

CHOWAN HERALD



July 4th festivities planned, 1B

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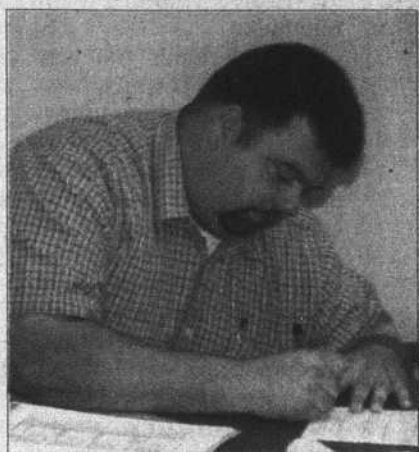
Wednesday, June 25, 2014

50¢

June surprises arise in local election

STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Carey Y. Parrish IV files Monday morning at the Chowan County Board of Elections Office as an unaffiliated candidate for District 2, Seat 1 on the county's Board of Commissioners. Parrish joins incumbent Commissioner John Mitchener, a Democrat, and Republican challenger Brian Ferraraccio in the race.



■ Parrish running unaffiliated in District 2; Brabble seeks spot on ballot in sheriff race

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

A third candidate joined the District 2, Seat 2 county commissioner race this week as Carey Y. Parrish IV filed Unaffiliated.

Parrish, 31, joins incumbent Commissioner John Mitchener, a Democrat, and Republican Brian Ferraraccio in the contest.

Parrish was required to submit 183 signatures of registered voters in the district in order to get on the ballot in the November General Election. When he

filed Monday he turned in more than 300 signatures, of which 279 were certified as registered voters with correct address.

Meanwhile, Tim Brabble, a former officer with the Chowan County Sheriff's Department who ran unsuccessfully for sheriff in a previous race, has been gathering signatures in a bid to get on the ballot.

The required number of signatures in the sheriff's race, which is countywide, is 420. Friday is the deadline for turning in the signatures.

Friday also is the first day of filing for the Edenton-Chowan Board of Education, and incumbent board members John Guard and Gil Burroughs said this

See ELECTION, 4A

Walmart nixes Edenton as site for store

From staff reports

Walmart apparently is no longer looking at Edenton as a site for a new store.

Frank Miglorie, executive director of the Edenton-Chowan Partnership, told local officials and the Chowan Herald Monday that Walmart was no longer actively considering Edenton.

The Chowan Herald at presstime had been unable to confirm the report with Walmart officials.

The Edenton-Chowan Partnership on June 5 voted to offer its services to Walmart should the company wish to take advantage of work the partnership could do on its behalf.

The company earlier this

year contacted Town of Edenton officials, indicating it was considering a possible store location here.

Chowan County Commissioner Emmett Winborne has argued in recent weeks that the partnership should aggressively pursue a Walmart store in the county.

During a meeting Monday night of the Chowan Board of Commissioners, Winborne expressed frustration at learning that Walmart was no longer looking at the community as a prospective store location. He said he was troubled that there were people trying to keep businesses out of the county — a reference to the vocal

See WARMART, 3A

FOND FAREWELL



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Members of the Edenton-Chowan Schools central office staff show off their best dance moves as they serenade retiring Superintendent Allan Smith during a party in Smith's honor. Brad Bass, transportation director/maintenance supervisor for the Edenton-Chowan Schools (below), performs a special song to the tune of Jimmy Buffet's "Margaritaville" during Smith's retirement party at White Oak School.

Town approves budget, tax hike

■ Rate increase of 3.71 cents over revenue-neutral rate is less than town manager's recommendation

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

The town council voted 4-2 to approve an amended budget ordinance for fiscal year 2014-2015 that would raise the tax rate 3.71 cents above the revenue-neutral rate, rather than the previously proposed 5.71 cents.

Councilmen Bob Quinn and Steve Biggs both voted 'no' on adopting the proposed budget with the reduction.

The action came following lengthy, sometimes heated discussion among council members concerned the change in the amount of the proposed tax rate increase and the contents of the budget itself.

