

Chowan fair, but not fair weather, PAGE 1B

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## Sheriff's candidate explains bankruptcy

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Chowan County's Republican candidate for sheriff says his personal bankruptcy several years ago makes him more financially responsible today.

Tim Brabble said he has never hidden the fact that he filed Chapter 13 Bankruptcy in 2003, which was discharged in 2006. Instead, he touts the experience as a humbling lesson that forces him to do a better job with

finances.

"I learned some very valuable lessons from my experience," Brabble said. "I learned we cannot borrow our way out of debt, we cannot spend our way out of debt and fiscal responsibility is more than cutting spending."

Brabble said he fell victim to borrowing money at high interest rates to pay off debt. Before long, Brabble owed more than he could afford, prompting him to turn to bankruptcy.



Brabble Goodwin

"It caught up to me," Brabble said. "Credit cards were my biggest issue."

By filing chapter 13, Brabble said he was able to

continue to pay and keep his home and vehicles.

He has posted a letter about his bankruptcy on his election website.

Chapter 13 Bankruptcy allows the opportunity to repay some or all of a debt at a reduced or no interest. An attorney, who acts as a trustee, oversees the repayment. The U.S. Bankruptcy Code gives the debtor up to five years to repay creditors.

Incumbent Sheriff

Dwayne Goodwin, a Democrat seeking re-election, said it's imperative for the sheriff to be financially savvy.

"Fiscal responsibility is important as sheriff when the sheriff is responsible for five 24-hours a day agencies with more than 55 employees and a \$2.7 million annual budget," Goodwin said.

In addition to the sheriff's office, the sheriff is responsible for the jail,

communications, animal control, and emergency management.

"It's a lot like you do at home, but on a much larger scale," Goodwin said.

Brabble, one of Goodwin's current deputies, points to his securing and handling of an \$80,000 domestic violence grant as proof he can effectively manage taxpayers' money. Instead of spending the entire sum, he managed

See CANDIDATES, 2A

## RAIN, MORE RAIN



PHOTO BY REBECCA LOWE

It was business as usual in downtown Edenton during Thursday's deluge that dumped 13 1/2 inches of rain in two days.

### Nicole dumps 13 1/2 inches of rain in 2 days

Flooding prompts cancellations

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Tropical Storm Nicole dumped 13 1/2 inches of rain on Edenton - Chowan last week, flooding area roads and wreaking havoc on perennial events.

Nicole's deluge led to swollen waterways that spilled onto nearby roads making passage hazardous. A rain-swollen Pembroke Creek resulted in a flooded Mexico Road while Edenton Bay spilled onto Water Street, both frequent flooding spots during heavy rains. Cancellations and weather-related adjustments followed the storm's aftermath.

"We found water levels to be as high as a vehicle's headlights on some county roads," said Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin after Thursday's second consecutive

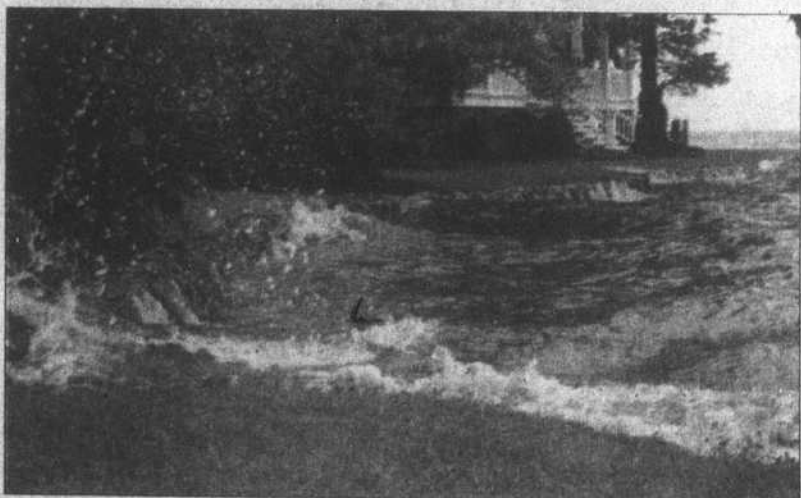


PHOTO BY SUSAN DIXON

Waves from Edenton Bay pound the rocky shoreline Thursday morning at Water Street as Tropical Storm Nicole contributed to local flooding along Chowan County's waterways and low lying areas.

day of heavy rain. "For the most part, motorists are keeping off the roads."

