

# SCHOOLS

## Edenton's African-American history inspires musical

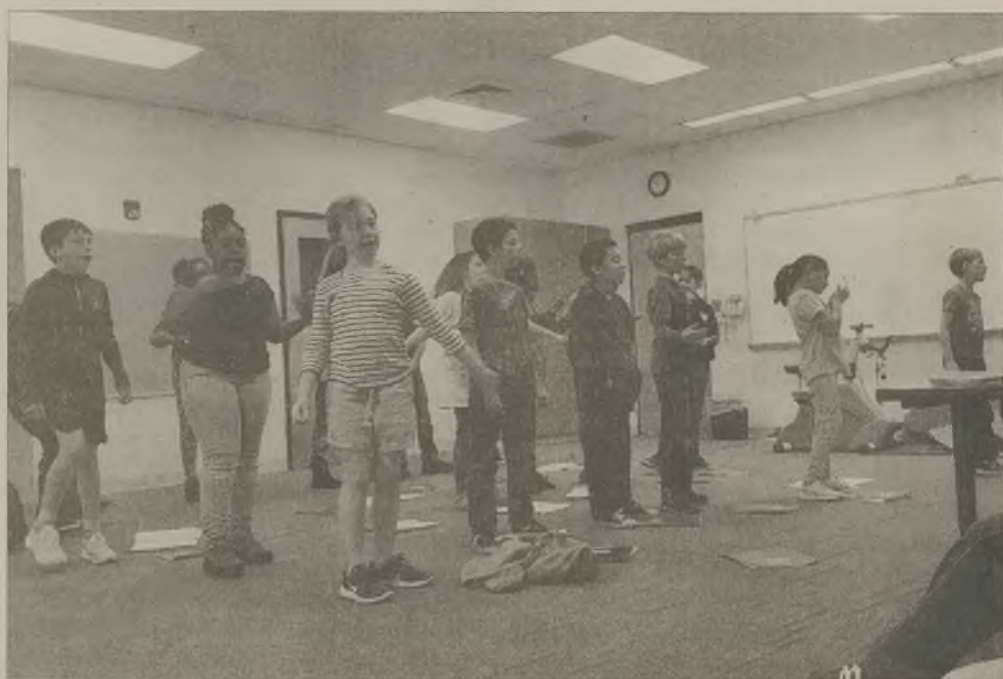
From Submitted Reports

Nicole Byrd-Phelps, general music teacher of D.F. Walker School, has churned out another Edenton-themed musical. Scheduled to be performed April 16, the musical is called "Here We Go - What's The Big Deal?"

"The 'Here We Go' in the title highlights D.F. Walker students embarking on a Friday afternoon excursion around downtown Edenton," Byrd-Phelps said. "The 'What's The Big Deal?' portion of the title highlights the importance of the people and places encountered on the excursion. In actuality, that question & the answer 'That's a big deal!' appear throughout the dialogue of the musical."

As with last year's musical, "We're Riding On The Bus," historically important figures and locations in local African-American history are prominently featured.

Byrd-Phelps is featuring Asheton Smith's fourth-grade class, a few fifth-graders, faculty/staff members from D.F. Walker School, White Oak School, Chowan Middle School, an Edenton-Chowan Schools Central Services employee and folks from the



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Composer extraordinaire Nicole Byrd-Phelps, general music teacher of D.F. Walker School, has created another Edenton-themed musical. Scheduled to be performed on April 16, the musical is called "Here We Go - What's The Big Deal?" and features fourth-grade class, a few fifth graders, faculty/staff members from D.F. Walker School, White Oak School, Chowan Middle School, an Edenton-Chowan Schools Central Services employee and folks from the Edenton-Chowan area.

"I like to feel that I am doing something similar, something I am called to do, to enlighten the children of this county about the importance of African-American history. I am hoping this will translate into a future tour offering through the Historic Edenton site, so that others will become aware of this part of Chowan County history."

Historic Edenton State Historic Sites began a new tour, "Edenton from Civil War to Civil Rights," covering some of the town's African-American history this year. While it was held through the month of February, it also is scheduled for June 15, Aug. 24 and Sept. 15.

Byrd-Phelps will have the musical video recorded and plans to upload it to YouTube, as she did with last year's "We're Riding On The Bus." Concerning the musical selections, some of the music sounds like the popular songs of the 1930s, while others sound like Motown tunes. The grand finale combines rap and that 1930s popular song style. We look forward to seeing and hearing Byrd-Phelps' encore on YouTube after the April 16 premiere of "Here We Go - What's The Big Deal?"

Edenton-Chowan area.

