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Cyclist honors fallen heroes with 16-state journey — 3A

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Wind permit hearing delayed for medical emergency

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners last week voted to delay the second night of the hearing on a conditional use permit application for the Timbermill Wind Project for a month to give Commissioner John Mitchener an opportunity to participate.

The hearing will resume on Sept. 26 at Swain Auditorium, beginning at 5 p.m.

Mitchener was absent from the Aug. 23 session because of a medical emergency, County Attorney John Morrison announced at the meeting, which was held at the Northern Chowan Community Center.

Morrison explained that the

board would meet in closed session to discuss how to proceed, given Mitchener's absence, and then would discuss in open session what action to take next.

After meeting in closed session for more than an hour, the board reconvened in open session and

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Commissioner Alex Kehayes made a motion to recess the meeting because of Mitchener's absence.

Mitchener represents District 2, where most of the proposed wind turbines in Chowan County would be located, and the district would be under-represented without

Mitchener present, Kehayes said. Commissioner Emmett Winborne argued that District 1 already was under-represented since Chairman Jeff Smith, who represents District 1, had been recused from participating in the hearing on the conditional use permit. Kehayes said Smith's absence

See WIND, 4A

SCHOOLS OFF TO A SMOOTH START FOR THE NEW YEAR

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

All four schools in the Edenton-Chowan system saw smooth starts to the 2016-2017 school year on Monday.

Steve Wood, principal at John A. Holmes High School, said it was a good first day at the high school.

"Everything went very well this morning," Wood said. Most of the students appeared to be glad that school was back in session, he said. Everyone fell in and did what they were asked to do, he said.

"It really has been a good day," Wood said. The school day at the high school is starting 10 minutes later than last year. The day runs from 8:30 a.m. - 3:10 p.m. this year, compared with 8:20-3 in 2015-2016.

Wood said the later start is an inconvenience for some parents in terms of getting to work but is an advantage for the students. Studies have shown that teenagers perform better later in the morning, Wood said. The school has three 25-minute lunch periods with about 200 students each.

Attendance at the high school Monday was 608, slightly higher than the number at the end of last school year, according to Wood.

Chowan Middle School had 436 students enrolled as of Monday, which was slightly less than last year.

Principal John Lassiter said a smaller group of sixth-graders is coming in this year because they were affected by a state law change about a decade ago that shifted the

See SCHOOL, 4A



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Teresa Ward heads to work at White Oak Elementary School Monday morning with her grandson, 6-year-old Hunter Lynch, trailing behind.

Jones calls for action on soaring national debt

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

U.S. Rep. Walter B. Jones Jr. told the Edenton Rotary Club Thursday that Congress needs to start acting responsibly by not spending money it doesn't have.

"We keep funding the crazy things that are happening in the world," said Jones, a Republican who represents North Carolina's 3rd District. The district includes Chowan and a number of other area counties.

Jones cited as an example of the "crazy things" the ongoing American involvement in Afghan-

istan. He said America was trying to develop law and government institutions in an Afghan society where few people have the education to implement those institutions.

Telling a villager without education to take on a role such as mayor or sheriff makes no sense, he said.

"What do we think we're going to accomplish in Afghanistan?" he asked.

A handout distributed by Jones indicated the Iraq and Afghanistan wars have cost American taxpayers \$1.6 trillion. The Iraq War has cost \$819 billion while

the Afghan War has cost \$729 billion.

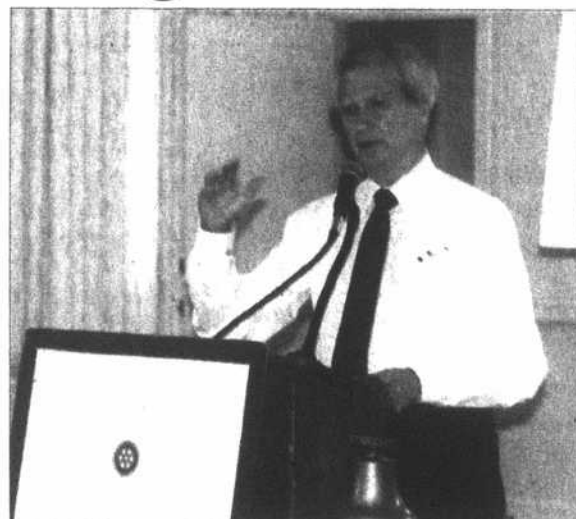
Jones said Congress has not listened to the people.

"People are just tired and fed up with the federal government not listening to you the people," Jones said.

Jones said he believes the government's lack of responsiveness to the people on issues such as the national debt has been a main factor in the popularity this year of both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump.

"It my mind it's a certainty that

See JONES, 4A



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

U.S. Rep. Walter B. Jones Jr., R-N.C., speaks to the Edenton Rotary Club, Thursday.

Response averts tragedy in carbon monoxide incident



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Several workers at Leon Nixon's Catering, shown here Wednesday afternoon, suffered apparent carbon monoxide poisoning Wednesday morning.

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Fifteen people — mostly workers at a popular Chowan County restaurant and catering service — had to be treated at hospitals last week for what officials believe may have been carbon monoxide poisoning, according to local authorities.

"Vidant Chowan Hospital in Edenton treated 15 patients for carbon mon-

oxide poisoning today," the hospital said in a press release on Aug. 24. "We transferred nine patients who needed specialized treatment to Duke University Hospital. The remaining patients at Vidant Chowan Hospital have been treated for non-life threatening injuries."

Edenton police received a report about 8 a.m. on Aug. 24 that a number of workers at Leon Nixon Catering were sick, po-

lice Chief Jay Fortenberry said. An officer who arrived at the business in the 700 block of Virginia Road said he found employees outside the restaurant who "were not acting right," Fortenberry said.

"They were all conscious," but because several workers appeared to be sick, the officer had other workers and staff evacuate the restaurant,

See POISONING, 4A

Chowan health challenged by poverty, risky behavior

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Socioeconomic factors such as poverty combine with risky behaviors such as smoking to place many Chowan County residents at risk for serious health problems.

That observation was at the heart of the 2016 Chowan County Health

Assessment, which was presented last week by public health consultant Sheila S. Pfaender.

Pfaender, in her presentation Thursday afternoon at the Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library, explained that the report was prepared by mining secondary data — demographic, socioeconomic, health, and environmental.

The assessment also made use of hospital data, including emergency room discharges and inpatient discharges. The hospital data helps show what people are liv-

Sheila S. Pfaender, in her presentation Thursday afternoon at the Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library, explained that the report was prepared by mining secondary data - demographic, socioeconomic, health, and environmental.

ing with, rather than just what they are dying from as in the case of mortality data.

Pfaender said the assessment takes special notice when Chowan County deviates from the state or region. The

report looks at changes over time and at significant age, gender or racial and ethnic disparities.

In 2015 Chowan County was ranked 61st out of the state's 100 counties in health outcomes. The county also was ranked

92nd out of the 100 counties for health behaviors and 79th for social and economic factors affecting health.

On the positive side, the county was ranked in the top third — 27th — for clinical care.

In 2014, 17.7 percent of pregnant women in the county smoked during pregnancy — nearly twice the statewide percentage of 9.8.

Significant causes of death for local residents as noted in the assessment include stroke,



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Sheila Pfaender presents the 2016 Chowan County Health Assessment at the Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library.

See HEALTH, 2A



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