

Sports

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832

Field

From B1

in his wallet and that's all. He gave me both of them for the field," he said.

Following those efforts, it came time to dedicate the field and it rightly honored John Drew's efforts and work with the young people of Aulander.

On Oct. 13, 2007, the day the town of Aulander dedicated the field as the John Asa Drew Jr. Field of Dreams, I stood with pride that my father was remembered for all he had done for the youth of our area," Billy Drew said. "As different people spoke of their memories, tears formed and trickled down my face.

"I had memories so many never had," he added. "I was the catcher on eight of the teams my father coached, and got to hear a lot of comments and ideas he would speak quietly during my practices. I learned what he was thinking and how he wanted things done."

During the dedication, Wayne Smith spoke about John Drew's accomplishments.

"On this field, John was home," Smith said. "He was like a father to me, always encouraging me and others to do the right thing. I'm a better person for knowing John Drew."

Johnnie Ray Farmer added, "John Drew taught us the game of baseball, but more importantly, he taught us the game of life. He laid the foundation for our adult lives, and what we learned from him we've passed on to others."

Vera Drew, John's wife, also spoke at the dedication.

"He loved children, in his mind and in his heart," she said. "He thought the world of those kids."

Mrs. Drew said it was the young people of today that the Ruritan Club had in mind when undertaking the task of renovating the old ballpark.

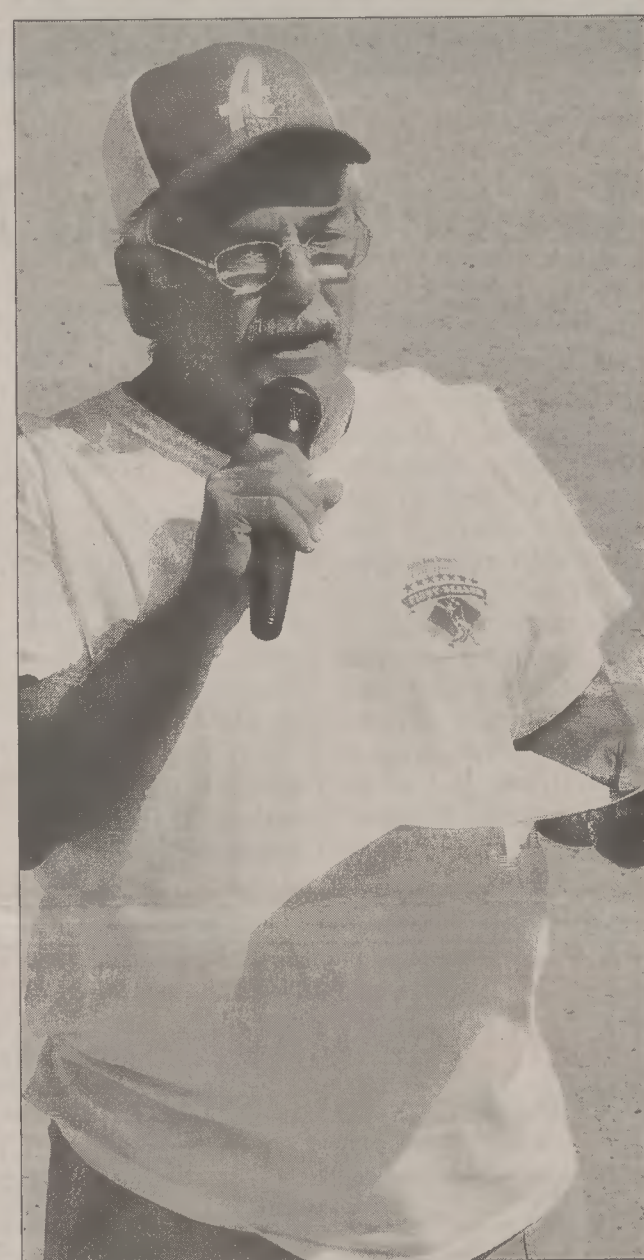
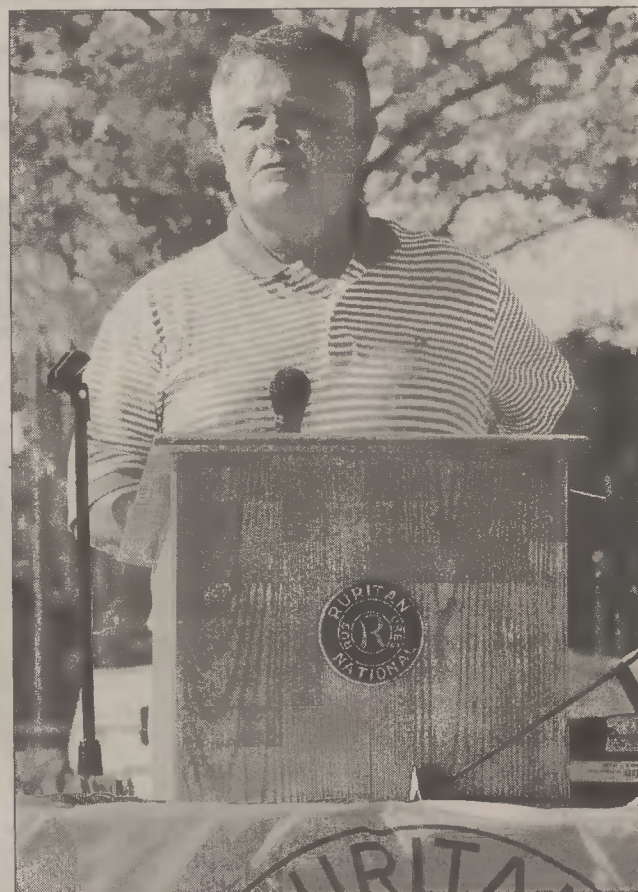
"We want this new field to help the children of today," she said. "I pray that John is looking down with approval of what is happening here today."

