



## Ex-Dem keynotes GOP center opening

Hub supports GOP campaigns

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Who best to kickoff the ceremonial grand opening of the Republican Victory Center in Edenton than a former Democrat congressman who now stumps for the GOP?

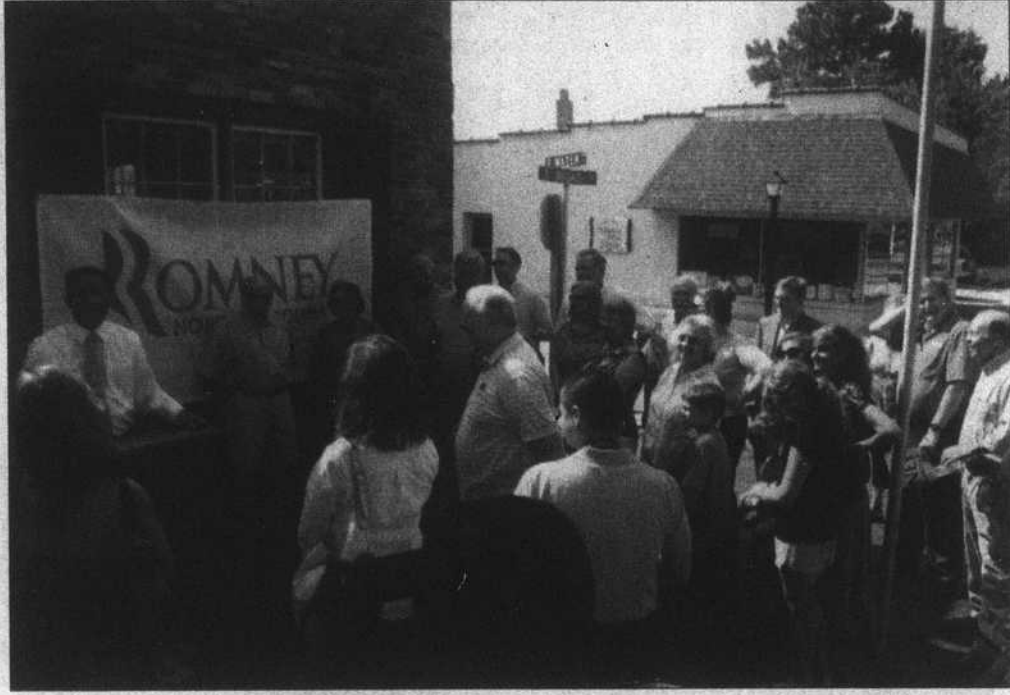
Artur Davis, a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Alabama, delivered keynote remarks at Thursday morning's official Victory Center opening. One of President Barack Obama's earliest supporters and a former co-chairman for his presidential campaign, the former Democrat switched parties about three months ago.

now I am found," Davis shouted to some 60 spectators gathered outside the downtown center.

He then urged them to reclaim their country during the November elections.

"If we don't take this country back, set it right, we may not recognize it," Davis said. "Get out there and take your country back. It might come down to North Carolina."

Davis, who represented Alabama's 7th Congressional District from 2003 to 2011, was notably the first member of Congress outside of Illinois to endorse then Senator Obama's 2008 presidential bid. And it was Davis who seconded the official nomination of Obama at the 2008 Democratic National



STAFF PHOTOS BY RITCHIE STARNES

Artur Davis, left at podium, speaks at Thursday's Republican Victory Center grand opening in Edenton. Davis, a former Democrat U.S. congressman from Alabama, switched political affiliations and joined the Republican Party. Once a supporter of President Barack Obama, Davis currently stumps for GOP presidential hopeful Mitt Romney.

See **OPENING**, 2A

## Suit alleges racial bias

Suit targets white school officials

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

A fired school administrator from Edenton-Chowan Schools has filed a federal lawsuit alleging that school officials discriminated against her because of race.

Mary E. Lyons-Felton filed the suit on July 31, alleging that the school system violated the Civil Rights Act by discriminating against her because she is black. The suit specifically targets white school officials, both individually and in their professional capacities.

