

CHOWAN HERALD



Leo Club earns charter on historic date — 1B

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Tenant for shopping center 'very close'

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

The owner of the Chowan Crossing shopping center said this week he was "very close" to finalizing a deal with a tenant for the former Farmers Foods building.

Terry Reeves said Monday he was unable to provide any information about the prospective tenant be-

cause he had signed a confidentiality agreement.

When he was asked if the prospective tenant was a grocery chain, he responded that he could not answer that question because of the confidentiality agreement.

Reeves added, however, that he expected an announcement about a tenant very soon.

Local officials have indi-

cated that a number of different grocers have shown some interest in the former Farmers Foods location.

Edenton Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said earlier this fall that the town was doing what it could to assist in recruiting a grocery store but that the negotiations were being handled by the property owner.

In letters to the Chowan

Herald and a number of other public statements, members of the public have stated a strong preference for having a second grocery store in town to fill a void left by the departure of Farmers Foods.

Knighton said last week that a group of local investors has been scouting sites for a possible new location for a grocery store and has

expressed interest in constructing a building for a grocery chain should the former Farmers Foods site not generate a second grocery store for the community.

Reeves told the Chowan Herald earlier this fall that he was working with town officials to the extent that it was feasible, but added "there is not but so much

that the town can do."

The level of interest in the site that local officials know about indicates that the grocery market here is profitable, according to Knighton.

Knighton has noted that retail leakage studies have shown that people in the local market are spending money on groceries beyond this market.

COMMUNITY HONORS JUDGE BEAN ON RETIREMENT

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

A large crowd of family, friends and colleagues converged on historic Pembroke Hall in Edenton on Thursday evening to pay tribute to retiring Judge Chris Bean.

A reception in his honor held that evening was book-ended with humorous stories, recollections and personal tributes celebrating the life's work of Bean, who served as chief district court judge for the 1st Judicial District.

And a portrait of Bean by noted Edenton portrait artist John Becker was unveiled. It will hang in the courtroom at the historic 1767 Chowan Courthouse, the only portrait to receive such an honor.

Edenton attorney Sambo Dixon, who helped organize and host the event, called it "a glorious end to an amazing legal career."

Those who know him well said that evening that Bean, who began his career as an attorney, has become known as much over the years for his personal values such as honor and integrity as he has for upholding the law.

"You knew when you were in his courtroom you were gonna get a fair deal," said attorney Pitt Godwin, son of the late legislator Phil Godwin of Gates County.

When it was his turn to speak Bean said he was



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Edenton attorney Hood Ellis (right) tells a funny story about Judge Chris Bean (center), as Mayor Roland Vaughan (left) looks on. Ellis was among those who shared memories of Bean's legal career as an attorney and a district court judge during a retirement reception held in his honor last week at historic Pembroke Hall. The reception was attended by a large number of family members, friends and colleagues.

"overwhelmed" by all the compliments and special attention.

"I can't thank you enough for this," Bean said. "It's one of the most touching things

in my life. These last 22 years (as a judge) have been good ones."

Bean, who was a lawyer and assistant district attorney for seven counties

for 14 years before becoming a judge, said he learned how to serve on the bench honorably from two fellow jurists, Judge John Chaffin and Judge Grafton Beaman.

Bean said both men decided cases on their merit and refused to let themselves be influenced by outside influences.

Bean said that during his

first few years on the bench he had several individuals approach him and attempt to influence his thinking

See JUDGE BEAN, 3A

Edenton cops using cameras

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
The Daily Advance

Long before the controversial deaths of two black men at the hands of police created a public groundswell for cops to use body cameras, Edenton police officers were wearing the devices to record their interactions with citizens.

Edenton police Chief Jay Fortenbery said his department's 19 officers have been wearing the small lapel cameras since 2012. So far, the results have been positive, he says.

"I think they're great," Fortenbery said, noting the cameras have helped answer questions that have arisen following arrests and use-of-force incidents.

Fortenbery said he's seen studies indicating cops' wearing of cameras actually reduces the use of force



THOMAS J. TURNEY/THE DAILY ADVANCE

Pictured is a close-up of an on-body camera used by the Edenton Police Department.

by police. Apparently the knowledge that their interaction is being recorded changes behavior, both of the police officer and the citizen or citizens with whom they're interacting.

Fortenbery said his department's on-body cameras are capable of recording 30 frames a second, and with a memory card, an officer can record up to two hours of footage before downloading it into a computer. Plus, at \$60 a piece, the on-body cameras are a bargain com-

pared to on-board car cameras, which Fortenbery says can run as much as \$3,500 each.

Currently, no other area law enforcement agency that responded to inquiries last week says it regularly uses body cameras. In Hertford, police Chief Doug Freeman said his department has one on-body camera it purchased to field test before committing to buying others.

See BODY CAMERA, 3A

Steinburg defends new tax

BY REGGIE PONDER
Chowan Herald

Rep. Bob Steinburg stood by his support of a new amusement tax as he met with a group of Chowan Regional Fair volunteers last week.

About 20 people turned out for the meeting, which was held Wednesday night at American Legion Post 40.

The tax is set to take effect Jan. 1. The meeting came on the heels of a strongly worded letter than Chowan Regional Fair President E.C. Toppin wrote to Steinburg, R-Chowan, expressing concern about the negative impact the tax was expected to have on the fair's bottom line.

Steinburg told the group Wednesday



STEINBURG

that the new amusement tax was a result of tax reform adopted by the General Assembly.

He said he and most of his legislative colleagues believe tax reform is one of the best ways to stimulate the economy. The legislature therefore is cutting taxes and eliminating some taxes.

"Four years from now we're hoping there will be no personal income tax at all," Steinburg said.

Previous tax laws have included "cut-outs" for various groups, but the current

See NEW TAX, 4A

Schools seek changes to rules

■ Appropriation Act requires some substitutes to use school insurance

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Local school officials are hopeful that the North Carolina General Assembly will soon address what they term the "unintended consequence" of making it more difficult for school systems in the state to utilize retired teachers as substitutes.

At issue is Senate Bill 744, otherwise known as the Appropriations Act, passed

during the last legislative session that establishes a new healthcare benefit eligibility category for nonpermanent full-time employees in order to comply with the Affordable Care Act.

That category requires that substitute teachers who work at least 30 hours a week on a regular basis — such as during a classroom teacher's maternity or short-term disability leave — be offered health insurance coverage by the school system that would replace the insurance coverage

See SUBSTITUTES, 3A



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DRIVE-THRU CHRISTMAS PANORAMA
The Greatest Gift
DECEMBER 12th, 13th & 14th
6 PM - 8 PM