



Rec kids run 5k, 6A

## Developer wants Council recusals

Four councilmen own rental property

By REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Developers seeking a conditional-use permit to build a larger government-subsidized housing complex are demanding that two Edenton councilmen

recuse themselves from the decision.

A week after Councilman Bob Quinn challenged Evergreen Construction officials about the company's plans to build a 50-unit multi-family housing complex along Coke Avenue, company executives want Quinn and Sambo Dixon



Dixon



Privott



Quinn



Stallings

recused from participating in the quasi-judicial hearing because of a per-

ceived conflict of interest. Evergreen's Tim Morgan, vice president, said both

men own rental properties in Edenton and have been the most vocal opponents of the proposed project.

"It makes me question whether they can be fair," Morgan said Monday.

"I believe there is a conflict of interest (financially) with (them) hearing our case and they should excuse themselves from the vote," Morgan wrote

in a May 18 email to the Chowan Herald.

"In my opinion, this would be no different than a new grocery store wanting to come to town, with representatives from Food Lion and Lowes Foods sitting on the town board, voting on whether the new store should be granted a

See DEVELOPER, 2A

## Budget spares a tax hike

County staff to get COLA raise

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

For a third straight year Chowan County taxpayers will avoid a property tax increase while county employees will get their first pay bump since 2007.

County Manager Zee

Lamb announced Monday that the county's tax rate will remain at 68 and 1/2 cents per



Lamb

\$100 valuation and that the county will again contribute to its fund balance for the 2012-13 fiscal year while also giving county employees a 2 percent pay hike. The county will also pay their health and dental benefits. In Monday morning's Board of Commissioners meeting, Lamb presented his annual budget with total revenues and expenditures at \$16.1 million.

Last week, Lamb presented a first draft budget that by meeting's end needed cuts of roughly \$400,000 before a budget could be balanced without a tax increase. He managed to find the necessary cuts within various departments while still contributing \$213,814 to the county's reserves. Part of Chowan's goal is to reach a fund balance of \$4 million, or 25 percent of its General Fund.

"I believe by the end of next year, we can achieve that target," Lamb told the board.

If there was any spark of contention it came when Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin expressed concern that his department has had to freeze positions for the past two years to help balance the county's budget. Goodwin reluctantly agreed to defund the 911 director's position as well as the need for another deputy.

"I'm as tight with a penny as anybody," Goodwin said. "I'm afraid we'll be back here next year and we'll be without one (911 director)."

See BUDGET, 2A



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## Finding Hero



Ben Rinehart, a retired lieutenant colonel, points to his many citations earned during his 22 years in the U.S. Marines. Rinehart was a decorated helicopter pilot.

## Army pilot tracks down Marine to say thanks

Rescue occurred 46 years ago in Laos

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Forty-six years after gunfire sent his reconnaissance plane plummeting to a fiery crash in Laos, one of the two survivors found the

Marine who saved his life and stopped in Edenton last Monday to say thanks.

After decades of trying to identify and locate his hero, Mark Bellamy, an U.S. Army retired lieutenant colonel, finally met Ben Rinehart, a retired lieutenant colonel, of the U.S. Marines, in a setting other than a helicopter.

There were no hugs for these two retired war birds. Instead, they shared a firm handshake and smiles before sitting down in Rinehart's living room where they reflected on the harrowing ordeal.

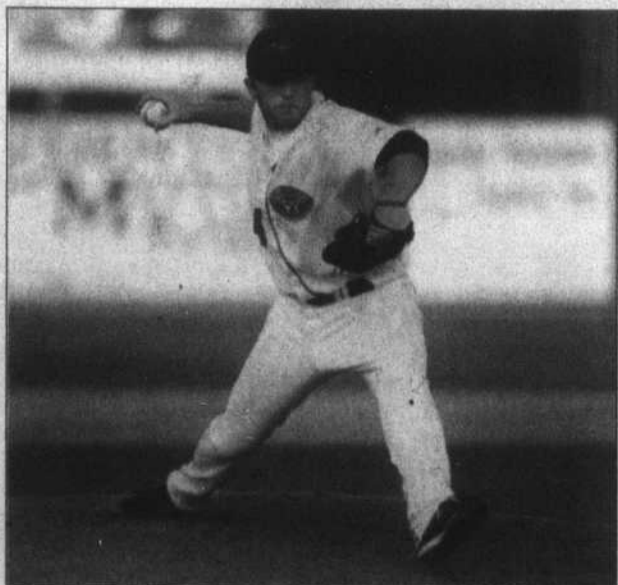
"This was an opportunity for me to say thanks," Bellamy said. "My chil-

See HERO, 3A



This photo shows Ben Rinehart when he was Marine captain, the same rank when he rescued then U.S. Army Capt. Mark Bellamy on Feb. 4, 1966.

## Returnees will be boost to Steamers



FILE PHOTO

Josh Branstetter, a right-handed pitcher from Delta State, was a Coastal Plain League All-Star pick for the Steamers last summer before suffering a season-ending ankle injury.

Four players back from CPL finalist

By CHIC RIEBEL  
Daily Advance Sports Editor

When the 2012 Edenton Steamers begin arriving in town this weekend to prepare for Tuesday's Coastal Plain League opener at Hicks Field against the Peninsula Pilots, first-year coach Steve Moritz will feel like he already has a good thing going.

That's because Moritz, who was an assistant under Dirk Kinney on last year's CPL runner-up, will be welcoming back four players who helped the Steamers set a franchise record for victories in a season.

### Season Opener

Tuesday, May 29,  
Steamers vs. Peninsula Pilots, 7 p.m.,  
Hicks Field

### Steamers Preview

Meet the 2012 team in our special, two-page preview on May 30

Pitchers Joshua Branstetter, Jordan Egan and David Teasley and outfielder Nathan Burns are the returnees.

"It was important to bring some of those guys back," Moritz said in a telephone interview earlier in the week. "If you look at the way we won last year, it was by playing the game right and playing hard."

"These four guys know how to do that. They know how to prepare for games. They know how to approach the game. They understand roles.

"Having a core group from last year will help us instill the same things in this team and they're going to help me adjust to being the head coach.

"I couldn't have asked for four better guys to be coming back. They were outstanding on and off the field."

Branstetter and Egan were voted into last summer's CPL All-Star Game.

Branstetter, a right-handed starting pitcher from Delta State, was 4-1 with an ERA of 1.34 before

See STEAMERS, 7A

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