

Coleman to replace Wells as food pantry director

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Leadership at the Edenton-Chowan Food Pantry is changing hands.

Ray Wells, who for nearly a decade has been the public face of the organization, is stepping aside as director of the nonprofit. Roger Coleman, a retired minister and

author, will replace Wells. Pantry Board President Robert Bastek explained that the changeover began Feb. 29 when Coleman entered an orientation process with Wells to familiarize himself with operations at the Pantry, which is located on North Broad Street Extended.

"Roger has a wealth of

experience in community outreach programs including meals on wheels, before and after school childcare centers, and housing for the elderly," Bastek said in an announcement concerning the transition in leadership. "He also served as chairman of the Mayor's Task Force on Hunger in Kansas City." Coleman praised Wells

for his past leadership and insight into the needs of the people in the community both for nourishing food and encouragement in difficult times.

"He is an exceptional person and has created a compassionate program that brings together a total community response to the food needs of those at risk,"

Coleman said.

Wells, who noted that this is his fourth professional retirement, said most of his career experience involved developing start-up programs. He said that experience came in handy as the Pantry began to experience growing pains and the need to serve additional clients as the economy has continued

to worsen in recent years.

Wells added that the Pantry has been fortunate to have experienced very little turnover among its volunteers.

"They come in and see this is a true ministry that helps people in a practical way, and they stay," he said.

See DIRECTOR, 2A

COOKIES FOR SALE



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Girl Scout Troop 815 had a successful drive-thru cookie sale at the Edenton Boy Scout Hut. This was the first time the troop had tried reaching out to the community this way. The girls sold almost 500 boxes of cookies and received a generous donation from the owners of an Edenton-based business, Marlin, LLC, group spokeswoman Tyeisha Phelps said.

Program is effective teaching tool, board told

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

The Alternative Learning Program in the Edenton-Chowan Schools is proving to be an effective tool in helping students return to their regular classrooms, according to program director Jamie Bowers.

Bowers, a past principal at D.F. Walker Elementary who now serves as director of the early

college and alternative learning programs for the school system, offered an overview of first semester results during the March 1 monthly school board meeting. Besides Bowers, ALP staff members are teacher Andy Downing and instructional assistant Angela Lewis.

Bowers began by noting that the program was begun as a way to help students achieve academic success by meeting their individu-

alized learning needs.

"This non-traditional program is designed to accommodate the non-traditional student in grades 6-12," she said, which in this case means students from Chowan Middle School and John A. Holmes High School.

Among those eligible for entry into the program, she said, are students who:

Have not been successful in the traditional school setting due

to a combination of academic, behavioral, social and maturation reasons

Have previously dropped out of school

Have a history of disciplinary issues

Have an excessive number of unexcused absences

Bowers said that nine students from Holmes were referred to the program during the first semester. Of that number, she said, two have

returned to the high school and one has progressed enough to be eligible for early graduation.

Of the six Chowan Middle School students accepted into the program during the first semester, she said, five have returned to CMS.

"We are still checking on those students," she said of those who have returned to their respective

See EFFECTIVE, 2A

Albemarle Bank & Trust's local branch to open Monday

From staff reports

The newest branch of Albemarle Bank & Trust (a West Town Bank) in Edenton will open for business on Monday.

Edenton resident Heather Sawyer will serve as branch manager and assistant vice president.

The full-service branch will be located at 216 S. Broad Street, which has served as a loan pro-

duction office for Albemarle for the past four years. Operating hours will be Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

"Albemarle is dedicated to providing a full-range of financial services and a superior customer experience to the residents of Edenton and the surrounding communities," Sawyer said. "We offer all the same services as a large institution, but with the

friendly attitude you would expect from a community bank."

The building has a rich history as a financial services facility. It was originally constructed in 1924 as the Citizen's Bank of Edenton. From 1966 to 1980, it served as a branch of the Bank of North Carolina. Albemarle began using the building in 2012.

"We're excited to be a part of the historic and vibrant down-

town area," Sawyer said. "We know residents have options for financial services in downtown Edenton so we will work hard to make their experience in our newly renovated facility as convenient and personable as possible."

West Town Bank & Trust is a North Riverside, Ill.-based state-chartered bank. The bank provides banking services through its offices in Illinois and North Caro-

lina and also maintains loan production offices in North Carolina, Maryland, Florida, Idaho, New York and New Jersey. Its primary deposit products are checking, savings, and time certificate accounts, and its primary lending products are residential mortgage, commercial, and installment loans. Additionally, the bank engages in

See TO OPEN, 2A

Early voter turnout up slightly more than 2012 numbers

From staff reports

The addition of a second site for early voting in Chowan County ap-



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pears to be making a difference in voter turnout.

As of the close of voting on Monday, 392 voters had cast ballots in the March 15 Primary Election. That puts the county on pace to exceed its total one-stop voting turnout of 982 in the 2012 Primary.

The Chowan Board of

Elections Office in Edenton has had 313 voters and the Northern Chowan Community Center -- the new site that has been added -- has had 79.

In addition, 76 absentee-by-mail ballots have been requested. Just 41 absentee-by-mail ballots were returned in the 2012 Primary.

Chowan County Elections Director Rebecca Lowe said there had not been any problems at either site related to the new photo ID requirement.

Two voters so far have voted a non-partisan ballot, which has only the NC Connect bond issue.

Of the other ballots,

178 have been Republican ballots and 212 have been Democratic ballots.

The Republican ballot has contests for the party's nomination for president and for other offices such as governor, U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate, but no contested local races.

The Democratic ballot for residents of the county's 1st Commissioner District includes a contest between Democrats Emmett Winborne and James "Jill" White to be the party's nominee for county commissioner in that district. The winner will face Republican Ron Cummings in the fall.

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