

UPFRONT PEOPLE / UPFRONT PRICES

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NC Supreme Court hears 2 cases in Edenton

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

North Carolina's Supreme Court heard oral arguments in two cases in the courtroom of the historic Chowan County Courthouse on Tuesday.

The first case the court's seven justices heard was *State v. Mario Andrette McNeill*. It centered a man seeking to overturn his convictions in the death of a 5-year-old child. Among other reasons, the outcome of the case will hinge upon the definition of attorney-client privilege.

Wray v. the City of Greensboro was the second

case heard by the justices. It's an appeal involving a former police chief who is seeking to recover employee benefits from the city of Greensboro.

The court session was held in the historic courthouse on King Street in honor of its 250th anniversary this year.

In the McNeil case, justices listened to oral arguments and questioned McNeil's defense attorney and prosecutors for nearly an hour and a half inside a packed courtroom.

In May 2013, a Cumberland County jury convicted McNeil of first-degree murder, first-degree kidnapping,

sexual offense of a child, indecent liberties with a child, human trafficking and sexual servitude in connection with a child's death. He was sentenced to death.

The body of 5-year-old Shaniya Davis was found on Nov. 16, 2009, in a kudzu patch off N.C. Highway 87 on the Lee-Harnett county line, six days after she was reported missing from her Fayetteville mobile home.

A medical examiner's autopsy determined that she had been suffocated, and she had injuries "consistent with a sexual assault"

See COURT, 2A



THOMAS J. TURNEY/THE DAILY ADVANCE

Justices of the N.C. Supreme Court stand prior to the start of their rare court session in the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse, Tuesday. The justices heard appeals in two cases during the session.



PHOTO BY MILES LAYTON

White Oak Elementary Librarian Beth Brabble reads to students as Friday's storm batters Chowan County.

Sheriff: Tornado touches down

BY MILES LAYTON
AND REBECCA BUNCH
Chowan Herald

A tornado touched down in the Rocky Hock area of Chowan County early Friday morning, damaging buildings but causing no reported injuries, the Chowan sheriff said Friday.

"There was some property damage but thankfully no one got hurt," Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin told the Chowan Herald.

Chowan County officials said the National Weather Service reported the tornado touched down just east of the Chowan River near Whites Landing Road and Gum Pond Road. The tornado caused tree damage as it

See TORNADO, 2A

HONORING MOTHERS



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Adrian Wood and her husband Thomas of Edenton are the proud parents of four children. A mother and author, Wood offers advice as to her experiences raising a family.

Mom of four offers advice, secrets

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Mother's Day is around the corner on Sunday, so it is time to honor those women who have their hands on the cradle to shape the lives of all those around.

Adrian Wood and her husband Thomas are the proud parents of four young children, one of whom has very special needs. On any given week day, this mom can be seen picking up her school age kids from the bus stop in downtown Edenton or

grocery shopping while accomplishing more, much more.

Among other honors, Wood has a PhD along with extensive experience not only in early childhood education, but as a writer whose blog "Tales of educated debutante" is just a mouse click away.

Quick reminder — shop local for Mother's Day. For more about where to go, see the For the Love of Local column on page A4.

Back to Wood. Most often, there is a smile on Wood's face, so the Chowan Herald sought to learn

more from her about the secrets of motherhood.

Chowan Herald: What do you find most challenging about being a mother in today's world?

Wood: Juggling life is what I find most challenging. Being a wife, mother to four, a fledgling writer, all our wonderful roles, but I seem to drop the ball more than I like.

CH: Does your being the parent of an autistic child make it harder some days?

Wood: Ummm, that would be a yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Our days are harder and look vastly different

than the ones before we were gifted our Amos. The real question is: Does having Amos make your days more joyful? And again, that would be a yes. It's quite possible to have both all wrapped up together which has been such a gift of enlightenment.

CH: After a long day of, well, being a parent — which means picking up clothes, food, travel, etc. — where do you find the strength to go on? Really, where do moms find that hidden reserve of strength

See MOM, 5A

Steinburg talks tort reform

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

State House Representative Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, said he is cautiously optimistic that

there are enough votes to override Gov. Roy Cooper's veto of an important agriculture bill that protects farms hog farms from frivolous lawsuits.

Last month, legislators passed House Bill 467 because more than two dozen lawsuits are pending federal court against the state's largest hog producer, Murphy-Brown, a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods. More than 500 people living near the hog farms have complained about the stench, insects, rats and water



STEINBURG

See STEINBURG, 2A

COA seeking ag program

BY NICOLE
BOWMAN-LAYTON
For the Chowan Herald

Chowan County Commissioner John Mitchener said he has high hopes that College of Albemarle's new president, Robert Wynegar, can help the

See COA, 6A

Community remembers fallen prison guard

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Hundreds of people, including Gov. Roy Cooper, attended a funeral service in Edenton recently for a prison guard who was killed in the line of duty, a local woman described by many as kind and loving.

Traffic was blocked on Virginia Road on May 4 as a horse-drawn caisson with Sgt. Meggan Callahan's flag-covered casket was led by state troopers to

Edenton United Methodist Church. Two long rows of law enforcement officers raised their hands in salute as Callahan's casket was taken inside the church.

Polk County Correctional Facility Administrator John Hamlin was among the many law enforcement officials from various agencies across the state who attended the service that was closed to the media.

"It's very moving, a strong sign of solidarity and very refreshing," Hamlin said.

"This is one of our own. We don't have to work at the Bertie Correctional Institution for us to feel this and to mourn her loss. This could have been anyone at any one of our facilities."

Callahan, 29, died April 26 from injuries she suffered during an attack by an inmate at Bertie Correctional Institution in Windsor.

Chowan Sheriff's Deputy Heather Matthews led the funeral procession from Callahan's residence in

Edenton to the church.

"She was a good woman, neighbor and friend," Matthews said. "I was very honored that the family asked me to lead the procession. They said she would've wanted me to do this for her, so I graciously accepted. It is still kind shocking. She was so young. She will be missed."

Many of Callahan's friends and neighbors spoke movingly about her following the service.

Kim Hickman and her

daughter Leah said they miss Callahan.

"She always had a smile that lit up the room," Kim Hickman said. "Her personality was just awesome. This is a big loss for the community because it has touched so many people."

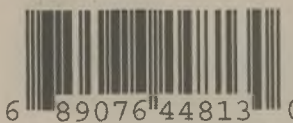
Leah Hickman and Callahan attended John A. Holmes High School together.

"You couldn't know anyone better. She was always happy," Leah Hickman

See FUNERAL, 6A



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