

Mayor-elect Stallings ready to serve Edenton

Newly elected councilors to be sworn in Dec. 10

BY MILES LAYTON
Staff writer

Mayor-elect Jimmy Stallings attributed his victory in Edenton's mayoral race on Tuesday to a dedicated base of supporters and a strong get-out-the-vote effort.

"I had many key supporters who worked hard to help me," Stallings said. "Door-to-door engagement with the citizens of Edenton was also key."

According to unofficial results, Stallings, a current member of Town Council, won Edenton's three-candidate race for mayor by garnering 40.19 percent of all votes cast. Finishing second was Steve Biggs, a fellow town councilor who finished with 30.94 percent of the vote. Jacqueline Hardy, a first-time candidate, finished third with 28.77 percent of the vote.

Also winning election in Edenton on Tuesday were incumbent 2nd Ward Councilor Sambo Dixon, who defeated challenger Tray Taylor; Roger Coleman, who won the at-large seat Biggs didn't seek re-election to; and Hackney High, who won the 1st Ward seat Stallings will surrender when he takes the mayor's oath during the town council's meeting on Dec. 10. The meeting will be held at 6 p.m. in town council chambers.

Stallings will succeed Mayor Roland Vaughan, who did not seek re-election after 24 years as mayor.

"I would like to thank the citizens of Edenton for their support and confidence in electing me mayor," Stallings said. "I am excited to move forward with this positive and energetic council."

Stallings, a 20-year veteran of town council, does not see any major changes to how the council will

operate once he takes over as mayor.

"No, if it ain't broke don't fix it," he said. "We have a very transparent council because, as you know, it is videotaped and run on television and the Chowan Herald is always there."

Hardy-Lassiter, who was making her first bid for elected office, thanked her voters and didn't rule out making a future bid for office.

"Thanks to everyone who supported this historic run for mayor," she said, referring to the fact she's African-American and female. "I'm still in awe of Edenton and the greatness that shall be revealed. ... Thank you for allowing me to run this race with integrity and character for a blessed Edenton."

She also asked supporters to join her if she ever gets "this opportunity again."

Asked if there was anything she would have done

differently, she didn't indicate there was.

"At the end of the day we fought a great fight, but it was the voters' choice and I respect that," she said.

Biggs could not be reached for this story.

Dixon, won re-election with 72.36 percent of the vote, also thanked voters for their support.

"I am so excited about the future of Edenton," he said. "Together we will continue to look for ways to make Edenton better for everyone."

Dixon said he's looking forward to working with Stallings and other members of the town's governing board over the next four years.

"Edenton is a special place and I will always seek out innovative solutions to the problems that arise during my tenure in office," he said.

Taylor thanked his supporters.

"I would to thank ev-

eryone that's came out and voted for me and the other candidates, especially to my supporters who donated and gave me an encouraging word to stay focused," he said.

Taylor said if he had to do over again he would do more door-to-door campaigning.

"The number one thing I would do differently would be to put myself out there more by going door to door and telling them the reason why I'm running," he said.

Taylor said he plans to stay active in the community.

Coleman, who garnered 799 votes to win his first bid for office, thanked supporters who backed his campaign and voters who cast ballots for him.

"I'm honored by the opportunity so many voters have given to me to serve our community as a Town Council member. I will work hard to live up to their expectations," he said.

Coleman also said he believes Tuesday's election sent a message.

"Five of the new Town Council members will have been on the council for six years or less when the new council takes office," he said. "I think we all look forward to focusing on economic growth and to building on the wealth of resources we have inherited from the previous council."

Although he ran unopposed, High also thanked his supporters for working hard to elect him.

"I am most appreciative of my family, friends and loyal supporters who initially encouraged me to run for Town Council and who took the time and effort to support and vote for me," he said. "It is both an honor and a privilege to serve the citizens of Edenton. I think the community was looking for a fresh voice and I am truly excited about the opportunities that are ahead of us."

Parade help needed

SUBMITTED REPORT

Preparations have begun for the annual Edenton-Chowan Christmas Parade. Sponsored by the Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce and the Rocky Hock Ruritans, we estimated at 5,000 people attended the event last year, and hope folds are already planning for this year's parade! This year's theme will be "Home for the Holidays."

The parade will begin at 10 a.m. in the CVS Shopping Center on North Broad Street and end at Water Street downtown. Line up starts at 9 a.m.

Businesses, civic

groups, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, churches, schools and community leaders are invited to participate. Classic cars, floats, costumed participants, clowns, school and athletic groups, musicians and choral groups are encouraged. Chamber Members' businesses can enter at no charge. First-, second- and third-place prizes will be awarded for the best floats.

