



Hornthal back coaching after lung transplant —1B 50¢

Citizens express concern over neighborhood crime

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Several years ago Cooper Meise and her husband bought what they hoped would become their retirement home in Edenton.

Last Friday, she left town, her dreams of a future in the community shattered. The now boarded up windows of her home stand as a message to the community that she left because she no longer felt safe there. Un-

relenting loud noise, cursing, vandalism, open drug dealing and prostitution, and threats of violence have driven her away.

"I now own a home that my husband will not return to, where my sons no longer wish to come, where our friends will no longer visit," Meise said in a letter that she read aloud during the public comment portion of the Aug. 13 town council meeting.

Meise was one of a group

of local citizens who live on North Broad and West Albemarle Street who read letters expressing their frustration that the enforcement of town ordinances is not being carried out effectively enough to put an end to the situation.

"Over the last eight weeks, I have reported my concerns to several town officials but sadly, I have documented no change," Meise said.

See COMPLAINTS, 2A

Officials: Town cares, will act

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

When a group of residents from North Broad and Albemarle Streets came before the town council at its Aug. 13 monthly meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Jimmy Stallings assured them the concerns they expressed had not fallen on deaf ears. "I assure you we are con-

MORE ON THIS STORY

Police chief promises 'whatever it takes' — 2A

cerned," Stallings told the group after he and other council members listened to their pleas for help in restoring peace and quiet in their neighborhood. "We have heard you loud and

clear. We will be working on this."

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said Friday that in response to the concerns expressed by citizens, Police Chief Jay Fortenbery and Capt. Tim Hickman have developed a plan of action that will address illegal activities

See RESPONSE, 3A

BACK-TO-SCHOOL

New things in store for Edenton-Chowan students

REGGIE PONDER
Editor

The Edenton-Chowan Schools are planning big improvements this year in technology, academic rigor, and parent and community involvement.

Behind some of these enhancements are the state's move to the New Common Core and Essential Standards and the district's implementation of two Golden LEAF grants.

Students return to class Aug. 26. The school district expects an enrollment of 2,238 students.

Superintendent Allan Smith last week said the common core and new essential standards are much more in-depth than prior standards, "requiring a much deeper understanding by the students."

Students are required to do much more application and evaluation with the material they learn, Smith said.

The Edenton-Chowan Schools have been working on the new common core for about a year and a half, according to Smith.

The school district has adjusted the curriculum and is focused not only on what is being taught but also on teaching it at the depth that is required, Smith said.

Teachers are learning to teach in ways that are more hands-on for students — real-world, project-based and student-centered are among the adjectives that teachers and administrators use in talking about the newer approaches to instruction.

There's a new emphasis on collaboration and teamwork, both among groups of students and also among students and teachers, Smith said.

On the school safety and security front, the school district held a two-day threat assessment training in June with the N.C. Department of Public Safety that will help staff improve safety during the coming school year.

The training included teachers, principals, as-



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Edenton-Chowan Schools Superintendent Allan Smith, shown in his office Friday morning, is excited about the start of a new school year.

sistant principals, members of the district-wide administrative staff, school resource officers, and the head custodian for each school.

The training covered identifying signs of potential intruders and ways of avoiding or preventing dangerous occurrences.

The schools this year will be taking a close look at things like the location of security cameras as the school district continues to seek ways to make all schools safer and more secure.

The Edenton-Chowan Schools this spring received two Golden LEAF grants totaling slightly more than \$1 million.

One grant is focused on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education in grades 6-12.

The grant will fund innovative, two-week science and technology modules

for middle grades students, including topics such as robotics, rocket science and fuels of the future.

At the high school level, the new STEM initiative will expand course offerings in science and technology areas.

Smith said the expanded course offerings will benefit both the student with an eye on a technical career and possibly a two-year technical program at College of The Albemarle, and also the student looking toward a four-year degree in science or engineering.

Smith said the school district also is looking for ways for students to prepare for science and technology careers that are available in the immediate area, such as the local peanut processing industry.

The second grant-funded program is the 1:1 Learning Initiative. The \$827,000 grant will provide an iPad for every middle school and

high school student in the county — hopefully by January but certainly by the fall of 2014, Smith said.

"But that is not the point and I cannot emphasize this enough," Smith said, referring to the iPads. "The 1:1 Learning Initiative is designed to increase instructional rigor and support the efforts in implementing the Common Core curriculum through real-world experiences, utilization of research-based teaching strategies, and taking advantage of existing and emerging technology."

It will improve student engagement in their learning, which is expected to yield dividends ranging from improved discipline to higher graduation rates, according to Smith.

Training teachers is critical to efforts to make better use of technology and real word applications, Smith said.

The Friday Institute is

helping with staff development at the local schools, he said.

The school district is working to overcome the digital divide among students, which stems from the wide diversity of economic levels in the community, Smith said.

"The project will narrow the educational gap among students, in part, by closing the digital divide," Smith said. "While the project does provide every student with a computing device, the central theme is the reorganization of the learning environment to more effectively meet the needs of our students."

For instance, so-called flipped classes, in which students watch pre-recorded lectures at home and then work on application and evaluation related to the material when they get to the classroom the next day, will be used by some teachers. There was a

pilot program with flipped classes at John A. Holmes High School last school year.

Personal computing devices help make flipped classes possible.

The expansion of access to computers also will strengthen the existing program at the high school that offers students non-traditional classes through online instruction. These course offerings range from technical and vocational areas to foreign languages such as Japanese.

"We have constrained ourselves in education that school has to happen from 8-to-3 within the walls of the school," Smith said.

But that's beginning to change. "Now time and location can be a variable rather than a constant," Smith said.

An example of the new

See SCHOOLS, 3A

County spending by domestic visitors increases by 5.5 percent

From staff reports

The N.C. Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development announced last week that domestic visitors to and within Edenton and

Chowan County spent \$18.3 million in 2012, an increase of 5.5 percent from 2011.

"This increase in visitor spending shows the value of tourism within Chowan County over the past year and the importance of our working together to further grow this significant industry. We look forward to reaching a wider audience as we continue to invite visitors to experience our rich heritage assets," said Keith

Nixon, Chowan County Tourism Development Authority Chairman.

Tourism impact highlights for 2012:

- The travel and tourism industry directly employs more than 140 in Chowan County.
- Total payroll generated by the tourism industry in Chowan County was \$2.6 million.
- State tax revenue generated in Chowan County

totalled \$860,000 through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income. Approximately \$1.12 million in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.

Gov. Pat McCrory announced in May that visitors to North Carolina spent a record \$19.4 billion in 2012, an increase of 5.4 percent from

2011. These statistics are from the "2012 Economic Impact Of Travel On North Carolina Counties." The study was prepared for the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development by the U.S. Travel Association.

Statewide highlights include:

- State tax receipts as a result of visitor spending neared \$1 billion in 2012 and

have increased 42 percent in the last 10 years.

- Visitors spend more than \$53 million per day in North Carolina and contribute over \$4.2 million per day in state and local tax revenues as a result of that spending (about \$2.7 million in state taxes and \$1.6 million in local taxes).
- The travel and tourism industry directly employs nearly 200,000 North Carolinians.

