

Jon Barlow bids farewell

■ Outgoing city manager honored at reception

By **PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT**
C-T Staff Writer
pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

The City of Roxboro staff, Mayor Samuel Spencer and members of city council hosted a reception Thursday for outgoing manager Jon Barlow, and nearly everyone present commented on his integrity and leadership skills.

Barlow, who has served as city manager for the past six years, stepped down from the post Friday afternoon, after accepting a similar position in Fuquay-Varina.

Barlow admitted that it would be tough to leave Roxboro.

"It's extremely difficult to walk away from something you like," he told *The Courier-Times* upon announcing his resignation. "Six years ago, I thought this was a great opportunity," he said, adding that he had not been disappointed by his time in Roxboro.

Thursday, Barlow thanked city council members, Spencer and former mayor Steve Joyner for "taking a chance" on him six years ago.

"I left a good situation and took a chance on coming here," Barlow said, "and it worked out."

He said he and his wife Beth and their two children had "grown up here," and that the family has "a lot of good friends here."

Joyner said, while serving as mayor and since leaving the position, he had been impressed by "how good a person Jon is."

Council member James Allen stated that Barlow was "a gentleman" who "always kept his cool" when faced with difficult challenges.

Sandy Stigall, another member of council, said he had enjoyed working with Barlow and said Barlow had "done a good job."

Stigall continued, "I hate to lose him and his family."

Spencer said he would always remem-

ber Barlow "for his soft talk," adding that, although it could be difficult at times to hear what Barlow was saying, "what he says, he can usually back up with facts and that's important."

Roxboro Police Chief Todd Boycher, who was appointed to the position by Barlow, noted that, upon learning that Barlow was leaving, he "said this is not a red letter day for Roxboro."

Boycher told Barlow, "You've put together a good management team that works as a team." He continued, "The city of Fuquay is getting the whole Barlow clan and I have no doubt they will make it a better city."

To the Barlow family, Boycher said, "We are diminished by your leaving, but Roxboro is very appreciative" of the contribution the Barlows have made to the city.

Planning Director Julie Maybee told Barlow she was "very appreciative" of

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Tim Chandler / C-T

TIME TO MOVE ON — Jon Barlow talks with County Manager Heidi York at a reception in his honor Thursday at Roxboro City Hall.

County commissioners approve change in longevity pay policy

By **TIM CHANDLER**
Courier-Times Editor
tchandler@roxboro-courier.com

The Person Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved a change to the county's personnel policy regarding the employee longevity plan during a Monday morning meeting.

Person County Manager Heidi York noted that the change proposed to commissioners Monday would not affect current employees, but "does give [commissioners] flexibility to make changes in the future."

Commissioner Sam Kennington asked York Monday how much was being spent on longevity pay for county employees. York placed the figure at

\$235,722 for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins July 1. She added the figure was \$15,000 less than the current fiscal year due to the fact that some employees had taken advantage of the early retirement program offered this fiscal year in the county.

All current county employees are included in the longevity pay plan. At present, Person County awards longevity pay prior to the five-year vestment period required by the North Carolina Retirement System, according to York.

York said she was recommending that the first service level at which an employee is awarded longevity pay be amended to five continuous years of

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Photo submitted

Joshua and Mary Wilbourne with their son, Peyton

Deployment to Libya will cause Wilbourne to miss birth of 2nd child

By **GREY PENTECOST**
C-T Staff Writer
greypentecost@roxboro-courier.com

Lance Cpl. Joshua Wilbourne hasn't had much time to prepare for his first deployment. In the next week or so he will be bound for Libya, where the United States has recently become involved in

the country's internal conflict.

Originally thinking he'd be deployed in July, with three months to train, Wilbourne later found out he would only have a month to get all his training and other preparations in. As part of the Mobile Electronic Warfare Support Systems

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CDBG grant will allow more rehab work in Ca-Vel

By **PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT**
C-T Staff Writer
pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

The City of Roxboro has received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of over \$500,000 that will allow for more housing rehabilitation in CaVel Village.

During a special meeting yesterday, Planning Director Julie Maybee told city council members that the state Department of Commerce had awarded the city \$529,539 to provide assistance for 12 additional dwellings in the city's CaVel Village Revitalization program. No matching funds are required from the city.

The funds have been "de-obligated," said Michael Walser, CDBG administrator with Hobbs, Upchurch and Associates, the engineering firm the city contracts with for CDBG services. The state wanted to find a project that could begin quickly, Walser said, so that the funds would be expended by Dec. 16.

Most of the CaVel houses the city originally planned to rehabilitate are under contract and on track, Walser and Maybee said, and the additional dwellings will be in the same area of Hicks Circle and Kerr Drive.

