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## Rascoe resigns as county manager

Leaves Chowan to take job in Southern Shores

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor



Rascoe

Chowan County Manager Peter Rascoe stunned his Board of Commissioners by announcing his resignation last Wednesday — the same day the town of Southern Shores issued a statement that he had accepted the job as their new town manager.

Rascoe said the position at Southern Shores, located in Dare County, was too good an opportunity to pass up.

"I'm looking forward to it," Rascoe said. "It's a great opportunity for me personally and professionally. It's an

opportunity that I had to take."

News of Rascoe's sudden departure surprised commission Chairman Eddy Goodwin.

"I have to say I was surprised," Goodwin said. "I had no indication of his plans."

Commissioner Emmett Winborne echoed Goodwin's shock factor. "I was really shocked," Winborne said. "I didn't see it coming. I guess we're all looking for greener grass."

Rascoe was named county manager on June 16, 2008, after first serving as the county attorney. He joined the county in December 1999. His new position followed the sudden retirement of then County Manager Cliff Copeland. Nearly immediately after accepting the county's top job, Rascoe learned that the county faced financial peril and was unable to make payroll.

"I've done my job and more, while steering the county through this situation," Rascoe said Wednesday. "It's been a challenge over the last 24

months."

Soon after Rascoe accepting the county's reins, it was discovered that Chowan County faced possible state takeover for its fiscal mismanagement.

The state Local Government Commission said Chowan faced a nearly \$4 million budget shortfall and was in danger of defaulting on an upcoming \$1.1 million debt service payment on the new D.F. Walker Elementary School.

The LGC reported that less than \$1 million remained from the \$29 million sale of Chowan Hospital 10 years earlier, and that from 2004 to 2007 expenditures exceeded revenues in the general fund by \$11.6 million. Further, another \$6.95 million was loaned from the general fund to other county funds, according to Sharon Edmundson, director of the LGC's fiscal management division.

Since then, Rascoe and the Board

See RASCOE, 7A

## Board seeking interim manager

From staff reports

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners unanimously voted to begin an immediate search for interim county manager while launching the process of finding a permanent replacement.

Commissioners met Monday night before going into executive session to discuss options to find a replacement for Peter Rascoe who stunned board members last Wednesday when he announced his resignation. Rascoe is set to begin as town manager for Southern Shores, effective June 9.

Chowan County will rely on the assistance of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners to help identify an interim county manager and initiate a professional search for a new hire.

Chairman Eddy Goodwin said the NCACC

See INTERIM, 7A

## Walking for a cure



STAFF PHOTOS BY REBECCA BUNCH

Cancer survivors walk the ceremonial survivors' lap at Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life 2010 event, Friday.

## Relay draws more people, less money

Organizers blame fallen economy for event's shortfall

By REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Enthusiasm remained high throughout the Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life 2010, which has become one of Edenton's most significant charitable events.

In what has become a widely participated and diverse group, this year's Relay for Life included an increase in the number of teams, from 20 to 25.

Many of those were younger participants, according to Debbie Burroughs, Relay co-chairwoman.

For all the increased awareness,

See RELAY, 7A



Youngsters soak themselves by tossing water balloons at each other during the Balloon Toss at Relay for Life, Saturday.

## Schools get \$200K with federal grant

Funds to help fix J.A. Holmes' windows

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

In the face of local and state budget restraints, the Edenton-Chowan Schools finally received favorable news in the form of a federal grant.

Gov. Bev Perdue announced Monday that Edenton-Chowan Schools is among the 38 public school systems to benefit from the \$5.4 million in federal Recovery Act funding for energy efficiency block grants. Funds from the grant are to be designated for projects that will enhance energy efficiency while also creating green-related jobs. Edenton-Chowan is set to receive \$200,000 from the grant for \$318,641 in projects.

"Green energy is one of my top priorities, Perdue said in a press release. "These federal recovery funds will help put people to work, help our schools and reduce cost for communities throughout the state."

Superintendent Allan Smith said that although he had yet to receive the official news by Tuesday, someone tipped him off after hearing the news. Smith said he then called Raleigh for confirmation.

"We had been waiting for the announcement," Smith said. "We were confident that we would receive the grant, but we also knew the competition was going to be stiff."

Edenton-Chowan applied for the grant in February amid plans to use the bulk of the funds toward window replacement on the front side of John A. Holmes High School. Smith said the windows are 52 years old and are in dire need of replacement. During the winter months, students are forced to wear heavy coats while in class because of cold air seeping into the building.

Holmes' principal Jamie Gillespie concurred, adding that the warm months are equally brutal.

"You can definitely feel the outside coming inside," she said. "It can get very uncomfortable, depending on the weather. You can literally feel the wind coming in those windows."

In addition to added comfort, the window replacement should net a savings on the system's utility bills, Gillespie added.

Edenton-Chowan had undergone an energy analysis in preparation of the grant application, Smith said. The grant was based on the energy savings identified from the study.

See GRANT, 3A

## Republicans gearing up for November elections

Candidates call for money

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Nine days after the Primary Election and area Republicans gathered to discuss how to campaign for victories in November. Last Thursday's Al Pam

Republican Club meeting at Montero's Restaurant in Elizabeth City revealed that local GOP candidates are preparing for an aggressive attack en route to Election Day.

Edenton's Bob Steinburg, who forfeited his role as a conservative newspaper columnist to challenge state Rep. Tim Spear, D-Washington, was among the candidates soliciting



Steinburg



Halbert

for support in an effort to unseat the incumbent Democrat.

Steinburg briefed the GOP audience on his recent campaign stumps in coastal areas historically kind to Democrats.

"I think the yellow dogs are a dying breed, but they're still out there," Steinburg said.

"If we don't win in 2010, we don't win in 2012," he added with greater sincer-

ity. They unanimously agreed that it will take a concerted effort to sway voters to breakaway from tradition. Efforts to wrangle votes from an area that has been historically favorable to Democrats will require crossover votes. It'll also take plenty of money to disseminate Republican messages.

"When you're running in this large district, you need money to get your message out," said Beaufort County Commissioner Hood Richardson, who is vying to defeat state Senator Marc Basnight, D-Dare.

"Basnight is the most important North Carolina politician," Richardson said. "State money and political favors filter through Basnight."

"Help me cut off the head of the snake that controls politics in North Carolina," he added.

Richardson reiterated Steinburg's previous contention that, if re-elected, Basnight would step down so Spear could assume his post. He said Basnight would continue to wield influence by using Spear.

"I heard Basnight say 'if he had a son, it would be Tim Spear,'" Richardson

said.

Both Basnight and Spear previously denied the allegations about a possible succession. Neither immediately returned a telephone message for this story.

Richardson also claims that Basnight will not debate him, adding that the senior Democrat is not as verbally skilled.

"I'd love to debate him," Richardson said. "I'd take him apart and put him back together."

Another Edentonian fresh off a primary

See GOP, 3A



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