

CHOWAN HERALD



Students say no to drugs during Red Ribbon Week — 8A

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Moore pleads guilty to first-degree murder

■ Plea means he will not face death penalty; sentenced to life

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

William Joseph Moore entered a guilty plea to first-degree murder Friday in the 2004 stabbing death of Pamela Joye Virzi.

Under the plea agreement that was approved by Judge

Jerry Tillett in Chowan County Superior Court, Moore was sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole.

Had Moore been convicted of first-degree murder by the jury in this trial, he could have faced the death penalty.

After asking Moore a series of questions pertaining mainly to his state of mind, Tillett de-



MOORE

termined that the guilty plea was Moore's "informed choice."

When Tillett asked Virzi's daughter, Lydia, if the plea agreement was what she wanted the court to do, she replied that it was.

H.P. Williams, the special prosecutor who argued the state's case in the trial, said after the trial that Virzi's family

had wanted to see an end to the case — including an end to appeals.

"This case was overturned by the N.C. Supreme Court in June of 2008," Williams said. "It was not calendared for trial until August of 2014, and from the beginning the family has asked that we do everything we can to get him to plead to first-degree murder with life without parole so that the case would

be over."

Williams said family members understood that if he were sentenced to death there would be constant appeals.

"They wanted it over with," Williams said. "Their feelings are that as long as he is behind bars and cannot harm their children — Lydia's children — then they are satisfied with this

See MOORE, 2A

TEA TROT WINNER



PHOTO COURTESY JOHN COLLINS

Edenton Historical Commission President Sally Francis Kehayes (right) congratulates Rachael Merritt of Plymouth for winning the grand prize in the Tea Trot event, which was part of the 240th celebration of the Edenton Tea Party. She won a luxury weekend for two at the Parsonage Inn bed and breakfast in Edenton. Looking on is her husband Justin. See story page 1B.

Tax credits could affect wind power projects

BY PETER WILLIAMS
The Perquimans Weekly

The future of state tax incentives to develop industrial-sized wind power plants may play a role in the future development of two wind power projects in northeastern North Carolina, but developers aren't saying that's the only factor.

Plans for two industrial-scale wind power projects in Perquimans County have not moved forward, but representative of both Iberdrola Renewables and Apex Clean Energy were in Perquimans County this month.

Tyson Utt of Apex attended a Business Expo hosted by the Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 16. The 12,000-acre Apex project would straddle the Perquimans-Chowan county line.

Craig Poff, a representative of Iberdrola, went before the Perquimans County Commission last week and asked to revise the timetable for the construction project known as Desert Wind, the 20,000-acre project that would straddle both Perquimans and Pasquotank counties and by some estimates would cost about \$600 million.

Wind turbine farms are being developed in the U.S., but not so much in the southeast, said David Ward, deputy director for strategic communications for the American Wind Energy Association.

"It looks pretty bare once you look past Virginia," Ward said.

That doesn't mean North Carolina doesn't have an investment in

See WIND FARM, 3A

County OKs development agreement for Riversound II

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

The county commissioners by a 5-1 margin last week approved a proposed development agreement for Riversound phase II that limits the density of development and establishes mandatory timetables for installation of roads and other facilities.

The agreement is a voluntary — but legally binding — pact between Chowan County and Yeopim Partners, the developers of phase II of the Riversound project.

This is the first development agreement the county has entered into under a 2005 state law that allows such agreements.

Commissioner Emmett Winborne cast the lone dissenting vote.

Prior to the vote, Winborne noted that he had never been shy about speaking his mind.

"I'm about being consistent," Winborne said during the discussion, which took place at the Oct. 20 meeting of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners. "Here we are looking at Phase II, and we don't have Phase I up yet. It's been a mess. I'm just wondering, Mr. Chairman, what are we doing? It looks to me like we need to get Phase I going first."

Phase I has been plagued by persistent problems related to road construction and wastewater treatment. Among other things, the facility-related snags resulted in the county calling the bond on the project in order to complete the installation of the public

facilities.

During the Oct. 20 meeting, commissioners were the only ones allowed to comment on the proposed contract. County Attorney John Morrison reminded the commissioners, and those seated in the audience, that a public hearing on the proposed contract had already occurred so no public comments would be received that evening.

"Tonight you will not receive public comment," he said. "It would not be appropriate. If you did you would in effect be having a second public hearing."

What the commissioners could do, he said, was to ask questions of county staff, the county attorney and Riversound attorney Hugh Franklin.

Morrison said that one change had been suggested that would require owners

See RIVERSOUND II, 3A

Early voting moving ahead of pace

BY REGGIE PONDER AND REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writers

One-stop voting in Chowan County in the 2014 General Election so far is ahead of the pace for one-stop voting in the 2010 mid-term election.

As of the end of the day Monday, there had been 1,094 one-stop votes cast in this election.

In 2010, which was the last mid-term election before this one, there were 2,382 one-stop votes cast in Chowan County.

There were 113 hours of

early voting in the county in 2010 and there had been 40 hours in this election as of the end of the day Monday.

That's an average of 27 votes per hour in this election, compared with 21 per hour in 2010.

Of the votes cast so far in this election, 546 of the voters have been Democrats, 284 Republicans, 263 unaffiliated and one Libertarian.

One-stop voting is being conducted at the Chowan County Board of Elections Office, which is located in the Ag Building at the inter-

section of Virginia Road and Granville Street.

Early voters in Chowan have expressed particular interest in the race for district attorney, N.C. House and U.S. Senate, and in the proposed constitutional amendment that if approved, would allow defendants in non-capital cases in Superior Court to waive their right to a jury trial.

Retired college professor Ben Speller, who described himself as a "moderate

See EARLY VOTING, 4A

Community joins Wreaths Across America

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Local residents have an opportunity to honor the sacrifices and service of America's veterans by participating in Wreaths Across America on Dec. 13.

Organizers are amassing more than 830 wreaths in order to decorate the

graves of service members in beaver Hill, Vine Oak and Providence cemeteries following a noon ceremony at Beaver Hill Cemetery.

Barbara Graybill, who is heading up the local effort, said nearly 500 wreaths have been sold so far. More than 830

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ROCKY HOCK Opry FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5TH, 7:00PM E.A. SWAIN AUDITORIUM
Sponsored by the Rocky Hock Ruritan's Relay for Life Team Tickets \$10.00 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH, 7:00PM EDENTON, NC
Tickets Available at various locations or call 252-221-4875 or 252-340-3438. Email rockyhockopry@live.com