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School board backs band uniform effort — 4A

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Wednesday, January 13, 2010

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## Building may become a hotel once again

■ Developer looking at mixed use with hotel, restaurant

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The developers who are looking at buying the former county office building on King Street — also known as the historic Hotel Hinton — said last week they are interested in restoring the building for use as a hotel.

Amit Gupta of Kill Devil Hills-based Saga Development said that while the project is still in the due diligence phase, the indications so far are good.

"We feel good about it," Gupta said.

"But were taking it one step at a time," he added, explaining the company is doing its due diligence to be sure the renovation of the building as a hotel is something that would work for the town and would make sense financially for

the company.

County officials announced last year that they had found a developer interested in buying the county's former governmental office building, which originally was built as a hotel in 1926.

The buyer is nearing the end of the due diligence period.

The developer is eyeing the building for a possible restoration as a hotel, with a restaurant also part of the mix.

"We're looking at a mixed use,"

Gupta said. "But a hotel would be the primary use that we would be looking at. The primary thing we are looking at is whether it would make sense as a restored hotel."

In a Jan. 2 talk at the Museum of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City on the topic of historic preservation, Edenton Town Councilman Sambo Dixon spoke about the historic importance of the Hotel Hinton and the value that a mixed-use restoration of the building could contribute to downtown Edenton.

While the focus has been on the restoration and renovation of the building, county officials also have maintained as a last resort the possibility of demolishing the structure to make way for new construction at the site.

County officials have insisted they do not intend to tear the building down and only wish to keep their options open at this point.

See HOTEL, 2A

## 'Strong people skills' sought

■ Search for new schools superintendent continues

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
 Staff Writer

School board members heard the results of online community and staff surveys describing qualities they would value in a new superintendent at their Jan. 6 monthly meeting.

In the process, school board chair John Guard said, the board also had the opportunity to participate in an impromptu brainstorming session of its own to identify characteristics it thought were significant.

When asked how the board's answers differed from those included in the surveys, Guard replied, "There was not a big variance in the answers."

A total of 48 completed community surveys and 102 completed staff surveys were received, according to Tanya Giovanni and Allison Schafer from the North Carolina School Board Association, who assisted the school board with its online surveys.

According to the survey results that were collected between Nov. 21 and Jan. 2

See SEARCH, 2A

## MLK Day event set for next Monday

From staff reports

The community's annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration will be held Jan. 20 at noon at Swain Auditorium.

Sherrod Banks, an attorney who grew up in Edenton and practices law in Durham, will



BANKS

be the event's guest speaker. Banks graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, cum laude, in 1985 and received his Juris Doctor Degree from the UNC School Of Law in

