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Officials seek safe operation of drones

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Concerns over public safety are resulting in the development of policies governing the use of drones on the grounds of the Edenton-Chowan Schools and the Northeastern Regional Airport.

The school board unanimously adopted a policy at its Dec. 1 monthly meeting — making it the first school system in North Carolina to do so, according to Superintendent Rob Jackson.

The policy allows for the use of drones by students and staff of the local school system provided the drones

are operated in compliance with school and FAA regulations.

“Any representative of Edenton-Chowan Schools, including but not limited to, staff members, students, coaches, sponsors or parents representing the school district or any of its affiliated clubs shall oper-

ate any and all district aerial drones in accordance with this policy and all applicable Federal Aviation regulations and shall report any inappropriate use of an UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) to the school principal, superintendent, or other designated school district official,” according to language

contained in the policy.

The policy also requires that local residents and others not associated with the school system obtain a signed consent form from Jackson or his designated representative for each planned use. FAA regulations must also be followed in that instance.

Jackson said that the school system became interested in developing a policy after a couple of instances where a drone was brought to sports-related events at the high school. After checking with state officials for guidance, he

See DRONES, 4A

Christmas Spirit



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

D.F. Walker Elementary students sing Christmas songs for guests attending this year's tree lighting ceremony in downtown Edenton, Friday. See more photos on page 3A.

Resident finds health issues near Wis. wind facility

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

One of the local residents who has been pushing for a more stringent wind energy ordinance in Chowan County spoke to the county commissioners Monday night about wind turbine-related health concerns she had learned about during a visit to a wind farm in Wisconsin.

Harriet DeHart reported at the commissioners' meeting Monday night about her visit to the Shirley wind farm in Brown County, Wisconsin. DeHart explained that she selected that particular wind energy facility to visit partly because she once lived briefly in Wisconsin.

But she said she also picked that facility because

she understood that she would be able to get a realistic picture of what residents in that area thought. DeHart said she didn't want to go to a dog and pony show but wanted to talk to people who lived near the wind farm.

Charlottesville, Va.-based Apex Clean Energy Inc. has proposed a utility-scale wind energy generation fa-

cility along the Chowan-Perquimans line on farmland and Weyerhaeuser-owned timberland.

A group of local citizens that includes DeHart has petitioned county officials to adopt more stringent wind energy regulations that the citizens say would better protect public health, safety and welfare. More than 600 local residents have signed

a petition supporting the stricter regulations.

DeHart noted that she had watched the process of the Chowan County's Wind Energy Ordinance being changed by the county commissioners at the request of the developer of the proposed wind farm. Since then she has been watching the process of local residents submitting a petition seek-

ing a more stringent ordinance, she said.

DeHart said she had wanted to learn more about wind energy facilities. So she and her husband visited the Wisconsin site, where they rode around and knocked on doors, she said.

They noticed signs at all the entrances to the wind

See WIND HEALTH, 4A

Wood remembered for service

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

John Gilliam Wood III of Edenton, who established a long and distinguished record of service to the community, died Tuesday, Dec. 1 at his home. He was 90 years old.

Mayor Roland Vaughan said that Wood along with a group of his contemporaries was instrumental in

recruiting Seabrook Blanching, a Pennsylvania-based company, to come to Edenton and in helping to

establish Peanut Drive, the area adjacent to Seabrook, as an industrial park that today is home to Jimbo's Jumbos, Regulator Marine and a number of other businesses.

“That area has since become a great asset to the community,” Vaughan said.

Vaughan said on a more personal note that he had known Wood all his life.

“He was my Sunday



WOOD

School teacher once upon a time,” Vaughan said. “Then in my college days when I came home I would get together at the Woods during the holiday season. That was quite a treat. Nellie Jones would play the piano and everybody sang Christmas songs.”

Vaughan recalled that Wood was a great storyteller and particularly loved to share stories with the children in his life.

“I think I'll remember him

See WOOD, 2A

Input sought in Public Art Initiative

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Almost 250 responses have been received so far to an online survey designed to go hand in hand with plans for the start of a Public Art Initiative in the community.

Those wishing to complete the survey can visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/EPAL. Geraldine Plato, who has been hired by Destination Downtown Edenton to help lay the groundwork for the effort, returned to Edenton last week to meet with citizens in a town hall gathering. She also spent time talking with members of the local Racial Reconciliation Group in an effort to gather information so that her final recommendations can contain ideas that reflect the diversity of the local population.

Plato told both groups that the beauty

of the town complemented by a successful public art program would enhance efforts to bring visitors to town.

“It (initiative) can be a real economic engine for the community,” she said.

Marianne Miller, a member of the Reconciliation Group, said she felt with all the creativity in the community a Public Art Initiative would be a perfect fit here.

“I've never seen more creative, artistic people anywhere than I have here,” she said.

Local author Kate Ahern observed that while many people come here for the history there is also a “contemporary richness” that can be found among those who live here.

Among the ideas discussed was a portrait project that would involve a public

See PUBLIC ART, 3A



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