"The class that I selected is very musically inquisitive and gifted," Byrd-Phelps said. "None of the students in Mrs. Smith's class were in last year's musical, so they are the right fit for this performance."

Among the featured sites are St. Paul's Episcopal Church, where Harriet Jacobs' children were baptized; St. Anne's Catholic Church,

where people of color populated the original group of Catholics from which the church would be born; Gale Street Baptist Church, where Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke during a visit to Edenton; and the 18th and 19th centuries African-American Cemetery where Jonathan Overton, Molly Hornblow and Thomas Barnswell are buried. Who are they? A Revolutionary War soldier who lived to be 100

years old, the grandmother of Harriet Jacobs and a builder. Other Edenton folks who are featured are John Coltrane and the Blairs (his mother's side of the family), Gail Johnson Rountree, Emma Bonner and other civil rights activists who picketed in front of Taylor Theater. Sounds like a varied cast of people from Who's Who In Chowan County African-American History.

Byrd-Phelps describes her

work as divinely inspired and reflective of what a former student of hers is doing.

"I taught Rhiannon Giddens when she was a student at Governor's School East in 1994. She has risen to the top of the Americana music field, in part, because she is highlighting the untold stories of African Americans. She is African-American herself and a history buff with limitless musical talent," she said.

## BOARD HONORS BULLDOGS



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Chowan Middle School students were recently recognized at a recent Edenton-Chowan School Board meeting. They placed third in a regional Envirothon Competition at Weyerhaeuser Cool Springs Environmental Center in New Bern and third in overall middle school competition. The students will advance to the North Carolina Envirothon State Competition on May 3 and 4. Envirothon is a scientific investigation of five different areas of environmental science which include soil, aquatics, wildlife, forestry, and current events. Pictured (l-r) are Chowan Middle School Principal Alton Campbell, Science teacher and team adviser Christina Elmore, Rebecca Dardzinski, Savanna Reid, Summer Gregory (team members not pictured are AJ Morgan and Steven Toney), and Edenton-Chowan Schools Vice-chair Jean Bunch.

## ACES HONORED FOR CONTEST WIN



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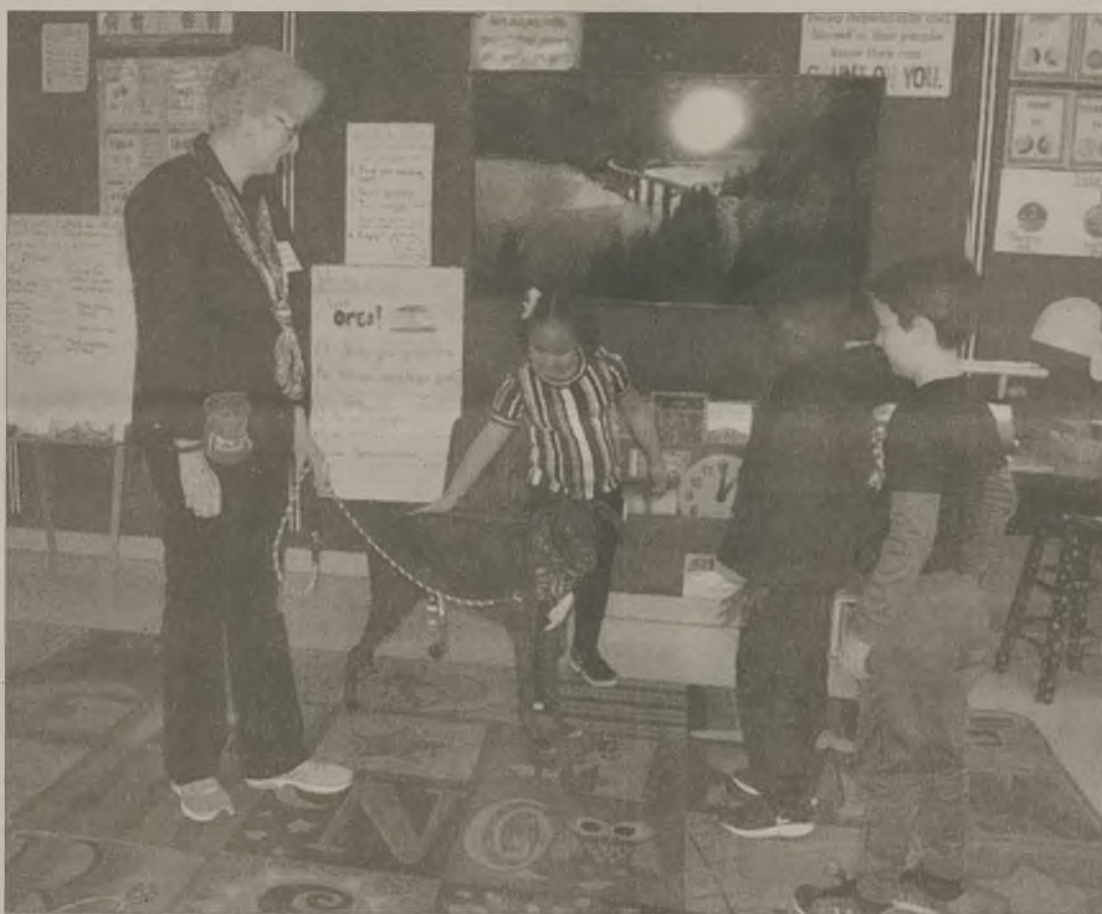
The Edenton-Chowan Board of Education recognized students from John A. Holmes High School who competed and won in regional Skills USA Competition held in Goldsboro. Pictured (l-r) is Luis Patino-Sandoval who won first place in the Skill Project Showcase for Woodworking; Connor Wallen and Alex Jackson took first place in the Quiz Bowl Team competition; and Kevin Miller took first place in Web Design. Also pictured are Principal Steve Wood, Teacher Tim Livingston and Board of Education Vice-Chair Jean Bunch.

