

Davis blasts GOP on education funding

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Sam Davis III told a gathering of Democrats in Chowan County recently that policies pursued by the Republican majority in the General Assembly are hurting the public schools.

The Pasquotank County businessman, a Democratic candidate for the 1st District seat in the N.C. House of Representatives that is currently held by Rep. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, told the audience at the Chowan County Democratic Party's meet-the-candidates dinner on Jan. 23 that the Republican-controlled legislature is taking the state in the wrong direction.

"North Carolina is extremely poor," Davis said. "But that's not all; we're poorly run."

Davis mentioned that he had remarked earlier to Edenton-Chowan Board of Education Chairwoman John Guard that if you're an educator or have a child in the public schools and you vote for Republicans in North Carolina, "there's something wrong with you."

Steinburg, when asked about Davis's comments on public school funding, said that issues such as teacher pay are more complicated than critics of Republican policies seem to understand.



About 190 Democrats turned out on a cold, snowy night to attend the meet-the-candidates dinner at Leon Nixon's Catering, Saturday, Jan. 23.

Steinburg said that starting pay for teachers is now \$35,000, compared with \$30,000 just a few years ago.

Instead of talking about "teacher pay," people need to discuss "teacher compensation," which takes into consideration factors such as health insurance and pension, Steinburg said.

Local supplements are also a factor because they are a part of a teacher's compensation package, Steinburg said.

"Nobody goes into teaching for the money," Steinburg said, but he agreed that the state can

do better for teachers. And he added that the state will do better for teachers and also work for better compensation for all state employees.

Davis said that as he was growing up around the hardware business, his father taught him to fix things.

Right now, Davis said, the district's current representative is part of the problem. For instance, he opposed Medicaid expansion, which would have benefitted many people in northeastern North Carolina, he said.

"Of course we didn't expand Medicaid because

Medicaid was absolutely out of control in terms of spending," Steinburg said.

Medicaid in the state was having millions of dollars in cost overruns every year, he said. And while the federal government would pay for Medicaid expansion initially, after a few years the state would have to pick up the tab, he said.

Republicans in the General Assembly didn't want to face even greater cost overruns in Medicaid, he said.

"Given that fiscal nightmare we decided that we would not expand," Steinburg said.

The state now has reformed Medicaid but it will take about five years to realize the full savings, he said.

Steinburg said that almost 70 cents of every dollar in revenue that the state takes in goes to a combination of two services: Medicaid and education.

Without holding spending in check the only option is to raise taxes — and Republican legislators won't do that, Steinburg said.

"We're not going to raise taxes," Steinburg said.

Davis also criticized Steinburg for supporting changes in economic development policy that did away with the Northeast Commission.

Steinburg said the regional partnerships such as the former Northeast Commission were not the best structure for coordinating a marketing effort to bring businesses into the state.

The new structure is more effective, he said.

With all due respect to the Northeast Commission and the things it was able to accomplish, the governor and General Assembly believe the new approach is a better approach because businesses are dealing directly with people in the Department of Commerce who can make the decision right there, Steinburg said.

"We've eliminated the middle man, so to speak," Steinburg said.

Davis told the audience he is a product of the state's public school system and a graduate of Elizabeth City State University.

He mentioned that he had served as a county commissioner in Pasquotank County and had been a district director of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners.

Davis said northeastern North Carolina is in his DNA. He mentioned that he grew up in Elizabeth City and his mother was from Tyner.

Davis said he knows what it feels like to be from northeastern North Carolina.

"I speak northeastern North Carolina because I have lived here all my life and I understand who we are and what we are fighting for," Davis said. "I know us. I'm one of you."

Davis said he appreciated people turning out for the event on a cold, snowy evening.

"Thank you all for being here on such an ugly night," he said.

He said the gather was probably the biggest group of Democrats he has seen in any one place at one time in eastern North Carolina in a long time.

"Our country depends on you," Davis told the crowd. "God bless America, y'all."

CRIMEWATCH

Edenton Police

ARRESTS

• Jan. 21 — Derrick Lewis Winfield, 35, of Tyler Run 1, was charged with one misdemeanor count of failure to pay fine for violation of vicious dog ordinance.

• Jan. 20 — Denise Dawn Woodall, 38, of Hertford, was charged with one misdemeanor count of larceny.

• Jan. 15 — Shaquean Quimahri Nixon, 21, of Cabarrus Street, was arrested on one felony count of robbery, one felony count of possession of stolen property and one misdemeanor count of injury to personal property.

