

CHOWAN HERALD

UPFRONT PEOPLE / UPFRONT PRICES

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Commission OKs 120-day moratorium on solar farms

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Chowan County Commission approved a 120-day moratorium on solar farms during Monday's meeting.

The moratorium affects county's solar farm ordinance and gives officials time to study possible changes to the law.

Camden's Board of Commissioners recently approved a 60-day moratorium on solar farms. The moratorium expires in late May.

Prior to the commission's decision to put in place a

moratorium that ends Aug. 28, a public hearing on Monday offered people a chance to voice their views.

Rachel Reid was among several people who spoke in favor of a moratorium and against solar farms.

"I've lived here all my life in Chowan County," she said. "It's been my home, my parent's home — our whole family. We've been here forever. My parents are farmers. I drive back and forth to Edenton every day and look at the crops. It really offends me that they would call this a solar farm because they

are not farms. They're not agriculture. There's nothing whatsoever that I want to look at driving down the road."

Reid said she doesn't believe the promises that have been made about these facilities being made to blend in better with the surroundings.

"They say that they're going to do all these things so that you can't see them or how they are going to have sheep there. Well, they're not going to have sheep or make it all nice and pretty," she said. "I've looked at the

solar farm on the way to Elizabeth City. I know we've all looked at that. They aren't going to do jack squat. There are a lot of empty promises that are being made about these things and they not being policed I believe like they should be."

Not everyone favors a moratorium.

"I want to express my opposition to this moratorium," Frank Sellers said. "I can't remember when this was done before. Moratoriums to me spells negativity. It is a negative sign to future investment not only to solar

farms, but other things as well."

Susan Inglis said the current ordinance is sufficient and that any changes to the ordinance arising from a moratorium could "snuff out" future opportunities.

"You can raise animals under solar panels. You can plant flowering plants for pollinators — 85 percent of our food crops require pollination. It is a threat to our current food security that we don't have enough pollination. I request that we do not lose any opportunity and do not have a morato-

rium."

Inglis' mother Frances added, "We need to support alternative energy sources."

Sellers said he's studied the documents related to ordinance as it relates to solar farms. Instead of drafting a new ordinance, Sellers said, the commission should rely instead on the existing law. He provided the commission with a template for solar development — documents acquired from various governmental groups who have studied the issue.

See SOLAR, 6A

Guard dies after assault

From staff reports

WINDSOR — A prison guard from Edenton who worked in Bertie County has died after she was attacked by an inmate.

North Carolina Department of Public Safety spokeswoman Pamela Walker said in a news release the attack happened late Wednesday afternoon at the Bertie Correctional Institution in Windsor.

Walker said prison medical staff and first responders were unsuccessful in the attempt to save 29-year-old Sgt. Megan Lee Callahan of Edenton. She died about an hour after the attack.

An inmate who has been in the prison since 2004 on a life sentence for murder in Cumberland County is being investigated in the attack but no charges have been filed yet.

The State Bureau of Investigation is handling the case.

Callahan had been with the department since 2012. She had been promoted to sergeant in February 2016.

Tim Brabble, a Vidant company police officer at Vidant-Chowan Hospital in Edenton, said he had known Callahan for many years, starting from their time together more than a decade ago when he was serving as Chowan Sheriff's Department's school resource officer at Chowan Middle School.

"She was a good kid. This is tragic. I'm heartbroken," Brabble said.

Gov. Roy Cooper has ordered all North Carolina flags lowered to half-staff in tribute to Callahan.

Cooper issued the order on Thursday. Flags were to be lowered immediately and returned to full staff at sunset today.

REGULATOR MARINE TO EXPAND



PHOTOS BY MILES LAYTON

Regulator Marine President Joan Maxwell points to a boat as assembly is finished at the Peanut drive facility. The company is looking to employ more workers as it expands.