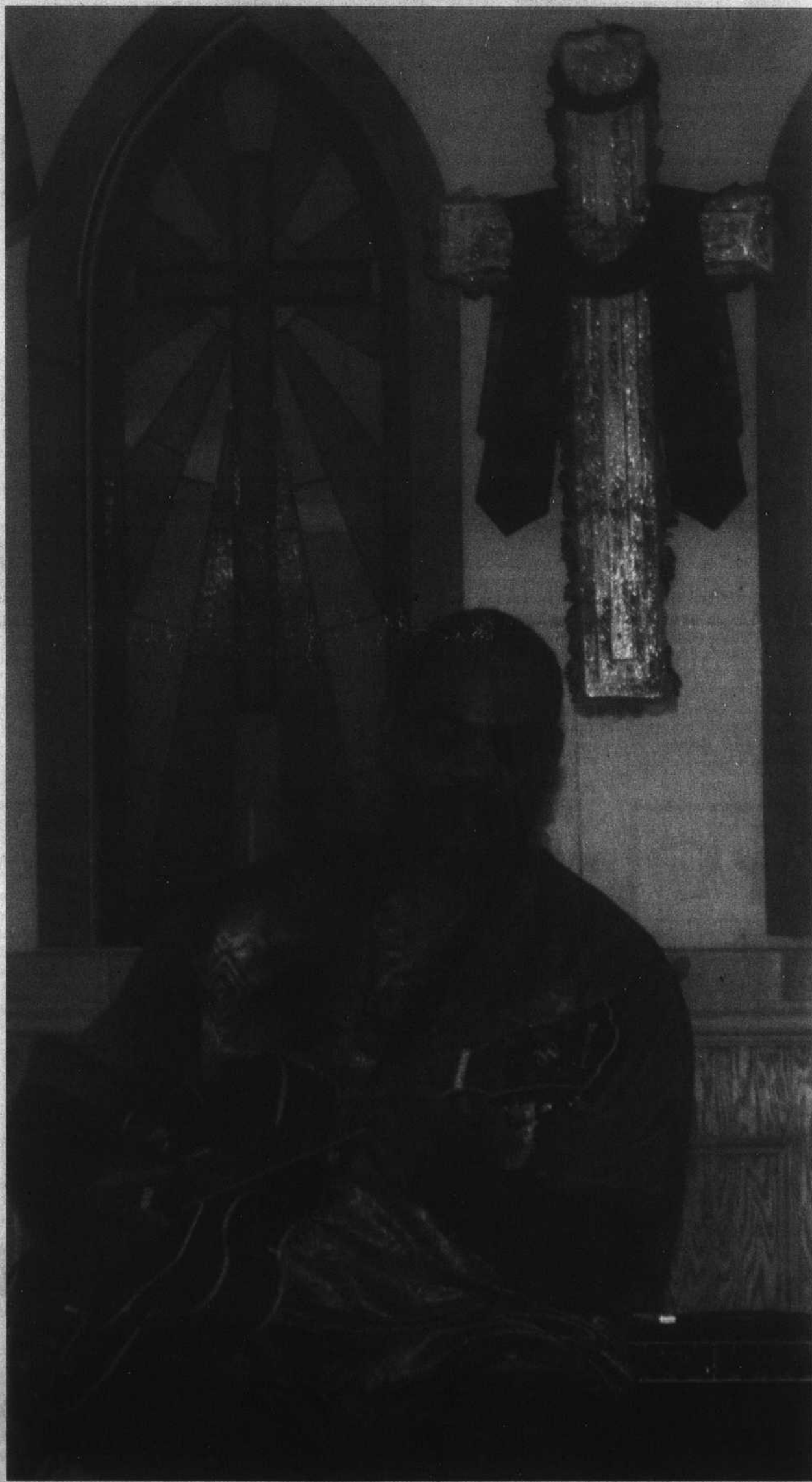
See EVENT, 2A



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## 'THEN SINGS MY SOUL'



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Guitarist EZ Malone plays a blues-infused version of "How Great Thou Art." See story on page 4B.

## Pair face charges in bank robbery

From staff reports

WINDSOR — Two Edenton men face armed robbery charges in connection with a bank robbery last week in Windsor.

William C. Twine, 45, of 806 Johnson St., and Michael Rankins, 50, of 201 Boswell St., both have been charged with robbery with a dangerous weapon in connection with the incident.



TWINE

Windsor police said the incident also is under federal investigation.



RANKINS

Twine and Rankins are being held at the Bertie County Jail, according to police. Both men were placed under \$400,000 bond, but Twine was being held without bond because of his refusal to provide a DNA sample, police said.

Subsequent to providing the DNA, Twine again would be placed under \$400,000 bond, according to police.

The two men were scheduled to make a first court appearance in court today in Bertie County District Court.

Windsor authorities said this was the first bank robbery in the town in anyone's memory.

The robbery occurred Thursday around 4:30 p.m. at the Wells Fargo Bank on South King Street. An undisclosed amount of money was taken in the robbery, according to police.

A weapon was involved in the robbery but police were not releasing specific information about the weapon at this time.

N.C. Department of Correction records indicate William C. Twine has previous convictions on various charges, including assault,

See ROBBERY, 2A

## Hospitals advise community about flu precautions

From staff reports

Vidant Health and Vidant Chowan Hospital recognize that this is peak flu season and request the community's help in protecting patients.

Signs are posted throughout the hospital asking community members to avoid visiting patients if they are feeling sick.

Hospital officials said they understand there are some extreme

situations where visitation is unavoidable, and in those situations visitors with a respiratory illness should wear a face mask.

The hospital asks visitors to wash their hands before entering patient areas and before and after entering patient rooms.

"Flu season is definitely upon us, but there are lots of things we can do to protect ourselves," said Jeffrey N. Sackrisson, hospital president. "If you haven't gotten a flu

shot this year, talk to your health-care provider about whether this would be a good choice for you. Also be sure to wash your hands well and frequently and cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands."

Currently the James and Connie Maynard Childrens Hospital at Vidant Medical Center is the only Vidant hospital restricting visitation for children under 12 years of age due to their highly susceptible pa-

tient population. Vidant Chowan is not restricting visitation due to the flu at this time.

As flu cases in North Carolina continue to increase, Albemarle Hospital in Elizabeth City is strongly recommending visitors take extra precautions in an effort to protect patients. All visitors are asked to wear a mask (available at infection prevention kiosks at each

See FLU, 2A