



Group confident VC to keep 7 days

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Local officials are expressing optimism that the Historic Edenton Visitor Center will remain open seven days a week for the foreseeable future.

Mayor Roland Vaughan, who led a local delegation to Raleigh Feb. 28 in a show of support for the center, said he was pleased that a

subcommittee — charged with studying budget-cutting proposals produced by a staff research panel for the N.C. General Assembly — declined to send the proposals to the full Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee for its consideration.

The panel had recommended in its plan that the Edenton Visitor Center be closed on Sundays and

Mondays to save the state more than \$100,000 annually.

The subcommittee's refusal also offered a reprieve to Museum of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City, which the panel had recommended be closed permanently.

"We were all favorably impressed with the outcome," Vaughan said.

Vaughan said that the Edenton delegation also

included Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton, Historic Edenton Visitor Center Manager Linda Eure, Sally Francis Kehayes from the Cupola House Association, Norman Brinkley and Frances Inglis from the Edenton Historical Commission.

Kehayes said that she was pleased to be able to attend. She said that the Cupola House historic site,

which is unmanned, benefits greatly from the walking tours given daily by the Visitor Center.

"I left confident that the Visitor Center would not be closed on Sundays and Mondays," Kehayes said. "We need to continue to have the services they provide as we all work to draw people to Edenton."

Vaughan added that the delegation appreciated

the opportunity to attend as well as the support offered by state Sen. Fletcher Hartsell, R-Cabarrus. Hartsell spoke during the subcommittee meeting about Edenton and the importance of the visitor center to the community.

Hartsell, whose daughter and son-in-law were Salvation Army officers in the

See CENTER, 2A

Site's water move on schedule

No money available for public access

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

While the driving of pilings to support the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse's placement over the downtown Edenton waterfront could get under way in a matter of days, public access and completion of its interior facelift remains uncertain.

Paul Waff, owner of Waff Contracting, said Friday morning that his crew "hopes to have pilings driven next week." But watching preparations, and the actual relocation itself, will be about as close as the public will be able to get to the historic structure anytime soon.

Current funding for the moving of the lighthouse does not include sufficient funds to build a ramp that would allow visitors to go inside and look around the yet to be restored interior.

Mark Cooney, director of capital projects for the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, said that the \$271,000 in contingency funds the department came up with in 2010 to move the lighthouse out over the water would not be enough to cover construction of a ramp as well.

Cooney said that phase I of the lighthouse restoration project had originally called for the lighthouse to stand on a permanent foundation on land leased from the town at the downtown park, and for exterior work to be completed using federal stimulus dollars.

However, when soil contamination was discovered at that site in 2010, and plans altered to put the lighthouse over the water, "everything changed," Cooney said.

Cooney said at that point the project had to be considered as if it was an entirely new endeavor; that in turn drove up the cost,

See LIGHTHOUSE, 4A

TO KILLA SQUIRREL



FILE PHOTO

Although the town of Edenton has historically allowed residents to fatally shoot squirrels that were causing a property nuisance, it plans to soon revoke the policy. Instead, residents will have to turn to the N.C. Wildlife Commission for trapping permits.

Town wants no part of killing squirrels

N.C. Wildlife will be alternative

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

Soon the town of Edenton will no longer allow residents to fatally shoot squirrels perceived to be a nuisance. If the police chief gets his way, the town would get out of the squirrel killing business altogether.

For years the town has allowed its police chief to issue permits on a case-by-case basis so property owners could kill squirrels by a firearm, although a town ordinance prohibits the discharge of a gun inside town limits. That contradiction as well as a few other factors have led to the conclusion that the town should no

longer permit the practice. The matter will come before the Town Council on Tuesday night.

Early indications suggest the Council will stop the permitting. Police Chief Jay Fortenbery also prefers that he be exempted from handling the fate of squirrels in any capacity, saying the management of such rodents fall under the domain of the N.C. Wildlife Commission.

"It's just not a safe practice to shoot a gun in town," Fortenbery said. "From an insurance standpoint, it's just too much liability. If someone wants to kill squirrels, they'll have to get permission from Wildlife."

Fortenbery said he has researched and learned that other police departments don't permit the practice.

Town officials also learned

from its liability insurance carrier that Edenton should discontinue the practice. Town Manager Anne Marie Knighton said the N.C. League of Municipalities said the practice puts the police chief in a difficult position, since his authorization of a permit is a discretionary call.

"If there were to be an accident then the chief's judgment would certainly be called into question," Knighton said.

Before issuing a permit to shoot squirrels, the chief would conduct an inspection of the property to determine if it was warranted. Typically, the resident must show proof of some form of property nuisance.

Fortenbery said he has issued as many as four such permits.

See SQUIRREL, 3A

Ex-police chief files for seat

From staff reports

A former Edenton police chief has entered the political arena after filing to run for a seat on the Chowan County Board of Commissioners.

Greg Bonner, 58, was the last local candidate to file before last Wednesday's noon deadline, according to the Board of Elections.



Bonner

The Democrat will face Republican Earl Willis for the District 3 seat.

Incumbent Democrat Ralph Cole opted not to seek re-election.

Bonner said the decision to run had been on his mind for a while.

He said his candidacy platform plans to focus on unifying the town and county.

"I would like to see the town and county governments work more closely together for the betterment of our entire community," Bonner said. "I would really like to be a part of making that happen."

Bonner added that he wants to be part of further advancing the county from its financial turmoil that led Chowan to the brink of bankruptcy and possible state takeover.

Bonner was Edenton's first and only black police chief, but not the first black officer.

He joined the Edenton

See BONNER, 4A

Judge dismisses 6 complaints of Parrish

Hinton: No evidence Parrish violated law

By WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer

A Superior Court judge on Friday dismissed six of the eight complaints filed by citizens calling for the suspension or removal of District Attorney Frank Parrish.

In a one-page order filed with the Pasquotank County Superior Court Clerk's Office, Judge Alma Hinton of Roanoke Rapids said

she reviewed six of the complaints and concluded Parrish did not break any state laws governing district attorneys' conduct.

Hinton further said she found Parrish "has conducted himself within the bounds of his prosecutorial discretion."

Neither Parrish nor his attorney, James Maxwell of Durham, could be reached for comment Friday.



Hinton



Parrish

Kathryn Fagan, a Manteo attorney representing all eight of the persons who filed the complaints, appeared stunned when reached for comment late Friday afternoon.

"I have not seen the order or the dismissal as yet because, as throughout the entire process, my presence in it has been ignored," Fagan said.

Fagan called both the judge's decision not to hold a hearing on

the complaints and the fact she hadn't been notified of the dismissal "absolutely outrageous."

Fagan claimed her clients had compiled more evidence against Parrish than those who made complaints against Tracey Cline, the Durham County district attorney who was permanently removed from office on Friday. Superior Court Judge Robert H. Hobgood removed Cline for making public statements about another judge that he said undermined public confidence in the justice system.

See PARRISH, 4A



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TUESDAY, MARCH 13TH
RELAY FOR LIFE Benefit Lunch & Dinner 11AM to 2PM & 4PM to 7PM
BBQ & FRIED CHICKEN AUCTION - 7 PM Until
 6 PM 'til 7 PM Dinner Music by "Big Daddy" Sam Morris
LEON NIXON'S CATERING DONATION \$8.00
 SPONSORED BY ROCKY HOCK RURITAN RELAY FOR LIFE TEAM
 FOR TICKETS OR INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 340-3438