Donations will help offset the costs involved with the parade. They can be made by calling 252-482-3400 or mail them to Edenton-Chowan Chamber, PO Box 245, Edenton, NC 27932.

SUBMITTED REPORTS

Optimist Club selling Christmas Trees

Chowan Edenton Optimist Club is preparing for its annual Christmas tree sale, which starts Friday, Nov. 22, at the Optimist Building, 147 Old Hertford Road, formerly the VFW Building.

The nonprofit will have an assortment of trees from 6 feet to about 10 feet, with most being Frazier Fir and other fir species. As a volunteer organization, hours are limited to evenings and weekends: 4-7 p.m. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays

and 1-7 p.m. Sundays.

Proceeds benefit the club's Needy Kids Christmas Project. Through this effort, members provide presents and a holiday meal to children who would otherwise go without. Each year, the nonprofit helps 15 to 25 children experience Christmas and know that their community cares about them.

Law to change donor registration at DMV

Earlier this year, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper signed into law SB 210 Organ and Tissue Donation/Heart Heroes, making North Carolina consistent with the rest of

the nation by including tissue for transplantation along with organs and eyes when one says "Yes" to donation at the DMV.

Today, anyone who says "Yes" to donation at the DMV will make a legal first-person authorization to become an organ, eye, and tissue donor upon death. Those who had the heart symbol placed on their drivers' license or ID card before Oct. 1, 2019, must take an extra step to add tissue donation to their registry status by visiting DonateLifeNC.org.

Aging conference held at Edenton UMC

Practicing good nu-

trition, staying active both physically and mentally, and simply enjoying life more are some of the keys to successful "brain aging," a neuroscientist says.

Dr. Paul Aravich, a professor at Eastern Virginia Medical School, in Norfolk, Virginia, was the keynote speaker for the annual Aging Conference at Edenton United Methodist Church on Friday.

Aravich addressed 200 people attending the conference, hosted by the Albemarle Commission Area Agency on Aging, in partnership with the Eastern Area Health Education Center.

VETERANS

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"So far, 30,000 soldiers have been killed in the global war on terror," he said. "We are losing 22 veterans a day to suicide. We're losing more soldiers to suicide than we have in combat. There is a stigma that prevents soldiers from getting help. We need to remove those barriers so our veterans can seek help. We must honor their sacrifice and make sure their needs are met on the other 364 days a year."

Ward noted that by being part of the military, he is part of the 1% of the American population that raised their hands to serve their country.

He noted that in his graduated class at Holmes, 18 other students went on to serve in the military — about 12% of his class.

"Being uncommon must be more common in small towns," he joked, noting that Chowan County has a plethora of veterans now serving as elected officials, school teachers, farmers, law enforcement officers, etc.

Ward talked a bit about his time in service, which included a stint at Fort Bragg, where he became a member of the 82nd Airborne.

"If you told me a year beforehand that I'd be jumping out of planes, I would have said I'd never do that," he said.

He noted that one time

he faced a difficult obstacle on a training course that he thought was crazy, no one could do it. The drill instructor, with a slightly Southern drawl, made Ward come down, pulled him aside and said, "If one person can do it, it can be did."

"I learned that day that courage is being able to overcome your fear," he said.

Life in the 82nd was rough during peace-time, like "being on a sports team, always training, but never playing a game."

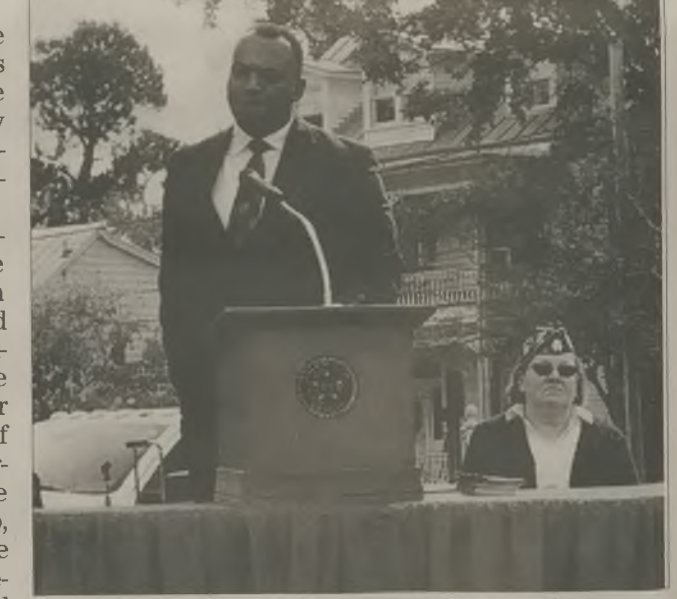
"Can you imagine having to write a will at 19 years old?" he asked. "Think of those soldiers, who served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam, who were deployed right out of basic

training."