Once the field was in playing shape and dedi-



CAL BRYANT / Roanoke-Chowan News Herald

John Asa Drew was memorialized (above) with the field that bears his name, the John Asa Drew Field of Dreams, on Oct. 13, 2007. At right, Aulander Mayor Larry Drew speaks during the ceremony.



JIM GREEN / Bertie Ledger-Advance

Aulander Youth League President Billy Drew (left) speaks during Opening Day earlier this summer; (at right) coaches are always willing to lend a helping hand.

cated, the Aulander Youth League was initiated to make use of the field.

"Aulander had not had youth baseball in 30 years when it was decided to try," Billy Drew said. "We were hoping to have enough youth to form at least four teams. As the word spread, we were surprised to have 144 boys and girls from

ages five to 18. "I feel the Youth League has surprised a lot of people," he added. "The field has given children that never would have had the chance to play organized ball their chance to learn the game, make new friends and make memories."

While the field still stands and is used regularly, changes have been made over the years including the addition of an announcer's booth, batting cage, additional bleachers and a storage building and field maintenance equipment.

The town of Aulander is also in the process of replacing all the poles, wiring and lights at the field.

Billy Drew said he also hopes to see the addition of a smaller field, which would keep the league from turning children away. He said there was always room for improvement to the fences and field itself, as well as a need for a new concession stand and restrooms.

"I would love to see more girls and older boys participate," he added.

Larry Drew said he enjoyed the work on the fields and with the youth league, but credited much of the success to his brother and sister-in-law.

"Billy and Kathy have kept the league going, and the youth playing baseball and softball

on that field, against all odds," Larry Drew said. "I am so proud of them and what they've accomplished."

Billy Drew admitted he and his wife have not missed a game in the past 10 years at that field.

"We love the youth. We love watching them learn and grow," he said. "We had children play that now have their own children playing here."

"I am getting older and a little slower, but I made a promise to the kids that as long as they will come to play, I will be here to meet them," Billy continued. "It is a promise I plan to keep, God willing."

And, as long as the Drews and other mem-

bers of the Aulander Youth League continue using the field, they honor the memory of the man it was dedicated to a decade ago.

"I can envision my dad leaning against a post in one of the dugouts - his hat just a little crooked - rooting on the kids on the field," Larry Drew said. "He would truly love it."

Thanks to the hard work of so many - from John Drew himself to his children and the children he loved and coached - the John Asa Drew Field of Dreams will continue to touch lives in Bertie County.

(Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald Editor Cal Bryant contributed to this story.)

NOTICE OF NONPARTISAN MUNICIPAL ELECTION TOWN OF WINDSOR, NORTH CAROLINA

A Nonpartisan Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 in the Town of Windsor, North Carolina to vote on Mayor, two Town Commissioners and one Town Commissioner (Unexpired term). The polling place is Windsor Community Building; 201 S. Queen St., Windsor, NC. Polls will be open from 6:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m.

Absentee ballots are allowed for TOWN OF WINDSOR residents. Requests for an absentee ballot must be made on a State Board of Elections Absentee Request and received in the Bertie County Board of Elections office or the one-stop early voting site by 5:00 PM on Tuesday - October 31, 2017. Completed absentee ballots must be returned to the Bertie County Board of Elections by 5:00 p.m. on Election Day.

One Stop Absentee voting for TOWN OF WINDSOR residents ONLY will be held at the Bertie County Board of Elections, 210 W. Watson St., Windsor, North Carolina on

Oct. 19th - Oct. 27th Monday-Friday: 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM
Oct. 30th - Nov. 3rd Monday-Friday: 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM
November 4th Saturday: 8:30 AM to 1:00PM

The Board of Elections will meet on October 17, October 24, October 31, and November 6 at 5:00 PM; on November 17 at 10:00 AM; and other times as may be necessary for the purpose of approving absentee ballot applications. Canvass Day will be held on Friday, November 17, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at the Bertie County Board of Elections, 210 W. Watson St., Windsor, North Carolina.

All residents of the Town of Windsor who are registered to vote with the Bertie County Board of Elections may vote in this election. Those residents of the Town of Windsor who are not registered to vote must register on or before Friday - October 13, 2017, in order to be eligible to vote on Election Day. Voters who are not registered by that deadline may register and vote during one stop early voting only, and will be required to provide documentation of their identity and residence.

For additional information contact the Bertie County Board of Elections at (252) 794-5306.

Carol Woodard, Chairman
BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Visit us online at www.ncsbe.gov or www.co.bertie.nc.us/departments/elections/elections.html.

NOTICE OF NONPARTISAN MUNICIPAL ELECTION TOWN OF COLERAIN, NORTH CAROLINA

A Nonpartisan Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 in the Town of Colerain, North Carolina to vote on three Town Commissioners. Polls will be open from 6:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. The polling place is Colerain Municipal Building (Old Fire Department), 101 Winton St., Colerain, NC 27924

Absentee ballots are not allowed. Canvass Day will be held on Friday, November 17, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at the Bertie County Board of Elections, 210 W. Watson St., Windsor, North Carolina.

All residents of the Town of Colerain who are registered to vote with the Bertie County Board of Elections may vote in this election. Those residents of the Town of Colerain who are not registered to vote must register on or before Friday - October 13, 2017, in order to be eligible to vote on Election Day.

For additional information contact the Bertie County Board of Elections at (252) 794-5306.

Carol Woodard, Chairman
BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Visit us at www.ncbe.gov or www.co.bertie.nc.us/departments/elections/elections.html.

NOTICE OF NONPARTISAN MUNICIPAL ELECTION TOWN OF ROXOBEL, NORTH CAROLINA

A Nonpartisan Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 in the Town of Roxobel, North Carolina to vote one Mayor and four Town Commissioners. Polls will be open from 6:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. The polling place is Roxobel Town Hall, 204 S. Main St., Roxobel, NC.

Absentee ballots are not allowed. Canvass Day will be held on Friday, November 17, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at the Bertie County Board of Elections, 210 W. Watson St., Windsor, North Carolina.

All residents of the Town of Roxobel who are registered to vote with the Bertie County Board of Elections may vote in this election. Those residents of the Town of Roxobel who are not registered to vote must register on or before Friday - October 13, 2017, in order to be eligible to vote on Election Day.

For additional information contact the Bertie County Board of Elections at (252) 794-5306.

Carol Woodard, Chairman
BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Visit us at www.ncbe.gov or www.co.bertie.nc.us/departments/elections/elections.html.