



## Schools want return of pre-fiscal woes funding

### Superintendent asks for \$730K

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Edenton-Chowan Schools has requested that Chowan County fund an additional \$730,000 over

last year's budget en route to restoring the system's allocation to 2008-09 figures, or before the county's fiscal crisis.

With the school system facing state and federal shortfalls of roughly \$1.5 million that has already forced the elimination of more than 40 local teach-

ing positions and various programs, Superintendent Allan Smith hopes to absorb the hit with an increase from the county. But, before the county will entertain his request to return to the budget days that sent Chowan to the brink of bankruptcy and state takeover, Smith will

have to explain why the schools are not first dipping into its own fund balance of \$1.3 million.

An audit shows that as of June 30, 2010 the schools carried a fund balance of \$2.7 million. Smith said, however, half of that sum is already allocated for the 2011-12 school year.

School systems are not required to carry a fund balance whereas counties are forced to keep a minimum of 8 percent of its annual budget in reserves. On Monday, Smith commended the Board of Education for its prudent practice of keeping an annual fund balance.

"We have allocated money from our fund balance for the last several years to balance the budget," Smith said. "Fortunately, we've had the reserves. If we had not, reductions would have been sharper. This economic downturn

See FUNDING, 2A

## Smith named extension director

By REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

When Tim Smith heard that the job of county extension director would soon be vacant, he didn't have to think long about whether to apply.

Last week, Smith, a Chowan County native, began work as the new county director for the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service. And he says he couldn't be happier about being back home.



Smith

"One reason the job was so attractive to me was because it gave me a chance to come back home and work with people I've been around all my life," Smith said.

Smith, 33, said he already knew some members of the staff. He and fellow Chowan County Extension Agent Katy Shook met while both were attending North Carolina State University.

And Smith said other members of the local extension staff have already done their best to make him feel at home.

"Another thing I was really excited about (in taking the job) was the quality of the staff," Smith said.

Smith added that he liked the mix of relatively new staff members and more experienced agents who had been working in the community for a while.

As far as what kind of director he expects to be, Smith said he wouldn't be one who spent a lot of time behind a desk.

"I'd rather be out talking with farmers, finding out what questions they have, what challenges they're facing and how I can help them," Smith said. "That's what I think this job's about."

Shook, whose major focus is horticulture, said she wasn't surprised to hear that.

Shook said that Smith was not the type of person who thought he had all the answers, but that he was diligent about trying to find them.

See SMITH, 6A

## MEMORIAL ELUDED REDCOATS



STAFF PHOTO BY RITCHIE STARNES

The Blount-Leary House in Edenton as it appears today. The house, circa 1772, served as the West Customs House during the Revolutionary War and was the temporary home of the nation's first monument for 10 years before it was shipped to its final destination New York.

## Franklin, Hewes hid first monument

Memorial stored in Edenton customs house

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

As New York workers currently toil over the restoration of America's first national monument, there was a time the marble and limestone memorial of Gen. Richard Montgomery remained hidden here in Edenton for nearly a decade.

With New York and Philadelphia swarming with redcoats, the monument was shipped here in nine crates at the paid expense of Benjamin Franklin. Here because Edenton was one of the few ports with customs houses that would likely elude British seizure while the Revolutionary War waged on. Edenton was also home to Joseph Hewes — one of Franklin's most trusted friends, signer of the Declaration of Independence and regarded as the country's first Secretary of the Navy.

"Hewes was extremely reliable. I think he and Franklin were very close and (Franklin) trusted him with his life," said Sally Webster, a professor emerita at Lehman College of City University of New York who has studied the monument.

In 1776, the then Continental Congress wanted to pay homage to the first



PHOTO COURTESY LEAH REDDY/TRINITY WALL STREET

See MONUMENT, 2A The marble and limestone memorial of Gen. Richard Montgomery.

## Relay for Life set for kick off

By REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

For more than 10 years the Z.T. Evans Family Team has been a fixture at Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life in Edenton. But this weekend there will be no team.

Leon Evans and his wife Joyce, who lead the team, said they were not able to do so this year because of family-related health problems.

Leon, who has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, is facing surgery in a few weeks. The couple has also been dealing with the illness of their daughter-in-law who is experiencing a heart-related ailment as well as cancer.

"We have really had our hands full," said Joyce Evans.

Absent from this year's Relay will also be the "johnny house" fundraiser established by Leon for last year's Relay. For a \$20 donation, anyone in the community could have the old-fashioned outhouse, complete with corncobs and chicken wire, delivered to the home or business of the person of their choice, courtesy of Leon.

But this year, Leon said, he just hasn't been up to moving the outhouse from place to place.

Last year, the "johnny house" fundraiser brought in \$3,600 in donations for Relay. And the Z.T. Evans team has consistently been one of the top fundraisers for Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life as well. It came in second last year for most money raised with donations totaling \$16,000.

Leon and Joyce said they expect that their team and the "johnny house" will be part of Relay again next year. And while they won't

See RELAY, 6A

## Owens, Spear vote for NC House budget

Bill restores bridge funds, cuts fee for ferry

From staff, wire reports

Area legislators Bill Owens and Tim Spear were among the five Democrats who joined House Republicans in voting Wednesday for a budget bill that contains no tax increases and includes deep cuts in education and other programs. The House approved the \$19.3

billion spending plan for the next two years by a 72-47 margin. The margin is significant because it's large enough to withstand a potential veto by Democratic Gov. Bev Perdue.

Owens, D-Pasquotank, and Spear, D-Washington, were among the five Democrats who joined



Owens



Spear

all Republicans present in backing the measure in a preliminary vote Tuesday night and voting for final passage Wednesday afternoon.

Reached Wednesday before the final vote, Owens said he had decided to support the budget crafted by House Republicans be-

cause their leadership had worked with him on several amendments he supported, including funds for the Mid-County Bridge and N.C. Seafood Industrial Park. The House leadership had also agreed to include an additional \$43 million in lottery funds for school construction and not impose a toll on the Knotts Island Ferry, he said.

"They were more than reasonable with me," Owens said.

See BUDGET, 3A



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EDENTON-CHOWAN SCOUTS & BOYS CLUBS 24th Annual **FRY** SAT., MAY 21, 2011 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM EDENTON SCOUT HUT Tickets \$8.00 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