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Top Ten News
Stories of 2018,
Part 2 - 4A

FINLAY, COLEMAN, BROTHERS NOTABLE IN 2018



ROGER COLEMAN

Director guides pantry's growth

BY MILES LAYTON
Staff Writer

Edenton-Chowan Food Pantry Director Roger Coleman is the natural choice as one of our newsmakers of the year.

"I have been fortunate enough to have been a part of the food pantry for the past three years — perhaps the best three years of my life," he said during a recent interview. "When one comes to the party as a servant, however, and begins to be treated as the guest of honor, it's time to leave the party."

There's no denying that Coleman is the face of the organization that feeds thousands of families each year. One look inside the voluminous pantry reveals much, particularly when compared to larger counties or places few and far between in Appalachia. Cans of vegetable, tuna and other

See COLEMAN, 2A

Boys & Girls Club unit director, Brothers, an advocate for children

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
Editor

During a recent December meeting of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners, several advocates spoke in favor of the Boys and Girls Club, which was in the process of leasing the first floor of the old D.F. Walker building. One name that was mentioned over and over was Susan Brothers.

Brothers, is the unit director for the Boys and Girls Club of Edenton/Chowan. To put her multi-faceted job into the simplest of terms, she is responsible for creating and scheduling programs at the club.

She also makes sure the participants stay "on task" when it comes to doing their homework, she said.

Every few weeks almost like clockwork, a new email about an event the boys and girls participate in comes to the Chowan Herald's inbox. The activities range from a Veterans Day ceremony to caroling with at nursing homes to writing thank you letters to the custodial staff. They've even planted bushes.

Students attending the club are also encouraged to practice a healthy lifestyle and taught how to deal with bullying through such programs as Triple Play and Healthier Lifestyle, as well as physical activity.

According to Executive Director Elizabeth Mitchell, the Boys and Girls Club focuses on academic success, character and leadership development and healthy lifestyles. When you think about it, that's a lot to focus on, but somehow Brothers and her amazing group of employees and volunteer pulls it off every day during the school year.

For example, during Power Hour, a significant event in the life of the club, children do their homework and get help if they



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Boys and Girls Club Edenton Unit Director Susan Brothers stands with children who participate in the after school program.

need it. Brothers said that one of the greatest needs of the club — which serves kids in grades K-12 — is for more volunteers to help at the club.

"We'd especially like to encourage young people to volunteer with us at the club," she said. "And another thing I hope to do is get more parents involved."

During a recent Chowan County Board of Commission meeting, Brothers was among those who made an impassioned plea for the board to approve the Boys and Girls Club lease agreement for the first floor of the old D.F. Walker building. In the past, Mitchell has said the space will

allow the organization double its capacity and offer a program for high-schoolers.

"From 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., people call us everyday hoping for an opening," Brothers said. "We can serve so many more kids if we have the space."

The board approved the lease and now the Boys and Girls Club can look at expansion and moving closer to the students it serves.

The organization is in the process of raising \$100,000 to match a capital campaign contribution from Dr. John Phillips, a native of Edenton.

See BROTHERS, 2A

Report shows strengths, weaknesses

Emergency officials review the successes, failures of November drill

BY PETER WILLIAMS
Perquimans Weekly News Editor

Area emergency officials did a lot of things right during a disaster drill in November but there are areas where they can do better, a report shows.

A 56-page "After Action Report" looked at how area fire, EMS, law enforcement, Albemarle Regional Health Systems and Vidant Chowan Hospital responded during the exercise. Chowan emergency officials were also involved.

The drill involved a van that ran into the side of a train in Winfall. The van was carrying "plague" and the container leaked, contaminating the area and sending a plume through the area north of Winfall.

"With any drill, the hope is to identify things we as first responders are doing good and to note areas where we can improve," said Jonathan Nixon, Perquimans County's emergency management director. "The participation by so many of our county and partner responders is a good reminder of the teamwork necessary to provide quality service."

The responding agencies were judged in five areas. In four of them, the report found they were able to perform the tasks "with some challenges." In the fifth area, the report said the tasks were performed with "major challenges."

The most troublesome area involved demonstrating the ability to direct, coordinate and control emer-

See REPORT, 3A

PGR: Thieves put their lives in danger

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
Editor

Those stealing from a solar farm in Ryland are putting their lives at risk.

That is the message Pine Gate Renewables wants to emphasize while offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to an arrest for larcenies occurring on its facility.

According to Chowan County Sheriff's Office Det. John McArthur, the thefts date back to October 2017. The most recent theft was reported on Dec. 7.

McArthur said that copper cable is being stolen from the solar farm, which is currently operational.

The solar facilities are transmitting high voltage energy throughout the site's infrastructure, said Claudia Weeks, preconstruction and sustainability coordinator with Pine Gate Renewables.

"We want to warn residents of the

See THIEVES, 2A



NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON/
CHOWAN HERALD

Jennifer Finlay, Shepherd-Pruden Memorial Library Librarian, stands outside the library's building.

Librarian brings newspapers, books, films to Chowan County

BY MILES LAYTON
Staff Writer

Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library's lead librarian deserves accolades as a newsmaker of the year because she goes above and beyond to give Chowan County a top notch library.

Let's note the obvious. Every time someone walks into the library, it's a warm feeling. There are activities for children and adults.

When school ends, the summer reading program begins. There

are family friendly movies shown at the library.

For adults, the Library's Armchair Traveler Series celebrated the 350 year anniversary of Chowan County.

Not only that, but there's tons of research materials that Jennifer Finlay has used in her weekly columns to illuminate us about Chowan County's fascinating history.

Finlay wears nice running shoes — why? — because she used to work at athletic apparel/shoe store. She also walks around

town — a lot — during her breaks. She's swam in San Francisco Bay — that's wicked cool too. She offers an eclectic frame of thinking that make one of most interesting personalities in our neck of the woods.

As to policy initiatives, check it out (a play on words that will make more sense in a moment).

If you've noticed, Finlay has taken charge of ideal that extends, at least for some people, to celebrate the accomplish-

See FINLAY, 2A

Santa's helpers bring holiday to less fortunate

Rec Department, gov. agencies holds annual 'A Day with Santa'

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
Editor

Santa and his helpers were busy Dec. 20 at the old D.F. Walker gym as they helped the community spend "A Day with Santa."

For more than 20 years, the event has assisted Chowan County residents who need a little help during the holiday season with gifts and activities for children.

In the center of the gym floor was Santa Claus himself. With the help of some "elves" — John A. Holmes high school students and others — he talked with boys and girls who came the event.

The rec department and other governmental agencies started gathering applications for "A Day with Santa" near the end of October, according to Gwen Brown, chairperson of the event. This year, over 400 kids were served through

See HOLIDAY, 3A

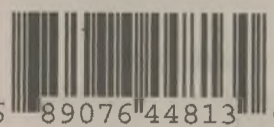


NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON/
CHOWAN HERALD

Santa poses for a photo while a girl eyes the toy box during "A Day with Santa," Dec. 20 at the old D.F. Walker gym.



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Not Appropriate for Children

RESILIENCE: The Biology of Stress & The Science of Hope
at Taylor Theatre
Thursday, January 10th, 2019 at 4:00 pm.
A film about Adverse Childhood Experiences

Join CHOWAN CARES and Prevent Child Abuse. Learn about toxic stress in our community.