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Knighton: LGC criticism not just aimed at Edenton

Though town acted to improve finances, many have not

BY MILES LAYTON
 Staff Writer

Town Manager Anne Marie Knighton spoke to the Chowan Herald about the fireworks reported at a state meeting about Edenton's finances.

Recently, N.C. Local Government Commission approved Edenton's application for a \$2.6 million U.S. Department of Agriculture loan. That loan, combined

with a \$1.1 million USDA grant the town was awarded, will pay for \$3.7 million in upgrades and renovations to the town's two water treatment plants.

The water plant improvements are needed, town officials say, to lift a water quality advisory imposed on Edenton's drinking water by the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. The town received the advisory because its drinking water contains elevated levels of trihalomethanes, or THMs, a chemical by-product that

"I told him I wanted to be a part of the solution and not just walk away content that the Town's debt was approved."

Anne Marie Knighton
 Town manager

forms when chlorine is used to disinfect drinking water. Exposure to THMs has been linked to increased risk for several forms of cancer.

Despite agreeing to allow Edenton to pursue the USDA loan, members of the

Local Government Commission had some criticism Jan. 8 for how the town handles it finances.

Knighton, who attended the meeting, said LGC members were referring to Edenton's most recent au-

dit report that listed several material weaknesses in the town's accounting practices and internal fiscal controls. One finding from the audit, for example, was that purchase orders weren't always prepared before purchases were made but instead prepared afterward.

Knighton offered the Chowan Herald more detail about the meeting with LGC.

"First, it's worth noting NC LGC staff recommended the Commission approve the town's application," she

said. "LGC staff reported to the Commission that LGC staff met with Edenton staff in Edenton in November 2018 and verified the town had taken corrective actions. LGC staff reported the Town's written response to the town's Fiscal Year 2018 audit findings and concerns was thorough and in fact, Edenton's letter was the best response letter the LGC staff has ever received."

Knighton said LGC staff reported to the Commis-

See KNIGHTON, 2A

Grading issues examined

E-Chowan to retally first 9 week grades

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
 Editor

EDENTON — Computer software used by North Carolina school districts to calculate student grades may have tallied them incorrectly in some districts during the first quarter, resulting in grades that either were too high or too low for an undetermined number of students.

Edenton-Chowan Schools Superintendent Rob Jackson said that shortly before winter break, the school district was notified by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction that there might be a problem with how software calculated student grades during the first quarter of the school year.

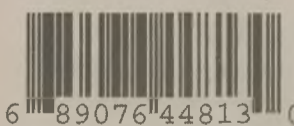
DPI provides PowerSchool, software that school districts use to report student grades. Within PowerSchool, there is a program called Power Teacher Pro. School districts use it for storing grades and report cards. DPI started phasing in Power Teacher Pro in 2017-18 and required all districts to use it starting with the current school year.

According to Jackson, DPI asked PowerSchool, the company that owns the Power Teacher Pro software, to look into the possible glitch and report back. Jackson said Edenton-Chowan Schools received an email Jan. 10 stating that there was a problem with grade calculations statewide and that school districts would be sent information on how to find out which courses were affected.

See GRADING, 2A



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REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. REMEMBERED



PHOTOS BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON/CHOWAN HERALD

The Rev. William T. Davis delivers the keynote address during the celebration.

Davis: Be stewards of your presence

Chowan County honors civil rights leader

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
 Editor

The Rev. William T. Davis urged those at the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration to be better stewards of their time, by picking the right tables at which to sit.

The filled John A. Holmes auditorium was decorated in blue and gold as members from the Girls Club and Brotherhood Club served as ushers, among other duties. The Fanny A. Parker Women's Club sponsors both youth organizations.

Davis, who also is an attorney, is a former Edenton resident and graduated from D.F. Walker School. For 36 years, he has been the pastor of New Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Camden County, not too far from Edenton. Glorious Elliott reminded the audience during her introduction of Davis.

Davis said that he was humbled, and grateful to be a part of the celebration.

"I was here a few years ago," he said. "I have mixed feeling when I'm asked to



Attorney D. Cole Phelps talks during the Chowan County Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration on Monday in the John A. Holmes High School Auditorium.

speak at an event again. Either I did OK or I really messed up and you have extended grace to me to give me a chance to redeem myself."

Davis based his speech

around a story in 2 Samuel, chapter 9. In it, King David feels blessed by God and want to share his blessings with others. So he asks a servant if there are any living relatives of his former



Committee Chair Angela Taylor Welch speaks to the audience during the celebration.

enemy, Saul. The servant knows of Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson who is unable to walk and lives in Lo Debar. David calls for Mephibosheth to live at the palace and eat at David's table for the rest of his life. So Mephibosheth comes to live with David.

For a modern example of this story, Davis pointed to an event a few months ago, when 20 black pastors and other religious leaders

See KING, 5A

Assistance offered during shutdown

Food Pantry extends hours; Historic site offers free admission

From Staff Reports

In light of the government shutdown, several Chowan County organizations and businesses are offering discounts or assistance to federal employees and their families.

The Town of Edenton is offering extensions on utility bills and will waive penalties/late fees to customers impacted by partial Federal Government Shutdown. For details, visit town Hall or contact 252-482-2155 ext. 176.

For those needing food, the Edenton-Chowan Food Pantry will be open from 4-6 p.m. each Wednesday to serve families of federal employees affected by the government shutdown.

The Subway locations in Edenton and Hertford will collect pre-packaged food, baby supplies and toiletries during their business hours. The collection will last through Jan. 29 and will be given to agencies to help families affected by the government shutdown.

This response is being coordinated with the Town of Edenton, the Office of the School Superintendent, the Department of Social Services and the Chamber of Commerce.

"None of us are exactly sure of the need in Chowan County but we want to be prepared and not have anyone go without food," said Roger Coleman, pantry director. "Already we are experiencing an increasing number of families coming to the pantry."

The Wednesday emergency food distribution is being coordinated by Karen Harrington, pantry program manager. To be eligible, according to Harrington, one must show a federal ID card and proof of residency in Chowan County.

The program will continue as long as there is a need, according to Coleman. "Like everyone else, we hope this will not be long. In the short-term, how-

See SHUTDOWN, 2A

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