



Schools' request may require tax hike

Superintendent defends budget, fund balance

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

Chowan County Manager Paul Parker said Monday night that the county cannot afford the schools 2011-12 budget request of an additional \$730,000 than was allocated without raising property taxes.

"If we do fund you at full level, I'd have to raise taxes 7.25 cents. This (Board of Commissioners) needs to know there is not \$730,000,"

said Parker, addressing schools' Superintendent Allan Smith at a special meeting.

At the special meeting called for the county's proposed 2011-12 fiscal budget public hearing, Parker reminded Smith that the county's revenues remain down. Funding Smith's request to return to 2008-09 allocations, the county would be forced to raise property taxes, dip into its reserves, or a combination of both, Parker said.

Although no one spoke during the public hearing in a sparsely attended meeting, Smith addressed the commissioners in sometimes a contentious tone. He admonished those that

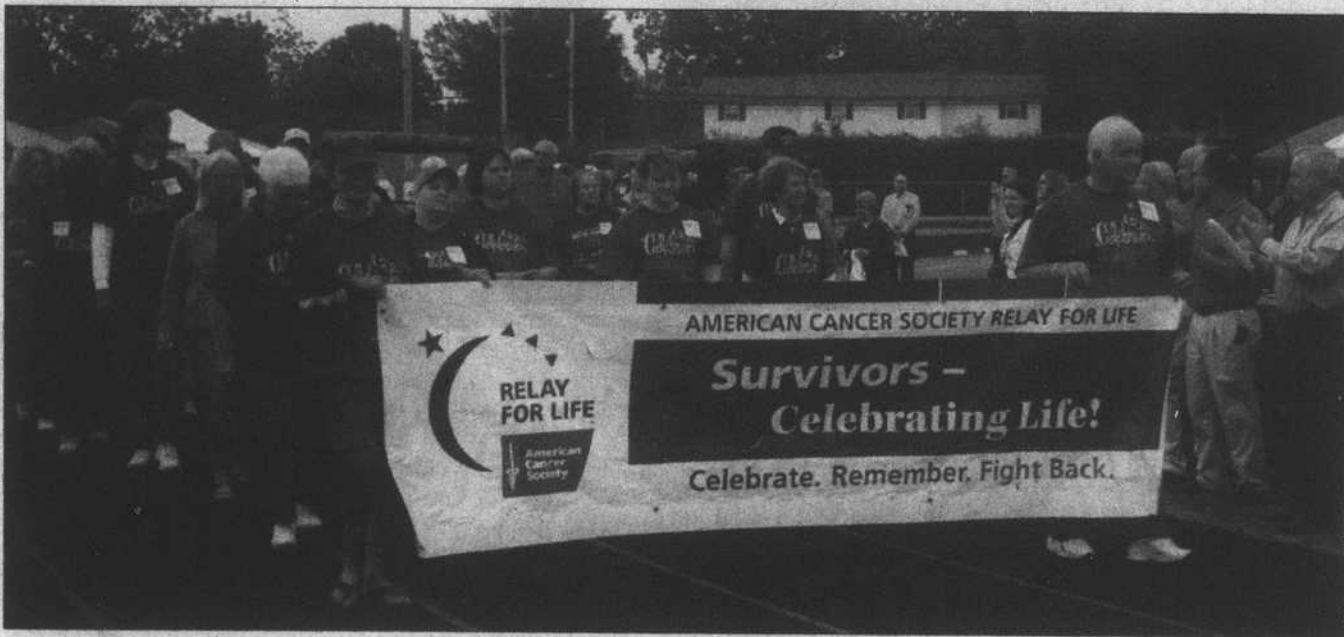
See **BUDGET**, 6A

By the Numbers

ENROLLMENT PreK-12	2010-2011: 367
2007-2008: 2,448	2011-2012: 327 (projected)
2008-2009: 2,424	
2009-2010: 2,379 (enrollment date changed for kindergarten students)	UNRESERVED FUND BALANCE (as of June 30 of each year):
2010-2011: 2,382	2007-2008: \$2,174,117
2011-2012: 2,387 (DPI projection)	2008-2009: \$1,262,899
	2009-2010: \$1,320,956
EMPLOYEES:	2010-2011: \$950,000 (projected)
2007-2008: 410	2011-2012: -----
2008-2009: 384	
2009-2010: 367	

SOURCE: Edenton-Chowan Schools

RELAY FETCHES \$101K SO FAR



STAFF PHOTOS BY REBECCA BUNCH

Residents of Chowan and Perquimans counties join to walk the survivors' lap at the opening of Relay for Life 2011 in Edenton, Friday.

