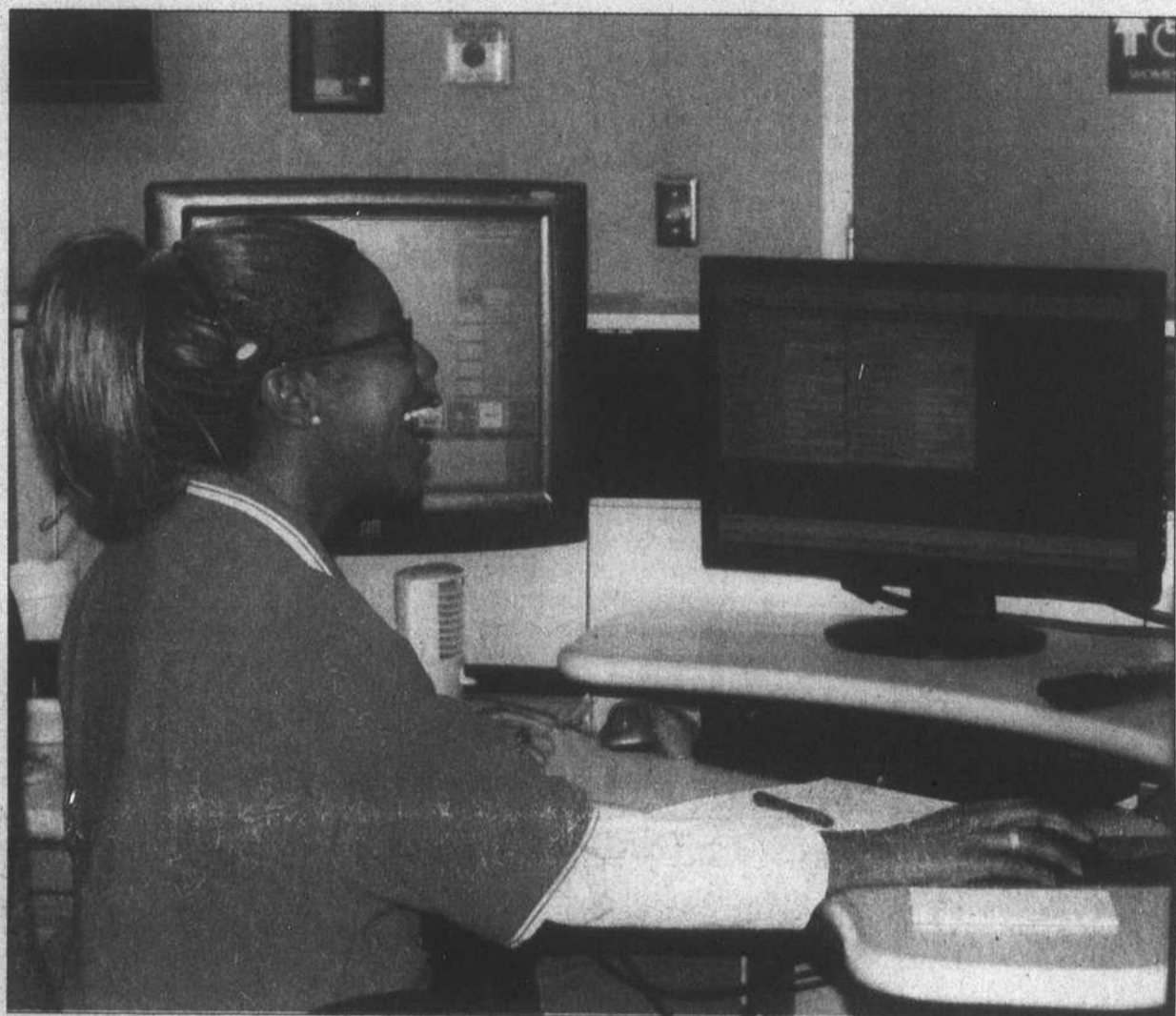


PHOTO BY RITCHIE E. STARNES

Anecia Wills handles 911 emergency calls at Chowan County's Central Communications office, Monday. County leaders want the town of Edenton to pay its share of the communications service. Edenton accounts for roughly 25 percent of the calls.

# County to town: Pay fair share of calls

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

Chowan County leaders want the town of Edenton to chip in toward the cost of central communications.

As the Board of Commissioners grapples to minimize expenses en-

route to drafting the 2010-11 fiscal year budget without a property tax increase, the board wants to charge the town for its use of communications, the support network of 911. In a 6-1 vote (with Commissioner Jimmy Alligood dissenting), the board adopted a resolution at Thursday's

budget retreat instructing County Manager Peter Rascoe to begin negotiations with town officials.

Instead of discussions, some preferred to simply send the town a bill for its 25 percent annual usage.

"What would be the ramifications if the

county sent them a bill?" Commissioner Ralph Cole asked Rascoe.

Commission Chairman Eddy Goodwin said the town should be approached first about the matter.

"Me as a businessman, I would be upset if you

See **CALLS**, 4A

# Chowan loses records access; Board OKs \$75K for new server

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

Chowan commissioners narrowly approved the emergency purchase of a new server for the county's computer system Thursday after a crash left the county and town without access to vital financial records.

County Manager Peter Rascoe said a 10-year-old Unix server crashed March 19th, sending the county and town's property tax collections and employee payroll data into darkness. Since then, the county's only information technology staffer has been working non-stop to retrieve the financial data, Rascoe said.

"We're basically running everything by hand since last Friday (May 19)," Rascoe said. "The main concern that



Rascoe



Knighton

we have right now is running payroll next week."

As of Monday, recovery efforts were still ongoing to reboot the Unix server so data can be downloaded to a new system.

"It's old and we've been advised a few times to replace it," Rascoe said. "Even if we get it going again, we've been told that it could die at anytime."

During Thursday's Board of County Commissioners' retreat, the board addressed the impromptu \$75,000 expense for a new server. Commissioners approved the purchase and amended its current budget with a 4-3 vote. The funding will come from a contingency fund, a move that not all commissioners agreed with.

See **SERVER**, 3A

# B&B owner pleads guilty to wire fraud

By **CATHY WILSON**  
The Perquimans Weekly

Stephen M. Gunther, a Hertford resident and owner of The Lords Proprietor's Inn in Edenton, plead guilty to one felony count of wire fraud March 25 in federal court in Norfolk, Va.

In a federal plea agreement, Gunther admitted taking part in the real estate closings of four homes in 2006 totaling nearly \$1 million using straw purchasers, and failing to identify third parties to the mortgage companies. Those mortgages eventually ended up in foreclosure with the lending institutions losing about \$210,000.

The plea agreement stipulates that Gunther cooperate with authorities in ongoing mortgage fraud investigations conducted by the FBI, and in return, the U.S. Attorney's Office agreed not to prosecute Gunther for other alleged federal crimes.

Gunther, 39, is scheduled to be sentenced June 21 and could face up to a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and full restitution. His license to practice law was revoked by the Virginia State Bar on March 23. He remains free on a \$25,000 PR bond, court records show.

See **OWNER**, 4A

EDENTON-CHOWAN  
SCHOOLS CLUB'S  
23rd Annual

FRY

SAT., APRIL 10, 2010  
11:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
EDENTON SCOUT HUT

Tickets \$7.00 per plate

For Tickets: Lynn Perry 331-5393, Frank Jones 482-0305 or Greg Bonner 331-5212

Proceeds For Scholarship Fund, Terrific Kids & Other Youth Programs