



JA Holmes homecoming pictures — 6B

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Town considers way to reduce outages

New device would contain power loss

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Widespread power outages in Edenton could become a thing of the past with the purchase of a device that cuts the potential for such occurrences.

Town of Edenton Electric Director Glenn Ander-

sen told the town council Monday evening that the purchase and installation of a recloser device had the potential to limit outages to a particular area where, for example, a tree had fallen across a power line rather than affecting an entire circuit of the town's electric distribution system.

A recloser, in layman's terms, is a circuit breaker that comes equipped with a mechanism that automati-

cally closes the breaker once it has been opened due to a problem with the electrical system, Andersen said.

"It would limit the number of customers who are left without power and help us troubleshoot a lot better," Andersen told the council.

Andersen recommended that the town start by purchasing three of the devices for the areas of the town's electric distribution

system most often struck by outages during stormy weather. Additional purchases could be made at a later date, he said.

In response to a question from Councilman Steve Biggs, Andersen said the town currently has none of the small, pole-mounted devices. The cost of the devices would be about \$18,000 each, Andersen said, but it would be a worthwhile investment.

Councilman Willis Privott, who is a member of the town's utilities committee, said while he agreed with the concept he thought the town should start with the purchase of one recloser and gradually purchase others. Privott spoke on behalf of the committee Monday night.

"I don't recommend buying all of them at one time, as the economy is now," Privott said. Funds for the

purchase would come from the electric and water department's budget.

Privott's fellow committee member Bob Quinn agreed that the recommendation for the purchase of one recloser should be forwarded to the full council for consideration during its next meeting on Oct. 9.

Councilmen Jimmy Stallings and Sambo Dixon were absent from Monday night's meeting.

County eyes reduced debt

Plan could save taxpayers \$10.2M

By PETER WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

With rebuilding the reserve fund all but complete, Chowan County Commissioners are shifting gears to paying down debt — ultimately saving taxpayers \$10.2 million.

The board voted last week to refinance seven of the loans it has, with a goal of being debt free by the year 2024.

As it was, a child born in Chowan County today would be 36-years-old by the year 2048 — when the last of the current debts were scheduled to be paid off.

"This debt was going to strangle us, and it was going to strangle us for a many years," County Manager Zee Lamb said last week. "So the board decided to come up with a way to refinance some of this debt."

In 2008, the board found that its reserve fund had vanished. The state recommends the board have at least three months of operating income on hand in case of an emergency.

At that time, the board agreed to earmark 1.5 cents of the property tax rate to rebuild the reserve fund. At the moment, it's up to \$3.8 million.

In 2008, the board also lengthened the terms of existing loans to ease financial pressure on the county. The action taken last week reverses that, and reins in the length of time it will take to satisfy the debt.

Some of 10 loans the county has won't be refinanced because it makes no sense to do so, Lamb said. The \$2 million it borrowed for renovations at John A. Holmes High School and the \$75,000 for



Lamb

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FAIR TIME



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

This fair booth created by the Chowan County Extension staff features some unusual musicians as members of the Chowan ECA Animal Band.

Fair officials pay attention to details

Organizers always looking for new ideas

By PETER WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

To the casual observer, the Chowan County Fair that started Tuesday is about rides, cotton candy, animals and crafts.

To the trained eye, it's all about balance, cleanliness and safety.

While the crowds vary based on weather, as many as 27,000 people have attended the annual

five-day event. The last two years have been hard on attendance, but the attention to detail hasn't been lost on people like E.C. Toppin and John Chilcoat.

Toppin is president of the fair board, a post he's held since the 1990s. Chilcoat is vice president in charge of advertising.

New this year will be an exotic petting zoo and a high wire motorcycle demonstration. Back this year will be a puppet show, which has proven a hit with kids.

"Most fairs all have the basic things, exhibits, the midway and entertainment," Chilcoat said

last week. "We put a lot of effort in this and we really make a point on cleanliness."

The efforts haven't gone unnoticed. For three of the past five years, the Chowan Fair has won the Image Award presented by the N.C. Association of Agricultural Fairs.

"It's a big award for us," said Bonnie Holloman, the executive director of the association. "The award shows they have a good balance. It's very prestigious. In Chowan they have a very strong organization and Mr. Toppin has always been super to work with."

While Chilcoat didn't bring it up, Holloman did. Last year Chilcoat won the Holmes McBride Award for his outstanding service to the fair association and Chowan Fair over the years.

Fairs can opt out of the competition for awards, but Holloman said about 95 percent do participate. The purpose is to make a weak fair stronger and a good fair even better. Given Chowan's current attendance, it ranks as a Category 1 Fair. That goes to fairs with an attendance of 15,000 or less. In the past, it's been a

See FAIR, 2A

Chowan County Fair remains a family affair

Generations pass down tradition

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

When Rich Miller of Merry Hill looks at the historically accurate black and white milk delivery truck he created to enter in this year's Chowan County Regional Fair his wife always crosses his mind.

Miller's wife Gloria died of a sudden heart attack at age 50 last fall, two years after the couple moved from Edenton to Merry Hill.

In early February of

this year he began working on the milk truck that she had encouraged him to begin prior to her death as a way to deal with his grief. There are reminders of her everywhere, Miller said. The lettering on the truck — a replica of a 1929 Ford Model A delivery truck — proclaims it a Partners Milk vehicle.

"That's what we always called each other, partners," Miller said with a sad smile, remembering.

The license plate numbers on the vehicle are the couple's wedding date, July 28, 2007. And an oval attached to the front of his project carries the name Gloria written in his



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Rich Miller of Merry Hill demonstrates the workable parts of a handmade old-timey milk delivery truck he completed as a tribute to his late wife Gloria.

wife's own handwriting, her a part in the project. Miller said. It was as close as he could come to giving

of them, Miller said, his wife's love and devotion meant everything to him.

"I'm here for her sake," Miller said. "I'd like to see it (milk truck) do well in the judging."

In 2009 Miller's hand-created depiction of an old abandoned farmhouse won best in show at the Chowan County Regional Fair and at the State Fair as well, making his wife very proud, he said. Miller has equally high hopes for this piece.

The milk truck is steerable and its hood opens from both sides to meet in the middle.

See FAMILY, 2A



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CENTER HILL Community Day	SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 29 STARTS AT 1:00PM	CENTER HILL COMMUNITY BUILDING SANDY RIDGE RD., TYNER	EMS FIRE DEPARTMENT SMART START	Let's have some Fun! Cake Walk • Silent Auction Inflatables • Optimist Train GAMES • Pie Throwing Craft Tables	Let's Eat Funnel Cakes BBQ Sweet Treats Beverages
MUSIC 1:00-5:30PM	TENT MEETING 6:00PM	Drawing for \$50 Gas Card Must be present to win			