Edenton-Chowan schools were closed Friday after plans to open

on a two-hour delay. School officials opted for the two-hour delay on Thursday after some

See RAIN, 4A

## Sales tax would aid Parks & Rec, Senior Center

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

In an effort to make the proposed sales tax more appealing to voters, county leaders earmarked the 1/4 penny increase for Parks and Recreation and the Senior Center.

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners opened discussions Monday night about how to curry voter favor for next month's sales tax referendum that will appear on the ballot in the General Election.

"I think citizens would like to know where their money is going before they vote yes or no," said Commission Chairman Eddy Goodwin.

John Sams, a Libertarian candidate for commissioner, said during a public comment that he would not support the tax, reminding the board that the increase brings the county's sales tax rate to 8 percent. Instead, he chastised the board for its timing.

See EARMARKED, 3A

## Chowan banks nearly \$2M

Restores fiscal solvency in 2 years

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Chowan County has gone from the brink of financial collapse to more than 1.9 million in its fund balance within a 24-month period, primarily due to reduced spending.

"To be able to add \$1.9 million in this economy, in any economy, you should be commended," said Bryan Starnes, county auditor. "I had to check it to make sure it was right. It might have been painful and unpopular, but it was the right thing to do."

Starnes delivered the audit review at Monday

night's Board of Commissioners scheduled meeting. He added that Chowan had risen from among the state's bottom wrung of counties with little money to among middle of the pack, calling the two-year feat "tremendous." Chowan has gone from having only a two-week cash flow to between two and three months, Starnes said. Compared to its expenditures and the General Fund, Chowan holds a Fund Balance of 18 percent, nearly 14 percent that is immediately available for cash.

Starnes attributed the accomplishment to a near \$1 million more in county revenue and about

See FUND, 2A

## John A. Holmes High School plays the Battle of the Bands

By REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Martin County's Riverside High School claimed Band of the Day honors Saturday at the 35th Annual Edenton Peanut Festival Battle of the Bands.

Riverside's marching band earned the top award after posting the highest overall score in what has become the Peanut Festival's centerpiece event, which is held at the John A. Holmes High School Athletic Complex.

Cape Hatteras High School took the event's other major award of the day - the Otis Strother Award - after performing in the competition for the first time. Strother was the band director at Holmes for nearly 20 years and played a key role in initiating the Battle of the Bands event.

The award that carries Strother's name is given to the band that best demonstrates good sportsmanship and a professional attitude in the 14-band competition. Dave Shaw, Holmes' band

director, said he was happy to see the award go to them.

"This is the first year that Cape Hatteras has fielded a marching band," Shaw said, "although they have had a music program. So, we were their inaugural band competition."

Shaw also praised the bands for making the trip to Edenton for the competition, following the two-day deluge that caused flooding throughout the region. A soggy football field where the competition usually plays forced the event to the stadium's track. The tight quarters hampered the bands from performing

their usual routines.

"Once we got going, everything went off without a hitch," Shaw said. "We are known for having a well-run competition and with the help of our students and their parents we lived up to that again Saturday."

Poor weather conditions prevented one band from making the trip, Shaw said.

The Marching Wildcats of Columbia High School kicked off the competition with a program that included Under an Irish Sky and America the Beautiful.

As late afternoon moved into evening, the stadium

See BANDS, 4A



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

The Manteo High School Marching Redskins are led in competition by drum major Caroline Lowcher. The band won first place in the drum major category during Saturday's Battle of the Bands in Edenton.



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