



Toys for Tots program canceled

By CINDY BEAMON
Staff Writer

Area residents are not likely to find a Toys for Tots bin to donate gifts at Christmas this year.

A local car club recently discovered the news when gearing up for a benefit.

Victor Roughton with the Chrome Pony Mustang Club said a member contacted Toys for Tots to get bins for collecting toys.

Instead they got an e-mail saying the local coordinator for northeastern North Carolina had resigned and the foundation decided it was too late to find a replacement for Christmas.

"I can't bear to think of all the families who depend on them at Christmas time," Roughton said.

The Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program regularly collects new, unwrapped toys dur-

ing October, November and December each year, and distributes those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community where they are collected. The Toys for Tots website states that Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, and Camden will not be covered in the program this year. A coordinator was listed for the Currituck Toys for Tots campaign in Knotts Island.

"With the way the economy is this year, there's going to be a lot of hurting people out there," Roughton said.

His team decided to team up this year with the Salvation Army "to pick up the slack."

The club plans to host a benefit car show at Hall Ford on Nov. 19 at 10 a.m. to encourage the Salvation Army's toy collection effort. Registration for

the event is \$10 or a new unwrapped toy with proceeds going to the Salvation Army. Residents can also drop off toys at collection boxes at the Salvation Army, Hall Ford, Blockbuster.

Roughton said other clubs and residents who give regularly to the Toys for Tots may not be aware that the program will not be setting up collection sites this year.

"People that normally give would wait and wait and then end up giving nothing," he said.

Gwen Brown, volunteer coordinator for Operation Santa in Chowan County, said she too was caught by surprise by the news.

"I'm just hearing about it now, from you," Brown told a reporter from the Chowan Herald who called

See TOYS FOR TOTS, 2A

Waterman's sale falls flat

Lease poses snag in deal

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

Plans to sell Edenton's longest running restaurant has ended with the two parties unable to strike a deal.

After two weeks of negotiations amid plans to announce new ownership of Waterman's Grill by Monday, co-owner Katy Ebersole announced instead that the purchase had been nixed and that she and husband, Rick, and business partner, Brian Roberts, will remain

owners of the downtown eatery.

"We have a renewed direction and focus on our situation," said Katy Ebersole after the realization that they would keep the restaurant they first opened in May 1996.

"It's a privilege to operate a restaurant in Edenton that guests enjoy and frequent," Ebersole said in a press release. "That patronage has provided jobs and income for many people over the years. We will continue to rely on our valued staff to make Waterman's such a great place to eat and we look

See WATERMAN'S, 4A

Man killed in truck crash

Driver charged for Oct. 12 wreck

From staff reports

A 40-year-old man is charged with misdemeanor death by motor vehicle after a two-truck collision last Wednesday evening that killed his passenger at U.S. Highway 17 and Haughton Road, the N.C. Highway Patrol said.

Binh Tan Nguyen, 43, was asleep in the rear of the cab of a 2000 UD truck

when he was ejected from the vehicle, which was being driven by Taun Van Nguyen, Trooper C.D. Montgomery said.

The collision happened after Taun Van Nguyen, approaching the intersection from Haughton Road, disobeyed a stop sign, Montgomery said.

Taun Van Nguyen went across all four lanes of U.S. 17 and attempted to make a U-turn in the southbound lanes, Montgomery said.

See CRASH, 3A

MARATHON GIRL



STAFF PHOTO BY BRETT A. CLARK

Edenton's Hannah Nixon returns the ball during her first-round 2A East Region qualifying singles match against Brenna Smith of First Flight that lasted more than five hours, last Monday. For more on the match, read the article on page 7A.

Fire chief calls fire suspicious

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

The Edenton Police Department is investigating what Fire Chief Charlie Westbrook calls a "suspicious fire."

Westbrook said a neighbor called 911 shortly after 8 a.m. on Oct. 12 to report a house fire at 207 West Second Street. No one was

at home at the time of the blaze, he said.

"We are investigating this as an arson," Police Chief Jay Fortenbery confirmed. "We are looking for any information we can get from the public, from anyone that might have seen somebody near the house between 7 and 8 o'clock that morning."

Westbrook said the fire

appeared to have started in the kitchen and a bedroom in the rental house owned by Town Councilman Jimmy Stallings. Stallings said estimated damage to the house was \$25,000.

"Generally, a fire doesn't start in two places," Westbrook said in explaining why he thought arson might have been involved.

Westbrook said fire fighters discovered a package of diapers left on the stove that was on at the time. This is the likely cause of the fire's origin in the kitchen, Westbrook said. He said he is uncertain how the fire in the bedroom started.

"We have turned all of

See FIRE, 2A

Cable service Mediacom draws subscriber complaints

Channels 10, 5 return to air

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Mediacom subscribers are once again receiving WAVY TV 10 as well as the Fox channel 5. And reception on Channel 7 has seemingly improved.

Wayne Holliday, regional manager for the cable company, said Monday afternoon that an agreement

was reached late Friday that allowed the absent stations to return to the air over the weekend.

Tom Larsen, group vice president of legal and public affairs for Mediacom, said Thursday that WAVY, an NBC station, and Fox were pulled from the air last month while LIN Media, parent company for both, was in negotiations with Mediacom over a new agreement.

"It's a bit unusual for them to do that," Larsen said. "But talks are continuing, and I think they are headed in the right direction."

With regard to the poor reception experienced by those attempting to view programs on Channel 7,

"It's a bit unusual for them to do that. But talks are continuing, and I think they are headed in the right direction."

Tom Larsen

Group vice president of legal and public affairs for Mediacom

Holliday told Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton technical problems were to blame.

"Wayne told me that Mediacom was working hard to resolve (those) problems," Knighton said. "He and his colleagues had worked through the weekend last weekend up until

very late in the evening Sunday to fix the problem."

Knighton reported to the Town Council during its Oct. 11 meeting that she had been in contact with Holliday after her office began hearing from local residents who subscribe to the cable service.

Knighton said that people often mistakenly think that the town because it holds a franchise agreement with Mediacom has considerable influence with the cable company.

"That's not the case," Knighton said.

Knighton said that the town can object to a raise in basic cable rates but lacks the legal authority to do more than that. She added that once the town's current agreement with Mediacom ends in 2014 the state would assume oversight authority due to changes in state law.

Councilmen Jimmy Stallings and Steve Biggs reported that they had been receiving complaints from cable subscribers re-

garding both issues.

But, they said, with other cable providers showing no interest in competing with Mediacom for cable service in the community, it leaves few options except satellite or dish service.

"We're seeing more and more of those going up," said Biggs.

Chowan County's Board of Commissioners recently issued a survey to taxpayers as a way to measure the area's quality of cable service. Like the town, the county has no service authority. However, county leaders plan to forward those findings to the state before Mediacom gets a contract extension. So far,

See MEDIACOM, 4A

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Sponsored by the Rocky Hock Ruritan's Relay for Life Team Tickets \$10.00 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, 7:30 PM
Tickets Available at various locations or call 252-221-4875 or 252-340-3438. Email rockyhockopry@live.com