



Parrish declines to charge supt.

Ex-asst. principal files complaint

By **WILLIAM F. WEST**
Staff Writer

Two more area residents, including a former administrator with the Edenton-Chowan Schools, have filed complaints with the Superior Court calling for the suspension or dismissal of District Attorney Frank Parrish.

Mary Felton, a former assistant principal at John A.

Holmes High School, and Kenneth Eugene Brooks filed separate complaints in Pasquotank County Superior Court on Friday. Felton's complaint accuses Parrish of refusing to investigate her allegations related to her termination from the Edenton-Chowan Schools. Brooks' complaint



Parrish

accuses the district attorney of refusing to prosecute the man Brooks claims assaulted him.

Parrish could not be reached for comment Saturday. He previously has said that ethics rules prohibit him from addressing complaints against his office. Felton's and Brooks' complaints are the fifth and sixth filed with the court against Parrish since Jan. 20.

In her complaint, Felton accuses Parrish of failing to investigate her allegation that Edenton-Chowan Schools Superintendent Allan Smith falsified her medical records. Felton further accuses Parrish of failing to investigate her allegation that two or more school employees conspired to ruin her career after she filed a complaint against the school district with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The EEOC, the federal agency that investigates civil rights complaints in the workplace, found on Dec. 30, 2011, that the Edenton-Chowan Schools discriminated against Felton when it transferred her from an assistant principal's job to a position as career development coordinator. The EEOC also found that the school district had retaliated against Felton, who is black, by firing her following her complaints about discrimination.

School officials have maintained that Felton's dismissal was appropriate. They have dismissed the EEOC's ruling as inaccurate.

Felton claims she first took her complaints about Smith and other school employees to Parrish on May 11, 2010, but the prosecutor did nothing with them. She says after she contacted Parrish a second time — on Aug. 18, 2010 — the prosecutor assured her he would contact the State Bureau of Investigation to look into her allegations against Smith.

"He (Parrish) commented at our August meeting that

See **PARRISH, 4A**

ELECTION FILINGS OPEN WITH FLURRY



STAFF PHOTOS BY REBECCA BUNCH

Bob Steinburg files for election Monday as his wife Marie and Board of Elections Director Rebecca Lowe look on.

Steinburg wants NC House seat

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

Monday's start of the filing period created a flurry of activity at the local Board of Elections.

Two political newcomers fulfilled their plans by filing to run for county commissioner while a pair of undecided incumbents wasted little time returning to the political fray by registering for re-election bids. Another county incumbent filed for re-election while a local Republican hopes a second attempt at a state House race proves fruitful.

Although Keith Nixon and Emmett Winborne said last week that they were still mulling over whether to seek another term on the Board of Commissioners, both opted to use the first day of the filing period to settle the matter.

"I think we're getting things done and hopefully the citizens will see fit to put me back in office," Nixon said.

Winborne echoed a similar sentiment.

"I feel like there's still hard work to be done," Winborne said. "If the citizens so choose, I'm willing to give four more years."

Winborne, a Democrat, first served as commissioner from



Tim Phelps listens to instructions from Board of Elections Director Rebecca Lowe on Monday as he becomes the first candidate to file for office. Phelps, a local contractor, is seeking to become county commissioner.

'94-'98 before successfully running again in 2008.

This marks Nixon's first attempt at re-election. He said a busy career kept the Republican from serving earlier.

"I couldn't get out and do much community service when I was trying to build my business," Nixon said. "Chowan citizens have been good to me and I feel like this is a way for me to give back."

As planned, GOP newcomers Alex Kehayes and Tim Phelps filed to run for Eddy Goodwin's

District 2 seat as the four-time county commission chairman leaves the board for a bid for secretary of state. Kehayes and Phelps will face-off in the Republican primary.

Republican Bob Steinburg, of Edenton, also filed Monday to run for the newly drawn N.C. House District 1, which serves the counties of Chowan, Perquimans, Camden, Currituck, Tyrrell, and a portion of Pasquotank. Rep. Bill Owens,

See **FILING, 2A**



FILE PHOTO

This Cessna 172-S crashed July 17, 2002, in a Tyner cotton field during aerial surveillance in Chowan County, killing all three law enforcement officers on board, including sheriff's deputy Richard "Rick" Edward Ashley. Ashley will be among public safety officers to be honored with a local memorial.

Plans afoot to erect officer memorial

Fallen deputy first to be honored

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

Plans are under way to erect a memorial at the Public Safety Center dedicated to officers killed in the line of duty.

A committee has been working to bring recognition to local officers who were killed while performing their job and any other officers killed in the line of duty while working in Chowan County. Those to be recognized include Richard Edward Ashley, Benjamin Henry Smith and John W. Hollowell, all from Chowan, and Maj. Robert S. Kennedy of Boone and Sgt. Anthony Scott Futrell from Charlotte.

The move comes nearly 10 years after Chowan sheriff's deputy Ashley, 36, Kennedy, 46, of the Boone Police Department and Futrell, 38, of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg police were killed in a plane crash while conducting an

aerial search for marijuana fields. Their fatal crash occurred July 17, 2002 in the Icaria community near Happy Home Road.

Ashley will be the first deceased officer to be recognized with a dedication of the U.S. 17 bypass bridge that spans across N.C. 32, or Virginia Road. The N.C. Department of Transportation will soon erect a sign bearing Ashley's name at the bridge.

Ashley's surviving family members welcome the recognition and are among those helping to see the efforts through.

"I don't want anyone to forget the sacrifice he made for the community. This is a way to keep his memory alive," said May Ashley Campen, Richard Ashley's widow who has since remarried.

Richard and May Ashley had been married for 18 years at the time of his death. They had two sons, Richard (Rick) and Steven. All were present at the Feb. 6 Board of Commissioners meeting when it gave a resounding endorsement of the memorial efforts.

Raleigh Ashley, Richard's father, said he appreciates the honor.

"He (Richard) enjoyed his job and he worked hard

See **MEMORIAL, 2A**

Butterfield opposes Chowan FSA closing

From staff reports

Congressman G.K. Butterfield on Thursday said he is urging U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to reconsider plans to close several Farm Service Agency offices in North Carolina, including the Chowan office

in Edenton. "Each of these FSA offices serves counties with diverse populations," Butterfield wrote to Vilsack. "Hertford and Warren are both majority African-American counties, and Chowan is a 35 percent African-American County."

Last month the Agriculture Department announced plans to close 259 FSA offices nationwide, including the Edenton office that employs two. Those workers will be given the option to relocate to the Perquimans FSA office, which will remain open.

The department said the closings would reduce its annual budget by \$150 million.

Chowan commissioners passed a resolution opposing the Chowan office closure.

Butterfield, D-N.C., issued a press release

Thursday in which he said the offices in his district targeted for closure provide "critical access to USDA services for hundreds of farmers, many of them African-American."

"Eliminating FSA offices in these counties will severely limit access to USDA services for black farmers in eastern North Carolina, which is a step in the wrong direction," he wrote.

He asked Vilsack to reconsider the planned closures.



Butterfield

Man charged in local stabbing

From staff reports

A Chowan County man has been charged with the stabbing of another man on Feb. 6.

Dominic Duron Gay, 21, is accused of stabbing Derrick Molek Parker, 35, at

the 800 block of Cabarrus Street around midnight, records show.

Gay is charged with assault with a deadly weapon. He is being confined at Chowan County Jail in lieu of a \$40,000 secured bond.

Chief Jay Fortenbery, Edenton police, said officers began investigating after receiving a report

See **STABBING, 3A**



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