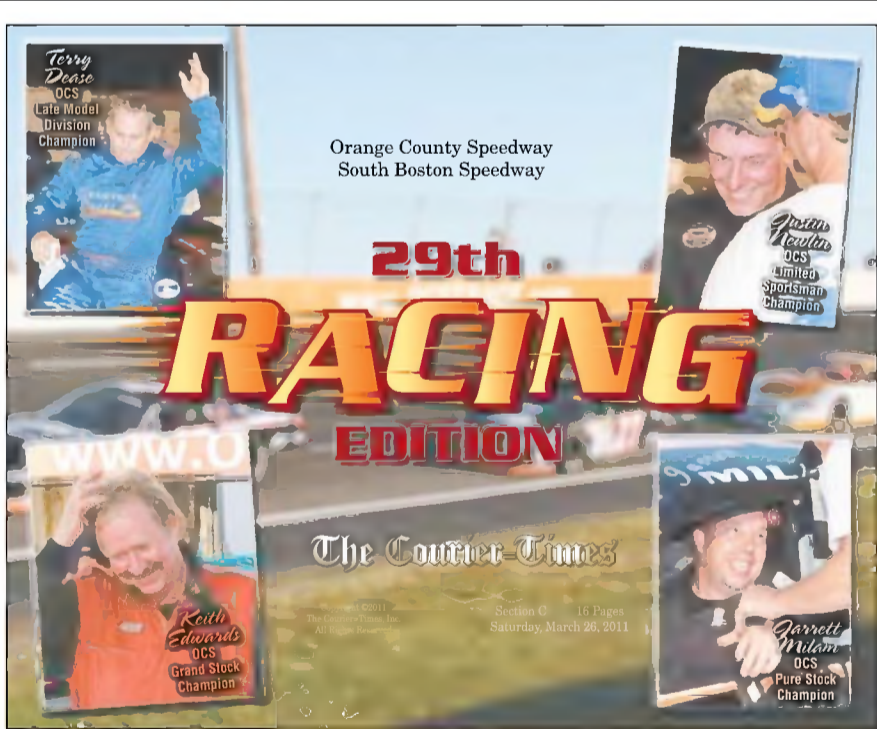
The city is already at work on 12 dwellings in that area.

Maybee said the city would "have to push" to meet the deadline to use the additional funds, but felt the project could be completed in time.

She said the city would work with the CaVel Neighborhood Watch group to reach homeowners who will participate in the project.

The original portion of the project includes rehabilitating a home that will be leased by a Roxboro Police Department officer. The city will own the house and

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Included in today's edition!

Roxboro Community School student Ayla Dunn earns spot in Scripps National Spelling Bee

By **GREY PENTECOST**
C-T Staff Writer
greypentecost@roxboro-courier.com

Roxboro Community School's Ayla Dunn has participated in a quite a few school, district and even regional spell-

ing bees over the years, but when the seventh grader correctly spelled the word "thoracic" last week she reached a brand new level: eligibility to participate in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speaking with *The Courier-Times* Friday, Dunn said she remembered thinking the words at the *Winston-Salem Journal* Regional Spelling Bee this year were easier than she thought they would be. She's participated in the regional bee twice before and said that some of the words had sounded "really really hard."

Dunn's mother and father, Dempsey and Laurie Dunn, both said that with the previous experiences under her belt, their daughter was a lot calmer this year.

RCS spelling bee coordinator Annette Slaughter chimed in that "the words did not get any easier."

Dunn said the championship word did make her think. She wasn't sure whether or not "thoracic" was spelled with an "x" or "c." In the end she went with the letter "c," having decided it was best to go with her first instinct. And with that, Dunn beat last year's winner, earning a trophy, a \$100 savings bond and a copy of the hefty Merriam Webster's Third New International Dictionary. She also received a seven-day, six-night trip to Washington, D.C., where she will compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in June.

Her father Dempsey said that while he can be a "hard-hearted" person, it brought tears to his eyes to see his daughter win that day in Winston-Salem.

"I cry every time she wins," commented Laurie.

Dempsey said he was proud of his daughter's win.

"I'm probably the killjoy," said Laurie, "because I always knew she could do it. I set extremely high standards for both of my children, and I feel like if I make it hard for them at home, then they go to school and it's not as hard as Mommy makes it, then they do good in school."

In Winston-Salem Dunn competed against 31 other young people representing the northwest North Carolina and southwest Virginia regions. Students in grades three through eight are eligible to participate.

Dunn admitted that she wasn't able to study much before the regional bee. Things had been somewhat hectic since the Piedmont Non-Public Intermediate Bee (equivalent to a "district" bee) held in High Point in February. On her way there she and her mother were in a car

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Ayla Dunn

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