Besides thanking those who served in the nation's military, he thanked the families and community members that support veterans. "We can't do it without you."

Also during the ceremony, wreaths were placed to honor each branch of the military and note all of the wars Americans have fought in. The Edenton Tea Party chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Submarine veterans group, along with the Sons of the American Legion and Legion Auxiliary, also placed wreaths.

Albemarle Sounds led the audience in the singing of several patriotic songs.



NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON/CHOWAN HERALD
Lt. Col. William "Joe" Ward speaks Monday during the Veterans Day ceremony. Behind him is American Legion Post Commander Maureen Sobulefsky, who served at the master of ceremonies.

POST

Continued from A1

and hamburgers that were quite tasty. Post 40 and the American Legion's birthday party was the place to be leading into the Veterans Day observances held near and far on Monday.

Chartered in November 1919, Post 40 has served Chowan County and region for the past 100 years.

"We have a 100 years of history in Edenton, also the 100th anniversary of the nation's American Legion," Post 40 Commander Maureen Sobulefsky said. "For some nonprofit organizations to last 100 years — that in and of itself is remarkable. For an organization that works for the veterans and the community, it's an exception. We're glad to be here in Edenton, glad to be able to help in any way we can. We are very proud to be here for 100 years and hope to be here for 100 more."

A few of the programs Post 40 supports for our community and region are the American Legion Baseball (two teams), Boys State, Student Trooper,

Boy and Cub Scouts Troop 164, Kids and Cops, Emergency Services Appreciation Banquet, Hampton VA/Disabled Veteran Fishing Outing, Memorial Day and Veteran Day services, collects cloths and personal items for veterans, collects pull taps for Ronald McDonald Houses, collects and properly disposes of flags that have become torn and tattered and the Chowan County Regional Fair.

More than 300 veterans know Post 40 on a first name basis.

"We are an older post — 100 years old — so a lot of our members are above the age of 70," Sobulefsky said. "Now that President Trump has signed the American Legion Act this past summer, we're hoping to get more veterans that are eligible that weren't before. Now, anybody who was honorably discharged from the military from Pearl Harbor to the present and beyond, when Congress says we are no longer at war, is eligible to join the American Legion."

Former Post 40 Commander E.C. Toppin, who also served on the district

and state levels, took a long look back at the American Legion's history in Edenton.

"There's a lot of history. I've been here for 48 of those years," said Toppin, who served in the U.S. Air Force between 1961 and 1965. "I've seen a lot of change. When I came here, we were very involved in the community then and we still are — fair, Boys State, baseball, Scouts and more."

Toppin, who served as the state commander between 1981 and 1982, said he is the oldest living active past commander in the Tarheel state. Toppin described his time with the American Legion as "being enjoyable, fulfilling and it's been my calling."

Toppin reminisced about how Post 40 has changed over time from a simple place to hold the fair, to the 35-acre multi-building complex that it is today.

"When the front building was built in 1955, it had four walls, a roof and a dirt floor — built as a livestock building," he said. "They put in the cement floor in the early 60s. Then after that, they built the

barn out yonder in the 60s. Built an exhibit building in the 80s and fixed it up. Then we added onto the barn — built the pavilion too. Canopy came from an old Exxon station that had been at 5-mile-Y. I've seen a lot of changes. It was just one thing after another. We just kept growing."

The Chowan County Regional Fair was first held in 1947 as the American Legion Fair. Since that time, it has grown into one of the most respected fairs in the state, winning many awards. The Fair is sponsored by Post 40 and is run by the Chowan County Regional Fair Association.

"Fair has grown from 3,000 folks attending to several, several thousands in a week's time," said Toppin, who is fair board president. "We've grown it and given back to the community through the funds we get."

Toppin recalled a bit of the fair's long history. Started in the late teens or early 20s, the fair was very popular until the Great Depression hit the region hard. Following WWII, the fair rebounded and is now the biggest fair anywhere.

"A group of WWI guys from Chowan County — they started a tradition and we just kept going," Toppin said. "When WWII was over, the guys came back and they just re-energized a lot of things. One of those things — they restarted the Chowan County Fair which had stopped in the Great Depression. I remember as a young child going to the fair at the old armory in town. Fair Board today does a great job — it gets the community involved and that's what we want. That's what it's all about — the community."

Bringing it back to Veterans Day and 100th anniversary of Post 40, Toppin said, "It is an important anniversary for us. It gives us time to set goals for the future an

opportunity to invite all other veterans to come on out, give us a look, give us a chance, because everything we do is for all veterans, not just American Legion veterans."

Taylor
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