



Donor pledges \$100K for Taylor Theater

Digital conversion nears reality

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

Efforts to keep the Taylor Theater reeling movies received a sizable boost when an anonymous donor pledged \$100,000 if fundraisers could match \$50,000.

"It's probably the most generous donation that

I've ever seen," said Councilman Sambo Dixon, who shared the news of the impending donor. "This just says it all about why we're (Edenton) different."

The donation is two-thirds of the \$150,000 goal designated as the sum needed for the Taylor Theater to convert its movie production from film to digital. Theaters unable to make the conversion to the contemporary method risk going out of business by

the end of next year.

"The donor just feels the theater is really important to the town of Edenton," Dixon said.

Most small towns no longer have a local theater as part of downtown districts, losing them to larger metropolitan areas where there is



a higher volume of a cus-

do this before the end of the year," said Jeanne Cumby, who has spearheaded fundraising efforts.

News of the benefactor was announced at Friday night's most recent fundraising effort - Soup & Mug - held at the former Chero's building. That event sold 400 tickets at \$20 each with patrons lined out the door onto Water Street.

"We're still selling the theater seats," Cumby said.

"We can raise the full amount just with the seats."

Fifty-two seats have already been sold at \$300 each. There are 120 seats in each of the two theater sides, or 240 total.

Efforts also call for trying to secure a naming rights sponsor of each theater at \$10,000 per side, or \$20,000.

"It's possible that we can raise the money by

See THEATER, 2A

Police eye new helmet penalty

Chief prefers to cite parents

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

For more than a year Edenton Police Chief Jay Fortenberry has conducted presentations geared toward encouraging local children to wear bike helmets. Now he wants to add more bite to the bark.

The impetus for the campaign was previous concern expressed by Councilman Steve Biggs about the number of kids he has seen around town riding bikes but not wearing helmets per state law.

Now, Fortenberry's See HELMET, 2A



Fortenberry

Santa Claus comes to town



PHOTO BY RITCHIE STARNES

Children line up for an opportunity to meet Santa Claus outside the Chowan Arts Council, courtesy of Destination Downtown Edenton, Friday.

Real beard defines holiday role

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

'Tis the season he's the most popular man in town and there's nothing phony about him.

Further proof emerged during Friday night's annual Christmas tree illumination. Once Santa Claus arrived on the scene, hundreds of wide-eyed children raced to greet him with parents in tow. Outside the Chowan Arts Council Santa dispersed candy canes amid frequent stoops for an army of children to whisper into his ear. After each wish list, Santa peered approvingly over his spectacles with as much excitement as the child.

"I love to see kids happy," Santa said. "Their eyes light up when I give 'em a present."

Even Santa's eyes sparkle with equal amazement when a child makes a special request.

"Last year, a 10-year-old boy asked for peace on earth," Santa recalled. "It shocked me that a kid that young thinks like that."

Santa, or one of many of Santa's helper as he's sometimes referred, is also special because he's real - a regular guy who emerges every Christmas season. He became Santa because he shared the right jolly disposition and physical characteristics.

Santa seems to be a happy-go-lucky type with a simple sense of always doing what's right. Rosy

cheeks mound below his smiling eyes. Santa's paunch, perhaps from too many left cookies, adds to his festive appearance and insulates him for the cold winters.

A trademark beard of 21 years mostly conceals his broad smile.

"Somebody told me one day that I would make a good Santa Claus because I'm big and the beard," Santa said.

While his shaggy, gray beard consumes his jovial face and fascinates children, it's also a litmus test for skeptics.

"My grandchild yanked his beard and Santa said 'ouch,'" recalled Frank Jones, owner of the Soda Shoppe where St Nick meets with children during the holiday season.

The Soda Shoppe is just another venue where a kid feels compelled to pull Santa's beard.

"We are so fortunate to have the best of Santa's helpers here in Edenton," said Jennifer Harriss, Destination Downtown Edenton director. "The children are always delighted to see Santa at the annual Christmas Tree Lighting, and if they tug on his beard, they realize that it is indeed real!"

Jones also recalled one day when St. Nick was in his diner during the summer eating lunch. Although not wearing his classic red suit, Jones instinctively

See SANTA, 3A

Disabled woman seeks cart waiver

Driver's license, insurance required

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

The Town Council is expected to consider at its Dec. 11 monthly meeting whether to grant a request to waive its requirement that those operating golf carts on town streets be licensed drivers.

In June, the Council adopted an ordinance allowing the use of carts. Among the requirements were that anyone operating a cart must have a valid driver's license and insurance.

Fay Agar of Edenton, See CART, 4A

Goodwin, Cole bid farewell to county board

Nixon voted in as new chairman

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

Two bade farewell while their elected replacements officially began inaugural terms.

Monday night's Chowan County Board of Commissioners meeting signaled the end of the terms of Chairman Eddy Goodwin and Ralph Cole. Meanwhile their successors Alex Kehayes and Greg

Bonner took an oath to serve the county for the next four years.

Before the start of any new county business, there was the matter of sending off Goodwin and Cole. Cole, 72, had served as commissioner for 10 years and experienced the county's financial debacle in 2008. But, he stayed the course until the situation improved - the only one from the previous administration still serving.

When Cole began to explain why he chose to step down, he referred to the 1978 song The Gambler.

See BOARD, 3A



PHOTO BY RITCHIE STARNES

Commissioner Eddy Goodwin (left) talks with Alex Kehayes at a Monday afternoon reception in honor of outgoing commissioners. Kehayes officially replaced Goodwin an hour later when he was sworn in.



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DRIVE THRU CHRISTMAS PANORAMA
The Greatest Gift
DECEMBER 14th, 15th & 16th
6 PM - 8 PM
CENTER HILL BAPTIST CHURCH - 616 SANDY RIDGE ROAD, TYNER