The revenue-neutral tax rate is the rate required to generate the same amount of property tax revenue as in the current fiscal year. The tax rate adopted by the council Monday is 3.71 cents per \$100 valuation above the revenue-neutral rate.

See TOWN, 3A

Smith honored as retirement nears

■ Chowan superintendent treated with dinner, gifts

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer



An evening of fun and friendship for a departing colleague greeted Superintendent Allan Smith as he attended a retirement dinner in his honor last Thursday night at White Oak Elementary School.

Following a welcome by school board chair John Guard and the recognition of guests by school board co-chair Kay Wright, Smith received his first message of farewell in a videotaped greeting from State Superintendent of Public Schools June Atkinson. Atkinson praised Smith for his outstanding work in public education, concluding with the

words, "I wish you the very best, I wish you happy trails."

During the lighthearted program that followed a dinner catered by Montero's, Smith's colleagues told jokes, danced, sang songs and shared stories as they remembered a man who, in their words, always put children first.

Michelle Maddox, who serves the dual roles of human resources officer and public information officer in the local school system, showed off her acting and comedic talents as she emceed the program in the guise of a little girl who spoke in a sing-song voice and used childlike gestures along with funny quips to introduce Smith's friends and colleagues.

Board member Gene Jordan joked with Smith about the ben-

See SMITH, 3A

County approves budget with 1.5-cent increase in tax rate

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Chowan County officials adopted a 2014-2015 budget Monday that increases the property tax rate by one and a half cents but will mean a lower tax bill for most county taxpayers.



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The budget, approved on a 5-2 vote of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners, increases the property tax rate from 68.5 cents per \$100 valuation to 70 cents.

Other rates and fees remain the same as in the 2013-2014 budget.

Commissioners John Mitchener and Greg Bonner voted against the budget, expressing concern regarding whether the budget would provide adequate cushion for continuing services at the current level given the likelihood of decreased rev-

enues from state sources.

Although the property tax rate has increased, most taxpayers will see lower tax bills because of steep declines in assessed values of real property. This is a re-valuation year for the county, and the overall assessed value of real property has dropped dramatically since the last revaluation eight years ago.

As Commissioner Jeff Smith noted Monday, farmers and businesses generally will see their property taxes go up in this budget. They are the exception to

the rule of generally declining values.

The overall reduction in assessed value of property in the 2014 revaluation means the current tax rate of 68.5 cents per \$100 valuation would generate more than \$1 million less on the new values than it did in the current fiscal year.

To close that gap, County Manager Kevin Howard recommended an increase in the property tax rate to 73.5 cents per \$100 valuation, along with a nearly \$40,000 reduction in General Fund spending and an infusion of

more than \$450,000 into the 2014-2015 budget from the fund balance in the General Fund.

The commissioners in a series of budget workshops whittled the tax rate down to 70 cents.

A significant sub-plot in this year's budget decision was the severe shortfall in Emergency Medical Service revenues, which has required that some \$600,000 be brought in from the fund balance in the General Fund to subsidize the service.

Commissioner Emmett Winborne during the meet-

ing Monday night expressed consternation and shock about the revenue shortfall.

But county staff said the county used projections based on information from medical facilities and the billing company.

Also, county staff has indicated the shortfall has resulted largely from high up-front costs in moving to the paramedic level of EMS.

The county's unrestricted fund balance will remain at slightly more than the 25 percent figure that commissioners have set as a policy for the county.

Chowan Edenton Optimist Club 35th ANNUAL Fabulous 4th of July	COME TO EDENTON'S WATERFRONT EAT DINNER AND ENJOY NORTH CAROLINA'S LARGEST "Over the water fireworks show"	STEVE HARDY'S ORIGINAL BEACH PARTY <i>Popular among all audiences</i> MECHANICAL BULL RIDING AND PONY RIDES	LOTS OF FOOD, FUN, CRAFTS, RAFFLES AND GAMES FOR CHILDREN!!!	Please Support Our Fabulous 4th of July WE NEED YOUR FINANCIAL HELP! MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CHOWAN EDENTON OPTIMIST CLUB 160 Cowpen Neck Rd., Edenton NC 27932 IRS Tax Exempt ID # available upon request
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