## BOE HONORS QUIZ BOWL TEAM



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Edenton-Chowan Board of Education recently recognized John A. Holmes High School students who won first place in regional HOSA Quiz Bowl Competition held in Greenville. The team went on to compete in the State HOSA Quiz Bowl Convention in Charlotte. Pictured (l-r) are Board of Education Vice-Chair Jean Bunch, Health Sciences Teacher Brittany Palmer, Brenna Goodwin, Kennedy Goodwin, Health Sciences Teacher Casey Spear, and Principal Steve Wood.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Liz Woodbury (left) holds the leash of Bodhi, a therapy dog, while she talks to White Oak second-graders about what Bodhi does to bring cheer to hospital patients.

## 2nd-graders meet therapy dog

From Submitted Reports

Once a month, Bonita McCall and Debbie Burroughs visits second-graders at White Oak Elementary School. Each woman teaches the students humane education principles. The classes are held during seven months of the school year and, while the focus is generally on dogs, the month of April is devoted to cats. The March visit was a special one as the students met Bodhi, a therapy dog, and heard his owner, Liz Woodbury, talk about what

Bodhi does to bring cheer to hospital patients.

The lessons' main objective is to teach students to be responsible pet owners to ensure the pets are happy, healthy and safe. In addition to reading a book during each class, McCall and Burroughs discuss topics such as basic pet needs; being aware of feelings through observing the pet's body language; and the meaning of humane.

The students learn that when a family adopts a pet, there are many things to consider ... Do they have

the time to devote to taking care of an animal? Do they have the space? Do they already have other pets? Do they have the resources to provide for the pet's needs? Are they able to commit to providing a forever home for the pet? The students learn that too many puppies and kittens born each year end up in animal shelters because homes cannot be found. This leads to a discussion of the importance of spaying and neutering pets.

The classes are presented on behalf of AWARE

(Animal Welfare of the Albemarle Region Every day!), a private, nonprofit, all-volunteer organization devoted to improving the lives of animals in Chowan, Gates and Perquimans counties. AWARE's goals are to provide discount spay/neuter vouchers to area pet owners, increase the save rate at Tri-County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center in Tyner, and promote humane principles and educate the public on responsible pet ownership.

For information, visit awarenc.org.

## Boatwright named student of month

From Submitted Reports

Sharonda Boatwright, a fifth-grader at D.F. Walker Elementary was named March student of the month at the Boys & Girls Club.

Boatwright is a hard worker. She always enters through the blue door with a smile upon her face. Her favorite hobby is playing basketball with her sisters and brothers. Reading is a passion for her, especially fiction and non-fiction books.

"I love coming to the

Boys & Girls Club and getting my homework done," Boatwright said.

She thoroughly enjoyed Executive Director Elizabeth Mitchell helping her with math during benchmark.

Boatwright is an all-around club member. She loves to help around the club with the Torch Club Store, where she became a member this year. As far as hard work goes, Boatwright knows how to handle a rake. During the Torch Club

Community Service project Seeds of Kindness, Yard Clean Up Day, she worked really hard raking, putting the trash in bags and making sure the yard was clean.

Unit Director Susan Brothers asked Boatwright how safe did she feel at the club. "I feel very safe because all the adults here take care of us during our time spent at the club," she stated.

Congratulations Boatwright on a job well done and continue to be great!



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Sharonda Boatwright was named the March Boys and Girls Club student of the month.