• Jan. 18 — Candice Leary, 18, of Vance Lane, was charged with one misdemeanor count of simple physical assault and one misdemeanor count of battery of an unborn child.

INCIDENTS

• Jan. 21 — Breaking and entering and larceny on East Church Street.

• Jan. 20 — Larceny at Rose's Store on Virginia Road.

• Jan. 17 — Breaking and entering, larceny and injury to personal property at Jimbo's Jumbos on Peanut Drive.

• Jan. 16 — Breaking and entering and larceny on South Granville Street.

• Jan. 15 — Hit and run on North Broad Street.

• Jan. 15 — Hit and run on North Oakum Street.

• Jan. 13 — Larceny of a debit card on North Broad Street.

Chowan Sheriff

ARRESTS

• Jan. 31 — Stephen Brooks Tatem, 35, of Gilbert's Beach Road, was charged with a criminal summons on one misdemeanor count of hit and run/leaving the scene of an accident that resulted in property damage.

• Jan. 26 — Brandon Joshua Byrum, 18, of Squirrel's Hollow Lane, was arrested on four felony

counts of breaking and entering of a motor vehicle, two felony counts of larceny of firearm, and two felony counts of possession of stolen firearm.

• Jan. 24 — Nikale Walton, 17, of Water Lily Loop Road, was arrested on one felony count of breaking and entering, one felony count of larceny after breaking and entering, and one felony count of possession of stolen goods/property.

• Jan. 22 — Kenneth Marvin Lister, 32, of Elizabeth City, was charged with one misdemeanor count of failure to appear.

• Jan. 22 — Shakitta Nicole Long, 38, of Water Lily Loop Road, was arrested on four felony

counts of breaking and entering, four felony counts of larceny after breaking and entering, and four felony counts of possession of stolen property.

• Jan. 12 — Andre Terrell Sanders, 30, of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, was arrested on two misdemeanor counts of failure to appear.

INCIDENTS

• Jan. 22 — Fraud on Rocky Hock Road.

• Jan. 22 — Disorderly conduct at Goody's Convenience Store on Virginia Road.

• Dec. 30 — Recovered stolen motor vehicle in wooded area off North Broad Street.

Police: Edenton man was shot in leg

From staff reports

An Edenton man was shot in the leg last week, according to police.

Shortly after 8 p.m. Thursday, officers re-

sponded to a call of shots fired in the 700 block of Johnston Street. Officers found 22-year-old Denzel Dequan Williams, who suffered a single gunshot wound to the leg.

Williams was transported to Vidant Chowan Hospital, where he was treated and sent to Vidant Medical Center in Greenville.

One bullet had penetrated the residence of 712-A Johnston Street, but no injuries occurred as a result of that. The victim and witnesses at the scene did not provide

any information on the suspects in this case.

The Edenton Police Department is currently investigating this shooting and request anyone with information to contact Sergeant Laura Wilkins of the Edenton Police Department at 252-482-5144. You do not have to provide your name.

Copeland wins state sorghum yield contest

From staff reports

Sydney Copeland of Edenton recently won first place in the Conventional-Till Non-Irrigated division of the 2015 National Sorghum Producers Yield Contest in North Carolina. Copeland won with Pioneer hybrid Pioneer 84P80, which yielded 176.53 bushels per acre.

Copeland earned one of the 113 state titles won by growers planting Pioneer brand hybrids. The NSP awarded 168 state titles in this year's contest. Growers planting Pioneer brand hybrids dominated the contest, winning 67 percent of all state awards presented. DuPont Pioneer sorghum growers won 16 of 21 national titles awarded in 2015.

First-, second- and third-place national honors were awarded in each of the seven divisions. Growers

compete within a broad range of sorghum production classes, including conventional-till irrigated, conventional-till non-irrigated, mulch-till non-irrigated, no-till non-irrigated, reduced-till irrigated, double-crop non-irrigated and double-crop irrigated.

"Pioneer brand sorghum hybrids performed very well in the 2015 NSP Yield and Management Contest," said Doug Pilkington, DuPont Pioneer senior marketing manager, Lincoln, Neb. "Our, high-yielding products, coupled with implementation of the very best management practices, are providing top yield results for sorghum growers across the United States."

"We continue to expand our investment in research to improve our products and the defensive traits that protect top yields," he said.

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