Walkers brave smoke, stormy forecast

By **REBECCA BUNCH**
Staff Writer

The threat of stormy weather and smoke from a Dare County wildfire may have kept some folks at home during Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life this weekend, but neither stopped the annual fundraiser from fetching more than \$101,000.

Organizers say they were pleased with the turnout and the amount of money raised so far. Twenty-five teams took part in the two-day walk-a-thon, according to Meghan Shoaf, event spokeswoman and community manager for the South Atlantic Division of the American Cancer Society headquartered in Greenville.

"Sixteen of them were teams that relayed last year," Shoaf said, "and nine were new teams."

Shoaf said 17 of the teams were from Chowan County and eight from Perquimans.

And while this year's Relay has not yet met its fundraising goal, Shoaf emphasized that it has a while longer to do so.

"Our goal is \$144,960 and we have raised \$101,000 so far," Shoaf said. "But we have until August 15 to get to our fundraising goal."

Shoaf said that 455 area residents registered to attend Relay. She noted that some

See **RELAY**, 3A



Family members of all ages showed their support for Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life 2011. The participants, who came despite the smokey conditions from a wildfire and the threat of a storm, were able to raise \$101K so far.

Break-in suspects linked to crimes here

By **CATHY WILSON**
Staff Writer

Neighbors looking out for each other helped area law enforcement foil a suspected burglary in progress last Wednesday.

Perquimans County Sheriff Eric Tilley said four Edenton residents were arrested following a suspected break-in at a home on Cottonwood Drive near Winfall. A neighbor called 911 after seeing four people and an unfamiliar white Dodge Intrepid in the neighborhood. A neighbor saw the car back up to the garage of one house where three people exited the vehicle, Tilley said. The neighbor confronted the female who remained in the car. She then drove away, but then returned. The three others fled on foot, officers said.

"Apparently, they were communicating on cell phones," Tilley said. "We believe the female was trying to pick them in the car in the area."

Deputies arrived and detained the driver of the vehicle, and then found guns, computers, and coins stacked at the door to the garage.

Tilley said three of the suspects ran from the home while the fourth stayed in the car. Another neighbor saw at least one suspect in the swamp area. Deputies and other law enforcement officers surrounded the wooded area and a Chowan County sheriff's canine unit led law enforcement officers to the suspects hiding in the swamp area.

Those arrested include: Thomas Ray



Boston



C. Twine



K. Twine



T. Twine

See **BREAK-IN**, 6A

Main Street to make first visit to Edenton

By **REBECCA BUNCH**
Staff Writer

The North Carolina Main Street managers group will be in Edenton May 25-27, marking their first stop here.

Jennifer Harriss, director of Destination Downtown Edenton, the local Main Street program, said the majority of those attending are from the western part of the state.

"We're very excited. We will have about 30 Main Street managers visiting us," Harriss said.

A welcoming reception will be held at the Barker House Wednesday evening (May 25), Harriss said. The

group will also be treated to boat rides and a trolley tour.

Harriss said that a managers' meeting to be held during the visit would focus on plans for the group's annual meeting in January as well as the impact of local Main Street programs, and recruiting small businesses for downtown areas.

Councilman Bob Quinn,

See **MAIN STREET**, 6A

County balks at DSS move

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

An architect informed commissioners Monday night that relocating the Department of Social Services into the Chowan Life Center building will cost the county about \$850,000.

Architect Terrance McCabe of BJAC delivered the news during Monday night's Board of Commissioners meeting, which was met with shock among board members.

"We could build a new building for this," said Commissioner Keith Nixon. "We'd be better off to

stay where we're at than pay this."

McCabe said roughly \$750,000 would cover the construction and demolition of the building's renovation with another \$100,000 for design and contingency. The renovation would include transforming the building into a collection of 34 offices.

The commission seemed unanimously at odds with the estimate.

"It appears to be about three times more than we estimated. I don't quite understand," said Commissioner Emmett Winborne.

County Manager Paul Parker was equally stunned by the projection.

"This is a little more than we expected - a lot more," Parker said.

McCabe defended the estimate.

"We're confident in these numbers," he said.

Plans call for the Health Department to move out of the building, relocating to the county's vacant former Mental Health building. The move would make way for the DSS relocation.

Jerry Parks, Health

See **DSS**, 6A



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CENTER HILL CROSS ROADS FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIREHOUSE CHICKEN SATURDAY, MAY 21ST. 12pm-6 pm \$8.00 per plate