



Aces' swimmers live in the fast lane — B1



### Dickens comes to life

Chowan County's version of the holiday classic "A Christmas Carol" has the ability to inspire the spirit. — B2



### Art for good cause

A recent children's art auction has raised over \$4,000 to benefit the work of the Chowan Arts Council as well as the local Boys and Girls Club. — B4



### This week's pets

Check out this week's adorable pets that are available for adoption from the Tri-County Animal Shelter. — B3



### Vets pay tribute

Seventy-six years ago — Dec. 7, 1941 — is a day that lives in infamy. Thursday morning, Capt. Mark Thesier sailed his ship "Liber-Tea" to the second bell buoy out in Albemarle Sound where American Legion Post 40 and the Submarine Vets Association laid a wreath in tribute to those service members who lost their lives in the attack on Pearl Harbor. — B6

## 'People's theatre' now locally owned, operated

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

Thanks to a commitment from the Chowan County community, Taylor Theatre will get a second act.

Charlie Creighton said the ink is dry on the deal to purchase the theater building from the Montanaro Family NC Properties.

See our editorial about Taylor Theatre on page A6.

Creighton along with Samuel Dixon and Larry Sellers spearheaded recent efforts to save the theater. Within a few short weeks, the investment group raised more than \$610,000 to purchase the theater building and make repairs.

Creighton said the purchase contracts were signed last week with the sales price being \$330,000. The remainder — about \$280,000 — will be used for repairs and more. The theater closed in June after a storm damaged the building.

"On top of the purchase price, this extra money will allow the owner to restore it to its original glory," Creighton said.

A local couple — Belinda and Ryan Respass — will lease the theater as its new operators. The Respasses are former long-time employees of the theater. While contractors were busy cleaning and



SUBMITTED PHOTO

These are some of the folks who made it happen — the rebirth of Taylor Theatre. A group of local investors stepped up to the plate to raise \$610,000 needed to buy the property and make repairs.

See THEATRE, 3A



PHOTOS BY KIP SHAW

The Christmas Candlelight Tour attracted tourists from near and far to Edenton's homes on Friday and Saturday. Scents, tastes and memories were created as folks traveled from home to home. Cookies made children smile while their parents sought out a warm and friendly hearth.



## Christmas Candlelight Tour 'very special'

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

The rainy, cold weather experienced in the community over the weekend had a definite impact on the number of those who braved the elements to take part in the annual Candlelight Tour, local officials said. Just 1,406 tickets were sold — about 280 less than last year.

But it didn't dampen the

spirits of those who did come.

Mike Ervin, executive director of the Edenton Historical Commission that sponsors the tour each Christmas, said particularly noticeable was the drop in the number of walk-in tickets normally sold for the event.

"Definitely the weather had an impact because we had 50 to 75 percent less

walk-ins than we normally have," he said. "We normally have in the 400 ticket sale range. This year we had only in the 100 range. Saturday there were only 46 walk-ins."

Ervin added that the stormy weather affected the transporting of visitors to the Edenton Bay homes that formed the foundation of this year's tour as well as creating challenges relating

to the luminary lighting that is normally put out for visitors.

He praised the homeowners who opened their homes for the tour and noted that they offered gracious welcomes to all who visited in spite of the weather and rainwater tracked inside their homes.

And those who did come

See TOUR, 2A

## Police Chief retires

BY MILES LAYTON AND REBECCA BUNCH  
Cooke Communications

Edenton Police Chief Jay Fortenbery has retired from police work to pursue teaching at Elizabeth City State University.

"I will miss working with the Chief," Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton



FORTENBERY

said. "I am proud of him for earning his PhD and securing a professorship at Elizabeth City State University. I am happy he and his wife Mysi will continue to make their home here in Edenton. They are great people and I wish them all the best."

One of Fortenbery's officers, Captain Daroyall Brown, will serve as interim chief until a new police chief can be hired.

Fortenbery's last day was Dec. 7 when he presided over a graduation ceremony from the final class to earn certificates from the Citizens Police Academy.

"I loved the symbolism of Chief's decision to officially end his law enforcement career with graduation ceremony of Edenton Police Department Citizens Police Academy," Knighton said. "His last act as chief was to congratulate and honor the citizens who recently completed the Academy. Chief is fond of quoting Sir Robert Peel, a British Prime Minister who is considered to be the father of law enforcement — the police are the citizens and the citizens are the police. He teaches those principles in the Academy and worked to instilled same in the culture of the department."

Knighton gave high praise to Fortenbery because he brought many initiatives to Edenton such as neighborhood policing, participation in regional law enforcement task forces and "if you see something, say something" campaign, to name

See CHIEF, 4A

## Goodwin announces sheriff re-election bid

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Chowan County Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin has announced that he plans to seek re-election when the primary filing period opens on Feb. 12. The filing period will end Feb. 28.

Goodwin, 48, is now serving his third term as sheriff. Prior to being elected to his

first term, he had served as a deputy. A native of Chowan County, he has served a total of about 26 years in the sheriff's office. He said he hoped to be given the opportunity to continue serving.

"If the people will keep me, I will be right there," he said.



GOODWIN

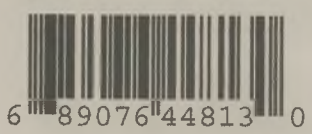
Goodwin said he felt much had been accomplished during his time in office including the establishment of a highly successful Kids and Cops program and most recently a focus on working with the community to ensure security at local churches.

According to Chowan

County Board of Elections Director Rebecca Lowe, other local offices that will be open for filing in February include Chowan County Clerk of Court currently held by Mike McArthur as well as Chowan County Commission seats held by Jeff Smith (District 1, Seat 2), John Mitchener (District 2, Seat 2) and Ellis Lawrence (District 3, Seat 2).



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10:30 PM SPECIAL MUSIC  
11:00 PM MIDNIGHT SERVICE  
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