



Used bookstore opens at new location — 1B 50¢

Plan calls for switch of health insurance

Chowan nixes its NEAHG membership

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

Chowan County plans to switch its employee health insurance provider since it can save as much as 25 percent on premium costs.

Because county leaders have been unable to examine its

claims data with the Northeast Albemarle Health Group (NEAHG) to determine if Chowan was in fact realizing a fair deal, the county was forced to notify the provider that it planned to exit the group. A one-year advance notice is required. Only two months after that request did



Lamb

NEAHG release the data. At that time, the analysis proved what county leaders already suspected — that Chowan County had been paying more than its fair share to the membership. Over the last five years, Chowan had paid NEAHG nearly \$5 million, compared to claims at \$3.3 million for an average of \$3,904 per employee. Last year, Chowan matched the 2007-08 fiscal year for its best claims to premium ratio over the five-year

span. "We could have been one of the counties with a higher ratio, but we didn't think we were. So, we rolled the dice," said County Manager Zee Lamb.

Chowan's claims to premium ratio averaged 66 percent, according to the data. A fair ratio for both the insured and provider is closer to 85 percent, Lamb said.

For its 128 active employees and another 19 retirees, Chowan pays \$7,176 annually per employ-

ee, or \$598 monthly, for health insurance. It pays \$264 annually per employee for dental and \$39 per employee yearly for \$10,000 in life insurance, records show.

Lamb said Chowan has had fewer claims than other NEAHG members, which he attributes to a healthy lifestyle among the county's employees.

"We've been fortunate not to have a catastrophic occurrence,"

See INSURANCE, 3A

Event honors Inglis Fletcher

Author penned Carolina Series

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

During the town of Edenton's 300th anniversary year the life and work of one of its most noteworthy citizens will be celebrated.



Novelist Inglis Fletcher and the historical novels she wrote during the time she lived in Edenton will be the focus of a symposium on March 1 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the 1767 Chowan Courthouse.



Fletcher

The symposium is being co-chaired by Sally Francis Kehayes, representing the Edenton

Woman's Club, and Ben Speller, retired dean and professor at the North Carolina Central University School of Library and Information Sciences.

Speakers will include East Carolina University professors Maurice York and Alex Albright. Fletcher's papers were donated to the university after her death in 1969.

Speller said he thought it was important that Fletcher be recognized during the town's anniversary year for her local contributions.

Speller said that Fletcher's Carolina Series of historical novels — written between 1942 and 1964 — covered 200 years of the state's history from 1585 to 1789, blending true events and real people from Edenton into the stories.

"You have to not only educate and inform but you also have to entertain," Speller said of Fletcher's writing style. "That was definitely her contribution. Her Carolina Series got people coming to

See SYMPOSIUM, 2A

Police believe jacket linked to arson

Sheriff: All case leads have been exhausted

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

A jacket bearing the New York Giants logo is the latest, if not last lead in a recent arson case.

Edenton police released a photo of the jacket with the National Football League's New York Giants' emblem. The jacket was found near the scene of the Feb. 3 fire of a 28-foot Albemarle fishing boat parked on a trailer behind a warehouse on Hubley Drive, according to police Chief Jay Fortenbery.

"We are hoping someone will recognize the coat and may lead us to a possible suspect," Fortenbery said. "We found this coat the night of the fire but withheld public release due to its relevance in the on-going investigation."

The 8:45 p.m. boat fire, partially captured on a security camera, was the first of three fires within two days, prompting investigators to consider that all are related. Police first thought the suspect in the boat fire may have suffered burns to his body after the surveillance film showed an explosive type fire.

On the following night (Feb. 4), the former White Oak Elementary School was set ablaze. As firefighters were battling the fire at the



SUBMITTED PHOTO

See ARSON, 2A This jacket was found near the scene of a Feb. 3 arson in Edenton. Police suspect the coat may have belonged to the arsonist.

Bulldogs post 3rd straight undefeated season

Boys' basketball team claims 4th consecutive championship

By RITCHIE E. STARNES
Editor

Instead of reciting 'Disney World' like many athletes declare as their next destination after a championship victory, Chowan Middle School's undefeated boys basketball team can profess a trip to the State Capitol.

A trip to the Capitol per the invitation of Gov. Pat McCrory is the fruit of the Bulldogs' labor after posting a 16-0 season for the 2012-13 school year, marking the school's third consecutive undefeated basketball season and fourth straight Coastal Athletics Conference championship. Efforts to coordinate a date for McCrory to meet the team are under way.

Chowan Middle's boy ballers have toiled a round-ball dynasty after recording 48 straight victories and 62 out of the last 64 games, dating back four years ago.

Coach Brian Chappell, who has paced the sidelines during the remarkable run, prefers to deflect credit to the boys.

"Chowan County has produced some mighty good athletes these last four years," Chappell said. "It's been a talented group. They're good learners that love playing together."

Proof of that hotbed of talent is most evident at Chowan Middle School where all of the male sports teams have posted undefeated records this year, including basketball, football (also coached by Chappell), and wrestling. Even the co-ed soccer team did not lose a game — a lone tie spoiling a perfect season.

"The pressure is on for our base ball team," said Tanya Turner, CMS principal.

Last year's undefeated basketball team also produced an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) National Championship last

year.

See BULLDOGS, 3A

By the numbers

- 3 — Consecutive undefeated seasons
- 4 — Consecutive conference championships
- 29 — Points per margin of victory this season
- 48 — Victories without a loss over last three seasons
- 62-2 — Record over the last four seasons
- 9 — Number of players that played on AAU national champion team
- 4 — Number of teams at CMS that went undefeated so far this school year.

Town OKs using donations to aid theater

Taylor Theater to make digital transition

By REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

The town of Edenton will assume ownership of digital projection equipment for use by the Taylor Theater.

The Town Council voted unanimously at its Feb. 12 meeting to use donations from the community — including \$100,000 from

an anonymous donor — to purchase the equipment priced at \$150,000 so that the downtown movie theater could remain open. Councilors Steve Biggs and Norma Simpson were absent due to illness.

Prior to the vote, Councilman Willis Privott questioned who would be responsible for upkeep and maintenance of the equipment after it is installed.

theater's owner/operator Bob Krochmal would relieve the town of that responsibility.

"The operator will be responsible for upkeep and maintenance," Knighton said.

Knighton added that town attorney Hood Ellis was working

"diligently" to prepare the agreement.

"So we won't have anything to do with this (upkeep and repairs)," Privott asked. "I just hate to see us get bogged down in this if anything happened."

Councilman Sambo Dixon said he was happy that the movie theater would remain open with the help of donors and the town.

"I think it shows how important and special that theater is

See THEATER, 4B



6 89076 44813 0
©2009 The Chowan Herald
All Rights Reserved

Edenton Lions Club
Breakfast for the Blind-Help the Lions help the Blind \$6⁰⁰
 Edenton Baptist Church - Saturday, March 9 | 7AM - 10:30AM
 Eat In or Take-Out | Tickets from any Lion or Call 482-3608 for more information.