God's grace spurs business

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
For the Chowan Herald

Before each shift, employees gather at Regulator Marine's facility on Edenton's Peanut Drive, a road that serves several local industries.

They start their shift with a prayer, perhaps to bless the upcoming shift or to seek support for a co-worker's relative. They go over their schedule, keeping an eye toward safety as an OSHA Carolina Star facility. Regulator is the only boat manufacturer to have the designation for meeting the high safety standard.

Then the shift gets to work filing fiberglass molds, installing wiring, creating supply lists — everything needed to finish the 15-18 boats currently in various stages of the production process. Regulator Marine completes four boats every week. But with an upcoming expansion, owners Owen and Joan Maxwell

hope to increase that number to meet the demand for its fiberglass sportfishing boats.

The company's multi-phase expansion includes an increase its workforce — now at 160. Regulator has 15 immediate openings ranging from technical writer to control/CFO to assembly and lamination personnel. Interested people can apply at the facility, 187 Peanut Drive.

The parking spaces there may be a little hard to come by. President Joan Maxwell said the parking lot will be one of the things expanded under the project, as will be the assembly area. A gravel lot has been constructed behind the facility with another to be put in later this year. Both will allow for the expansion of what is now the storage facility for the fiberglass molds used to make everything on Regulator's boats — from coolers

See REGULATOR, 4A



A boat is lowered onto a trailer for shipment to a dealer. Regulator Marine produces four boats per week.

Legislators differ on bill

BY REGGIE PONDER
Daily Advance

Area lawmakers disagree on whether a university free speech bill that has passed the state House is a necessary safeguard or an unnecessary diversion from more important issues.

"I think this is just an additional safeguard," said state Rep. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, who voted for House Bill 527. Steinburg represents a part of Pasquotank County, which is home to Elizabeth City State University, one of the 16 campuses in the University of North Carolina system affected by HB 527.

But state Rep. Howard Hunter, D-Hertford, who also represents a part

See BILL, 2A



STEINBURG



HUNTER

Arts show creates fun

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff writer

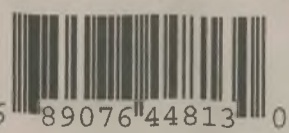
Those attending the opening reception tomorrow (Thursday) night for a four-woman, mixed media show will have the opportunity to experience a visual treat that encompasses everything from colored pencils to rice paper.

The reception opens at the Chowan Arts Council Gallery in downtown Edenton at 5:30 p.m. Admission is free and everyone is

See ART, 5A



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'Midnight Masquerade' memories made

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Dressed in their best, John A. Holmes High School students made their arrivals Saturday evening in front of the school to attend the prom.

Parents and neighbors greeted each couple as they walked toward a time and place where memories

would be made. Superintendent Rob Jackson, who greeted the Aces in his dapper suit and bow tie, noted that of his long tour of duty at many proms over the years, Holmes' proms are unique because folks gather to greet sons and daughters as they step out of cars and onto the red carpet. For a moment, time stopped as parents used cellphone

cameras to take photos and videos of their dressed up teens.

Aces' ladies — the styles of dresses have changed over the years, but that is to be expected. There was a lot of time spent making this fashion moment special. Gowns were classy and elegant, much like

See PROM, 8A



Aces' prom king was Kyrese Phelps while the queen was Jer'Kyrah Jackson.

PHOTO BY JAN SMITH

MAY PLAY DAY
FAMILY FUN
ROCKY HOCK COMMUNITY CENTER

Food & Fun!
Baked Goods
Craft Booths

BBQ CHICKEN PLATES
\$9.00 from 3-7pm
Edenton Dance Stars
11:00 - 12:00 PM

CORN HOLE TOURNAMENT 10:00 Until
Winning Team - Grand Prize - \$100.00 Cash
FREE CHILDREN'S CRAFTS & GAMES
BB GUN SHOOTING CLINIC & CONTEST
BICYCLE DRAWING 1:30 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH - 10AM
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