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Sheriff: Dispatcher mishandled call

By **REBECCA BUNCH**
Staff Writer

A weekend call about a possibly rabid animal has led to changes in the way Chowan County emergency dispatchers will respond to such calls in the future, Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin said Monday.

Arrowhead Beach resident Chris Rusbult said she was driving home Friday afternoon when

she saw a fox sitting in a clearing on a wooded lot a couple of streets over from her house. Rusbult said that those living in the neighborhood are used to seeing other types of wild animals such as raccoons, but a fox was a rare



Goodwin

ity, so she stopped to watch it.

"That's when I noticed that the fox's face looked funny," she said.

Rusbult said the fox's lips were pulled back so that its teeth were showing. "It looked like it was grinning at me," Rusbult added. "I felt sure it was sick."

Concerned that it might attack someone in the neighborhood, Rusbult

said she called the county dispatch's non-emergency number when she got home to report what she had seen.

"I didn't want to call 911 and get in trouble, since it wasn't an emergency," she said. "But I did feel that something needed to be done."

Rusbult explained the situation to the dispatcher so that someone could be sent to the site. To her

surprise, the dispatcher told her that the local animal control officers and the sheriff's office did not respond to those types of calls, Rusbult said.

Instead, Rusbult said, the dispatcher gave her the name and phone number of a pest control company in the area and suggested that she contact them for assistance.

But Rusbult said that when she called the compa-

ny, they wanted her name and address so they could bill her once they made a visit to the site to trap the animal.

"I couldn't believe it," Rusbult said, shaking her head. "I was floored."

So Rusbult once again contacted the county dispatcher who again gave her the same answer — no help was available from

See **SHERIFF**, 5A

Attorney wants dismissals reopened

Judge threw out 6 petitions last week

By **WILLIAM F. WEST**
The Daily Advance

An attorney representing persons wanting the suspension or removal of District Attorney Frank Parrish is calling for a reconsideration of six petitions a Superior Court judge threw out late last week.

The attorney, Kathryn Fagan, of Manteo, is arguing that the people of the 1st Judicial District "deserve a voice in the courts and not to be summarily dismissed with no explanation."

Fagan on Tuesday filed her request with the Pasquotank County Civil Court. Neither the judge, Alma Hinton, nor Parrish's attorney, James Maxwell of Durham, could be reached for comment. Parrish could not be reached, but he has said he does not comment on matters pending before a court.

Hinton, in a brief order made public on Friday, dismissed the six petitions, which listed separate allegations against Parrish. She ruled that she believed Parrish did not break any state laws designed to prevent district attorneys from engaging in prosecutorial misconduct.

Also, she ruled that Parrish "had conducted himself within the bounds of his prosecutorial discretion."

Fagan, in calling for a hearing in open court, said she believed that the six petitioners have alleged much more than mere displeasure with Parrish.

"They have described time after time where in the district attorney agreed that crimes had been committed and either

See **PARRISH**, 2A



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JAILHOUSE DEALS



PHOTO BY RITCHIE E. STARNES

Efforts move ahead for Chowan County to contract its jail services with the Albemarle District Jail. Plans also call for the Detention Center to become part of ADJ.

Chowan inches closer to ADJ

Leaders prefer jail stay open

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**
Editor

Efforts for Chowan County to join the Albemarle District Jail continue to progress with a possible deal by July 1.

Chowan and Pasquotank County leaders are still conducting their respective cost analysis to see if the deal is financially feasible before the start of the next fiscal year. Closing Chowan's jail or bringing it under ADJ's authority remains a key variable, but not a deal breaker.

For the past several years Chowan has eyed surrendering its jail system to ADJ, but efforts have gained the most traction over the last year. Long-term the move should net

Chowan taxpayers a savings.

"For the first couple of years it would be a wash," said Chowan County Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin. "As the number of inmates increase that's when we'll start seeing a bigger savings. Anytime you deal with volume you can get things done cheaper."

Chowan's jail was built in the late 70s and designed to hold 24 inmates. It already borders its 40-inmate capacity. If the county doesn't transition to ADJ, the county could be forced to build a new facility at roughly \$8 million.

In addition to its own inmates, Pasquotank's ADJ currently houses prisoners for Perquimans and Camden counties. ADJ has a capacity of 248 inmates and an annual operating budget just under \$5 million, according to Pasquotank County Sheriff Randy Cartwright. Its next planned

expansion calls for an extra capacity of 240 before building out at 600 inmates, but there are no plans to expand in the foreseeable future. ADJ has also been housing between 45 and 70 federal inmates, which helps to offset the jail's operating costs. At \$52 daily per inmate, ADJ's expense could improve with more partnerships.

"The more inmates the less the costs to house because of the fixed costs," Cartwright said.

Pasquotank's jail has already been housing Chowan's female inmates. But, to avoid closing its jail altogether, Chowan has pitched allowing ADJ use the facility for female inmates, or at the least placing the jail under ADJ's umbrella.

"We have an interest in keeping the facility open," said Chowan County Manager Zee

See **ADJ**, 5A

Schools brace to lose Life Coaches

\$175K grant aids dropout program

By **REBECCA BUNCH**
Staff Writer

With the dropout rate already a perennial concern in the Edenton-Chowan Schools, the system now stands to lose a program aimed at addressing the problem.



Bond

Superintendent Alan Smith said that a state-funded dropout prevention grant that allowed the local school system to offer a Life Coaches program would end at the close of this school year unless other funding can be secured. Smith said that despite the merits of the program he was doubtful that would be the case.

"That would be a sizeable expense for us," he said of the \$175,000 annually that would be required to keep the program alive.

"I really admire the passion that they (life coaches in the school system) have for this program," Smith



Lassiter



Smith

See **LIFE COACHES**, 4A

NC lottery not producing school jackpots

By **PETER WILLIAMS**
Staff Writer

The odds of winning the Power Ball jackpot are better than the odds that the N.C. lottery can bridge the gap for school districts facing shortfalls near year.

There simply isn't enough money available — and never has — to make a serious dent in the education budget, state officials say.

Local school systems get a share of every lottery dollar spent but it doesn't

come close to what it costs to fund education in the state.

Sara Clark, a spokeswoman for the Department of Public Instruction, puts it into perspective.

Clark estimated the revenue from the lottery in 2010-11 was \$419 million, while the total state education budget was roughly \$7.14 billion.

"You can see it's really a

drop in the bucket," Clark said.

Thirty cents



every dollar spent on a lottery ticket will filter back to education in some fashion. The majority —

50 percent — goes toward prizes. There is 7 percent that goes back to retailers who sell the tickets and 5 percent goes for administrative costs like advertising and administrative costs. Schools get the rest.

Camden County is in a rare position. The Camden school system is the smallest of the five in the Albemarle region but it's also has the largest amount of money sitting in a pot created by the North Carolina

lottery to pay for construction projects.

What's more unusual is Camden doesn't have any looming construction need that would require the funds. It's planning to draw down \$100,000 to rehab the media center at Camden High School, but it doesn't have an immediate need to build a \$30 million school. It's used \$200,000 in lottery money for debt service once, back in 2008-09.

See **LOTTERY**, 4A

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