"This lawsuit primarily seeks redress, in the context of Title VII claims, for Edenton-Chowan Schools' failure to promote Plaintiff to Director of Secondary and Career Technical Education due to being black and her prior complaints of racial discrimination based upon acts committed by Edenton-Chowan Schools' Board Members, Chairman, Director of Human Resources, Superintendent and highest officials...As opposed to promoting the Plaintiff to said position on the basis of her credentials, Edenton-Chowan Schools hired a less qualified white candidate," the suit reads in part.

See **BIAS**, 2A

## Most schools meet targets

2011-12 final year for ABCs report

By PETER WILLIAMS  
The Daily Advance

Twenty-eight of 35 schools in the five county region — 80 percent — met or exceeded student learning growth targets on the ABCs of Public Education in the final year the state will be using the testing measurement.

According to state data released Thursday, all five schools in Camden County, four schools in Perquimans County and four schools in the Edenton-Chowan Schools met expected growth on the ABCs. So did nine of 12 schools in the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools and six of 10 in the Currituck County Schools district.

In addition, two Camden schools — CamTech and Camden Intermediate — were named Honor Schools of Excellence for students performance on end-of-course and end-of-grade testing, as were two Currituck schools — J.P. Knapp Early College High School and Knotts Island Elementary School.

Three other Camden schools were named Schools of Distinction. Camden High, Grandy Primary and Camden Middle were awarded that status.

Four Currituck schools also were named Schools of Distinction.

They included Central Elementary, Jarvisburg Elementary, Moyock Elementary and Currituck Middle schools.

Perquimans High School also was named a School of Distinction.

In the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools, Weeksville Elementary

See **TARGETS**, 4A

## Digital conversion costs could darken Taylor Theater



STAFF PHOTOS BY RITCHIE E. STARNES

Bob Krochnal peers through a projector's window at his Taylor Theater. While Edenton's two-screen theater still relies on film, an industry transition toward digital within a year threatens the sustainability of the movie house.

## Owner needs to raise \$150K by 2013

Film soon to be obsolete

By RITCHIE E. STARNES  
Editor

Still reeling from a stagnant economy, the Taylor Theater is now faced with a new crisis that threatens to bring the curtain down on movies shown in Edenton.

The Taylor Theater is among thousands of small-town movie houses across the country faced with making the conversion from celluloid to digital. While the quality of digitally shown movies shown will be an improvement over film, the required financial investment will be simply to remain in business and not necessarily translate into additional revenue. At \$150,000, which is what's required to make the change at the Taylor's twin cinema, the sum remains too steep for 46-year-old owner Bob Krochnal.

Krochnal said he's talked with a venture capitalist about a loan to cover the conversion, but the terms call for a 5-year loan at more than 9 percent interest, or roughly \$3,200 per month. That doesn't include his other expenses, such as rent and utilities.

"That's a mortgage! I need 30 years to pay that back," Krochnal said. "I can't take that loan out."

Krochnal, who also serves as theater manager, said he will not be able to do it alone. He's appealing for the community's help to subsidize the transition.

"If we want to keep this theater in town, I'm going to need help from the money folks," Krochnal said. "If I go under, this town will

See **THEATER**, 3A



Bob Krochnal stands beside film reels attached to the wall inside the projection room at his Taylor Theater. Plans call for the conversion from celluloid to digital. The conversion will cost Krochnal \$150,000 just to remain status quo in terms of revenue.

## School grad report mixed

Only 3 of 7 schools show rate increases

By PETER WILLIAMS  
The Daily Advance

Even though graduation rates improved at only three of seven area high schools last year, six of the seven posted rates higher than the statewide average that for the first time ever topped 80 percent.

According to state data released Thursday, the two high schools in the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools district — Northeastern and Pasquotank — showed the largest improvement on graduation rates during the 2011-12 school year.

Pasquotank County High School's graduation rate rose from 74 percent in 2010-11 to 85.6 percent in 2011-12 — an 11.6 percent increase.

Northeastern High School's graduation rate, meanwhile, grew from 88 percent to 88.6 percent, the highest of any public high school in the Albemarle.

Superintendent Linwood

See **GRAD RATES**, 3A

