

CHOWAN HERALD

**ACES FOOTBALL DOWNS
FIRST FLIGHT; LADY
ACES TENNIS IN STATE
PLAYOFFS — 7A**

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Nixon, Kehayes will not seek reelection

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Two county commissioners have announced they will not be seeking reelection next year.

Commissioners Keith Nixon and Alex Kehayes said they would not be seeking reelection.

Both are Republicans. Commissioner Emmett Winborne, a Democrat, said he would be announcing his plans at a later time.

Winborne, a Rocky Hock farmer who represents the county's 1st District, served as a county commissioner from 1996-2004,



BONNER

KEHAYES

NIXON

WINBORNE

then sat out a term before being elected again in 2008.

Commissioner Greg Bonner, a Democrat who represents the 3rd District, could not be reached for comment for this story.

Filing for state and county offices will run from December 1-21 because the Primary will be March 15. North Carolina's Primary Election for years has been in May, with filing for state offices

and most county offices taking place in February.

"I will not be running," Nixon said Friday.

Nixon, who has held the at-large seat on the board since 2008, said he feels like eight years is long enough to serve on the board. He said he believes he has served his purpose as a commissioner and it's time for someone else to have a turn.

He also pointed out that he has kids who are still in school and is working full-time for Sherwin-Williams. He doesn't have as much time to devote to county govern-

ment as he did previously, and he believes in giving everything he can to what he does, he said.

Nixon left open the possibility that he might run for office again at a later time.

Kehayes, who represents the county's 2nd District, is in his first term, having been elected in 2012.

Kehayes said Saturday he wanted to announce his plans not to seek reelection so that other candidates might begin tossing their hats in the ring.

"I think we need some younger people on there," Kehayes said.

RESEARCH SEEKS LOST COLONY-CHOWAN LINK

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

While the authenticity of the Eleanor Dare Stone has not yet been conclusively proven, Fred Willard, director of the Lost Colony Center for Science and Research, and associates like Edenton native Phil McMullan, who now lives in Hertford, are open to the possibility.

The two believe there is a good chance that the 21-pound granite stone holds the key to the gruesome deaths and gravesites of Eleanor Dare's husband Ananias and their little daughter Virginia — the first child born in the American colonies — and in the process offers clues to the fate of the group collectively known as the Lost Colony. Finding the gravesites would offer conclusive proof to those who doubt the stone is authentic, they said.

Willard said during an Oct. 10 invitation-only gathering inside the Edenton Town Council Chambers that the stone, if authentic, was "the only English artifact ever found directly related to the Lost Colony."

He and McMullan acknowledge that the search goes on for conclusive evidence that the stone is genuine and its message describing the burial site of Dare and his daughter is real. But an archaeological dig featured on a two-hour History Channel

