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Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Howard named new county manager

■ New administrator coming from Caswell County

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

County officials have tapped the county manager of Caswell County in the state's Piedmont region to be Chowan's new county manager. Kevin B. Howard is

scheduled to begin work here on March 3. His starting salary will be \$87,000 a year, plus a travel allowance of \$300 a month.

Howard replaces Zee Lamb, who began as Nash County's county manager, Jan. 1 after two years as county manager in Chowan.

Chowan Department of Social Services Director Clifton Hardison is serving

as interim county manager.

Howard has been Caswell's county manager for six years and nine months. Before that he was county manager in Hyde County about a year and a half.



HOWARD

The board selected Howard following a nationwide search that drew 42 applicants.

Chowan Board of Commissioners Chairman Keith Nixon said the county had a lot of good candidates for the position.

The commissioners were looking for professionalism, leadership, local government experience, proven financial ex-

pertise and someone able to communicate well with the public, according to Nixon.

Nixon said the board also was looking for someone who will live in the community, be involved in the community and would like to stay in the community for an extended period of time.

Nixon said the commissioners put a lot of time into

the process of selecting the new county manager. Commissioners reviewed each individual application and had numerous meetings on the matter.

He said he believes the board has selected the best person for the job.

"I feel like we're going to be in good shape," Nixon said.

See MANAGER, 2A

Big snowfall expected by today

From staff reports

Seven inches or more of snow was expected to fall in Chowan County over a 24-hour period as the Chowan Herald was going to press.

The National Weather Service forecast from the weather station in Waverly, Va., at presstime Tuesday was calling for snow during the day on Tuesday, mainly after noon. The high temperature was predicted to be near 29, with a north wind at 13 to 15 mph. The chance of precipitation during the day was 100 percent.

This week's expected snowfall comes on the heels of a lighter snow last week and in the midst of an extended period of unusually cold temperatures for this area.

The forecast called for up to two inches of snow during the day Tuesday, plus a possibility of three to five additional inches of snow Tuesday night.

The low temperature Tuesday night was expected to be around 23, with a north wind at 13 to 15 mph.

Today, snow remains likely until early afternoon, according to the forecast. The forecast calls for cloudy conditions today and a high temperature near 29. A north wind is expected at 8 to 13 mph. Chance of precipitation today is 70 percent.

Meanwhile, cold temperatures have led to an unusually high number of reports of frozen and burst pipes.

Town and county officials have received many reports of frozen pipes and



PHOTO COURTESY JOY HARVILL

Molly Harvill, 7, steers the sled as Bree Thatcher, 6, hangs on for the ride during last week's snow. See more photos from the snow on page 4A.



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Chowan County has received a grant for improvements to Pembroke Creek Park, shown here on a recent afternoon.

County receives grant for park

From staff reports

Chowan County has been awarded a state grant to design and build a bulkhead, two piers, kayak launch with gangway and other improvements at Pembroke Creek Park.

The \$150,000 grant was awarded by the Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program, which is part of the N.C. Coastal Management Program.

The county's receipt of the grant was announced during the Jan. 6 meeting of the Chowan Board of Commissioners.

Recreation Director Jason Petersen, who is the county's administrator for the project, spoke to the commissioners briefly about the grant.

"It's great news for us and for the county and all the people in our area," Petersen said.

Chairman Keith Nixon noted at the meeting that in addition to the work done by county staff, the Albemarle Resource Conservation and Development Council also was instrumental in the development of the project proposal.

Nixon asked Linda Peterson, a member of the Albemarle RC&D Council, to stand and be recognized on behalf of the council. Commissioners applauded when Peterson stood to be recognized.

The 5.43-acre park site at 716 W. Queen St. features roughly 1,100 feet of shoreline along Pembroke Creek.

See GRANT, 2A



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New reading requirements challenge schools

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Under new Read to Achieve requirements, only 21 out of about 160 third grade students in the Edenton-Chowan Schools would currently be considered on track to demonstrate reading proficiency at grade level.

Linda White, director

of elementary education for the school system, discussed those findings and the challenges that lie ahead for implementing Read to Achieve with the school board during its annual retreat last Thursday.

Read to Achieve is a North Carolina law passed to ensure that elementary school students can read at or above grade level by

the end of their third grade school year. It is part of the Excellent Public Schools Act that became law in July 2012.

Board chair John Guard noted that the new measure has created a great deal of concern in school systems.

"There's a lot of concern, not just here," he said.

White agreed but said the school system has no

choice but to follow the law.

"We know what we've been given, our task is to make it happen," she said.

Efforts to make sure students can read at grade level by the end of third grade under Read to Achieve, will start when they enter kindergarten at White Oak. They will be given an entry assessment within the

first 30 days of enrollment, White said. They will also be assessed at the middle and end of the school year, she said.

White added that instructional methods used by teachers will be modified as necessary to meet the individual needs of students and that feedback would be

See READING, 2A

Medical helicopter to be based at local airport

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

A medical emergency helicopter soon will be based at the Northeastern Regional Airport.

Kevin Justice of Air Methods confirmed last week that the company would be basing a helicopter in Eden-

ton.

Airport Manager Harry Davis said having the helicopter based in Edenton will be a lifesaver in cases where it enables someone to get to a high-level treatment center within the one-hour critical period for emergency response, Davis said.

"We are most fortunate

in this community of about 5,000 people to have an air medical helicopter onsite here at our airport," Davis said. "It's like a miracle."

Air Methods is expected to begin operations at the airport on a limited basis by the middle of next month, with 24-hour operations in place by mid-March.

The airport is installing a helicopter landing pad for use by Air Methods.

Crews on the helicopter will include a pilot, paramedic and flight nurse.

The helicopter will be housed in an 80-foot by 60-foot hangar. The company also will locate a trailer at the airport that will serve as

living quarters for on-duty flight crews.

Air Methods is headquartered in Englewood, Colorado.

According to the company's website, it has operations from Alaska to Key West, Fla. The company has more than 300 bases of operations in 48 states.

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