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Walker students set speed stacking record — 6A

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Wednesday, December 4, 2013

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# County approves wind energy amendment

**■ New rules allow 600-foot-high turbines**

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved Monday an amendment to the county's wind energy ordinance that would allow wind turbines to be built up to 600 feet high.

County officials noted during the board's meeting

Monday night that the text amendment is the first step in a process. Officials from Apex Clean Energy Inc. said it likely will be a year before the company is ready to apply for a permit to site and construct a wind farm.

Apex is the company that is considering construction of a 300-megawatt wind farm on roughly 10,000 acres of Weyerhaeuser land along the Chowan-Perquimans county line.

County and Apex officials pointed out that Monday's

action brings Chowan's wind energy regulations in line with the rules in Perquimans.

While Apex's request has triggered the amendment, the text amendment applies in all situations and is not site-specific or project-specific. The company will present site-specific plans at a later date, which will go before the Chowan Planning Board and also before the county commissioners for action at that time.

The text amendment the

commissioners approved Monday was recommended by the Chowan Planning Board at its meeting last month. Board member Patti Kersey cast the only vote against the amendment at the planning board meeting.

Previously, Chowan did not allow wind turbines to be built higher than 250 feet. The amendment approved Monday allows 600-foot-high turbines; allows the company one year to remove equipment and materials after a turbine ceases opera-

tions; establishes a bonding formula for decommissioning of turbines that requires a bond of the estimated cost of removal, less the salvage value of materials; allows approval of the county's wind farm permit to be contingent upon all other required permits being in place, rather than requiring the permits to be in hand before the county permit is issued; and allows county staff to approve minor or non-material modifications to the plan.

During a public hearing on

the amendment, members of the public spoke on both sides of the issue.

James Robison cited a number of concerns, including fire safety; flight safety and proximity to the Northeast Regional Airport; danger to birds and bats; health concerns stemming from noise and shadow flicker; and whether the bond would be sufficient to cover the actual cost of decommissioning if it were

See AMENDMENT, 2A

## Regional bicycle path plan backed

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners voted 6-1 Monday to adopt a resolution in support of a regional bicycle path plan.

Commissioner Emmett Winborne cast the lone vote against approving the resolution.

At a previous meeting the board had voted down a motion to back the bike path plan, which was developed through the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization, but after hearing from cyclists and others in the community who were strongly in favor of the plan, the board agreed to revisit the issue.

Sterling Baker of the N.C. Department of Transportation was at the commissioners' meeting Monday night and addressed questions and concerns from the commissioners — mostly about funding.

One of the things Baker acknowledged was that recent changes in the way state highway funds are distributed will likely mean that Division One, which consists of Chowan and 13 other counties in northeastern North Carolina, will receive far less funding than under the previous "equity formula."

Asked by County Manager Zee Lamb whether bicycle path construction would be likely to get funded under the new system, Baker said it probably would not be funded unless it was part of a highway-widening project that was a priority for funding.

Chairman Keith Nixon said one of the things that had persuaded him to support the bicycle path plan was learning that the county would be unable to apply for grants — whether state or federal — for bicycle path construction without a plan being in place.

Nixon said he still has some concerns about specifics about the plan and is especially troubled that

See PLAN, 2A



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## ROCKY HOCK CHRISTMAS SHOW



CHOWAN HERALD FILE PHOTO

During the 2012 Rocky Hock Opry Christmas show, vocalist Kaitlyn Flythe, sings "Where Are You Christmas," the theme song from the movie "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." Tickets are on sale now for this year's shows that will take place this Friday and Saturday night, Dec. 6-7, at Swain Auditorium in Edenton. Shows start at 7 p.m. nightly. For ticket locations, contact Jack Evans at (252) 340-3438. Proceeds from the shows will benefit Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life.

## Company donates lighting to D.F. Walker School

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
 Staff Writer

Students and staff at D.F. Walker Elementary School in Edenton are the recipients of an early Christmas gift from Durham-based CREE Inc. that has let new light shine in the school's 4,080 sq. ft. multi-purpose room.

According to Brad Bass, maintenance supervisor for the Edenton-Chowan Schools, the gift couldn't have been given at a better time. He said that the multi-purpose room was chosen because the lights there had been extremely problematic for the past four years.

"They started failing around 2009," Bass said. "The sockets

that the bulbs plugged into became extremely brittle and would no longer hold the bulbs. The light quality was extremely poor."

Bass said that Jessica Graber with NORESKO in Cary introduced him to Patricia Brezney, who is affiliated with the North Carolina chapter of the Green Schools Advocacy group that is part of the U.S. Green Building Council.

The council initiated the collaboration with CREE and coordinated the project as part of a Green Apple Day of Service, according to Brezney. Now in its second year, Green Apple Day of Ser-

See LIGHTING, 2A



PHOTO COURTESY BRAD BASS/EDENTON-CHOWAN SCHOOLS

William Riddick installs new LED lighting on Saturday morning at D.F. Walker Elementary School.

## Sale starts shopping season

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

Retailers were looking for a big boost from Black Friday — especially with a shorter-than-usual Christmas shopping season this year — and many local stores seem to have gotten the start they were seeking.

"I think they got a good jump-start," said Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce Director Win Dale.

Dale said the shopping season is effectively one week shorter this year because of the late date of Thanksgiving. He said he hopes shoppers will continue to support local retailers in the weeks ahead.

Peebles and Sears in downtown Edenton both started Black Friday the night before, with special Thanksgiving night shopping.

Jadelle Wagner, manager of Peebles, said combined sales for the Thursday night event and Black Friday were much better than last year.

There were 60 people in line Thursday evening when the store opened, and soon there were a hundred people inside the store, she said.

"We were busy — the building was full — for a good hour and a half," Wagner said of the Thursday night opening.

One of the first 50 shoppers Thursday night got a

See BLACK FRIDAY, 2A

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**The Greatest Gift**  
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