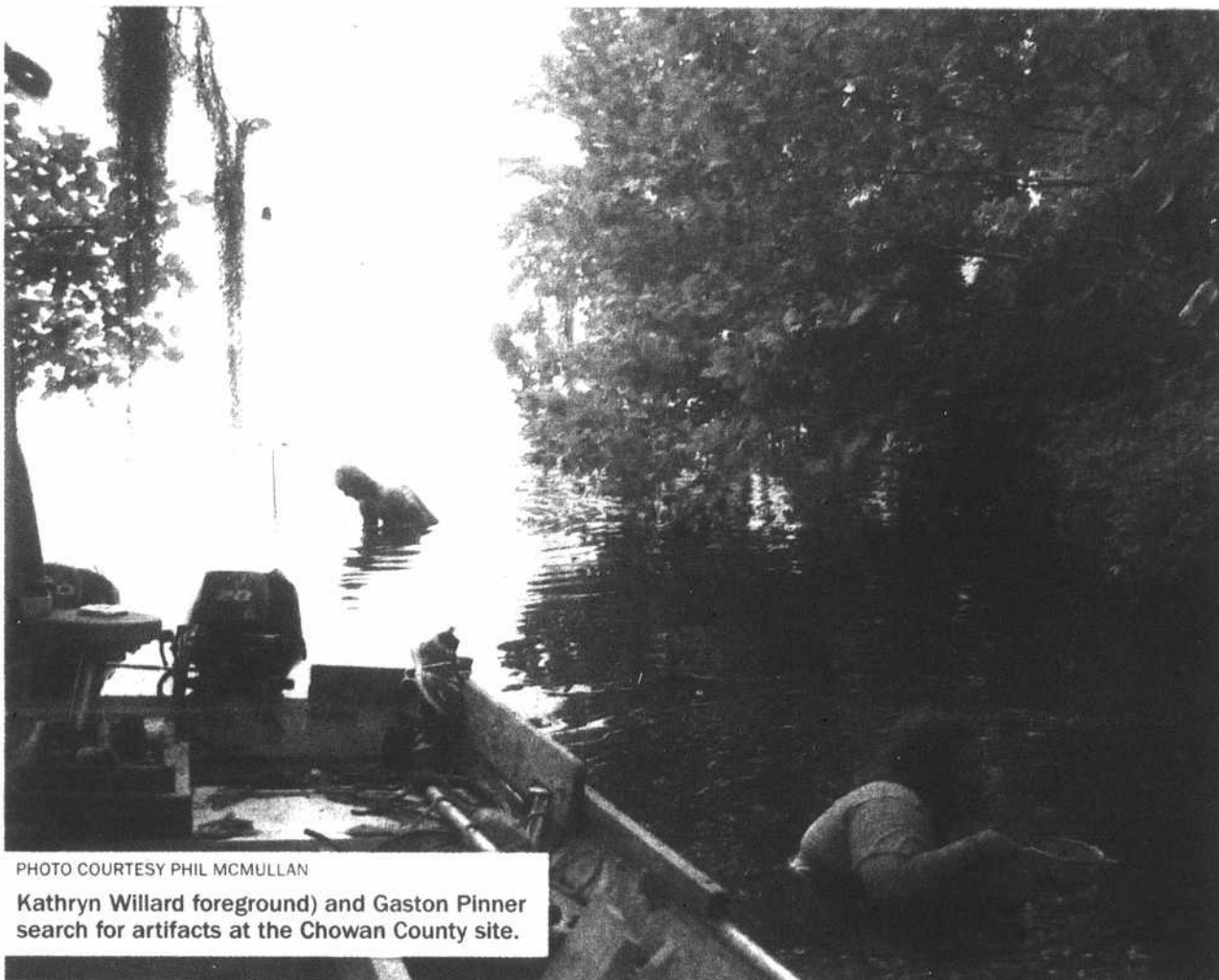


PHOTO COURTESY PHIL MCMULLAN

Kathryn Willard (foreground) and Gaston Pinner search for artifacts at the Chowan County site.



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Fred Willard (seated) and his wife Kathryn (standing) show artifacts from the most recent dig in Chowan County to (l-r) Chowan Tourism Director Nancy Nicholls, Gaston Pinner, Lisa Baker and John Morehead at the Edenton Town Council Chambers during a recent invitation-only viewing.

See LOST COLONY, 2A

Solar farm developer gets \$23M in loans

■ USDA awards nearly \$2.3B in loans nationwide

From staff reports

The Charlotte area firm developing a 20-megawatt solar farm on Yeopim Road has been awarded nearly \$23 million in loans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Cornelius-based O2 EMC Portfolio 1, LLC is receiving three loans totaling nearly \$23 million to build several solar farms. The company develops, owns and operates solar farms across the Southeast.

The Chowan County Planning Board in August approved a special use permit for O2 EMC to develop a solar farm on about 120 acres at 740 Yeopim Road.

At presstime a spokeswoman for O2 EMC was unable to confirm whether any of these USDA loans would be part of the financing for the local project.

The spokesman said the Chowan project is still in the development stage. Environmental assessments are continuing — including some soil sampling and wetlands assessment that are taking place at the site this week — and the tentative timetable calls for construction to start in the spring.

The loans to O2 EMC for the development of solar energy projects are part of nearly \$2.3 billion in loans announced last week by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to build and improve rural electric infrastructure

See \$23M IN LOANS, 3A

Future unclear for Op. Santa

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Operation Santa, a local holiday tradition since 1995, is facing an uncertain future.

The event — carried out annually by a committee led by Gwen Brown that is made up of employees of the Edenton-Chowan Schools — has lost its two major sponsors and the location where in previous

years it stored and handed out toys and clothing for children on its annual Day with Santa activity.

Brown said at this point they are weighing their options and consid-

ering whether to try and keep the tradition going.

"We don't want any child to be left without presents on Christmas

See OPERATION, 2A



PHOTO COURTESY OF GWEN BROWN/OPERATION SANTA

Kids attending Operation Santa last year were given knitted caps and scarves to keep them warm during the winter, courtesy of Edenton United Methodist Church.

Sheriff, police chief offer tips for a safe Halloween

■ Downtown biz district trick or treating is Friday

From staff reports

Later this week the streets will be scattered with little ghosts, goblins and witches trick-or-treating.

Destination Downtown Edenton will sponsor its annual Safe Trick or Treating event Friday at 5:30 p.m. — one day before the actual date of Halloween.

Many trick or treaters, of course, will choose to

See HALLOWEEN, 3A



FILE PHOTO

Raggedy Ann escorts trick or treaters on Halloween night in downtown. This year join Destination Downtown Edenton on Friday at 5:30 p.m. for Safe Trick or Treating.



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ROCKY HOCK Opry FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4th, 7:00PM
Sponsored by the Rocky Hock Ruritan's Relay for Life Team
Tickets \$10.00
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5th, 7:00PM
E.A. SWAIN AUDITORIUM EDENTON, NC
Tickets Available at various locations or call 252-221-4075 or 252-340-3438. Email rockyhockopry@live.com