

Harris

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council. He also posted signs on the buildings condemning them. At that point, he observed that the ceiling had fallen in and debris was inside the two-story building at 600 Grubb Street.

He also observed extensive vegetative growth around the outside of the buildings. What looked like a garage was barely visible because of the overgrowth of plants, he said.

A hearing was held on March 31 earlier this year. Harris was given 66 days beginning on July 1 to comply with the inspector's order to repair or demolish the buildings. Harris appealed the decision within the 10 allotted days.

"Today, I've not seen any improvements on the building," Jackson said to the council.

Harris stated under testimony that in April he had begun to clean up the debris in the building left from Hurricane Isabel two years ago and board up the windows. But, he had to repair an income-producing property in "much worse shape," which left him without enough money to finish the "minimal" repairs on Grubb Street, he

said.

Town attorney Ike McRee said that he finds it hard to believe, based on the photos and report, that the Grubb Street buildings could be minimal in comparison to the income-producing property that Harris was referring to.

Jackson stated that the buildings are deteriorating, unstable and unsafe, while the surrounding neighborhood is clean and "a very nice community."

Town Manager John Christensen, who also displayed photos of the buildings at the hearing, said that the town is trying to promote a positive visual effect in the mostly residential area. His photos showed the roof caved in, windows broken, tin poking down through the roof into the interior of the building and overgrowth of plants. Photos taken from a bucket truck showed an aerial view of the roof with most of the tin blown off of one building.

"I've had a number of complaints from various citizens. Some have even come to the council," Christensen said. Even though the buildings are boarded up, he said that he had concerns that someone may still want to get in.

Harris said he secured the building, putting padlocks on the doors, board-

ing up the windows and posting no trespassing signs. McRee asked Harris what he had been doing about repairing the building during the last two years.

Harris stated that he currently uses the building for storage and no members of the public have access to it. He also said that Hurricane Isabel created possibly the worst damage, and the repairs he started were not getting done quickly because he only had two or three workers.

Tommy's Pizza owner Tommy Barrett, who later approached council about building a residential development along Clark Street, testified that he was one of the workers who helped remove old roofing materials and broken windows this past year.

"Based on the evidence, there has been a pattern of work," Haywood said. "No work has been done pending this appeal."

Harris related the history of the buildings, stating that they have sentimental value to his family.

"Take a look at the photos," McRee said. "Is this the kind of respect that you give to your sentimental property?"

Haywood expressed concerns that there are actually more separate buildings than the three addresses

that the council was considering. However, the inspector's report was based on the tax assessment records for the entire set of buildings.

"If (Harris) was aware of (the discrepancy in the records), he should have done something about it," Jackson said.

Harris said that he had appealed concerning the tax record error. "I've still got issues with the tax department," he said.

Haywood asked council to revoke the building inspector's report. He stated that the buildings are not a fire hazard or unsafe because there is no electricity hooked up and people cannot get into the buildings.

"There is no evidence that the structures have harmed citizens in any way," Haywood said.

He also said that Harris intends to repair the buildings, but the cost will be substantial in terms of money, time, materials and labor.

Councilor Carlton Davenport began the deliberations. "This has dragged on for years and years," he said.

Councilor Horace Reid later agreed. "The more time we give (Harris), the more time he's going to take," he said.

Chamber

Continued from page 1

house," said owner Stephen Bass.

Dozier's was established in the early 1940s by Eva June Dozier who ran the business out of her Hertford home. Mary Ruth Smith bought the business in 1965 and moved it to its present location on Berry Street about 1988. Ten years later, Bass purchased the shop.

Bass, a native of Rocky Hock, was taking botany classes at Eastern Carolina University in Greenville, when he returned home to farm his parents' land. BJ's owner Barry Jones, now deceased, asked Bass if he would buy Dozier's and learn to be a florist. Bass knew about growing flowers, but not arranging them.

His parents, Carroll and Frances Bass, loaned him the money to take over the business, he said.

Bass enlisted his younger brother to help him make floral arrangements and he began to watch and learn. A year later, his brother had to quit and he was left with having to learn the more advanced techniques rather quickly.

"I guess it was all in me," he said. "Designing is something you really have to have in you."

Bass tripled the business productivity since purchasing it, he said. Recently, he decided to utilize the empty space left by the beauty shop by turning it into a floral showroom.

Bass specializes in fresh florals and employs four designers that work with fresh or artificial arrangements. Mary Danchise, who has been with Bass since the beginning, specializes in artificial décor. Designer Stacy Criddle helped Bass through the early years.

Bass hopes to expand the shop with gift items. Discount stores are his biggest obstacle, he said. He's looking for items that are not commonly avail-

able, he said.

"I'm going to have to work hard at finding things that are different that aren't going to be at those (discount store) places," he said.

As an FTD and Teleflora member, Dozier's can get most flowers at any time of year and sends to anywhere in the country, as well as overseas locations. He delivers to Perquimans, Chowan and funeral homes in Gatesville.

Bass and his designers will make custom arrangements and will do tasteful custom floral décor in homes and businesses. He also services celebrations, such as birthdays and weddings, traveling as far as the Outer Banks. He even went to Kentucky for a large event, he said.

Bass donates floral arrangements to The Lost Colony fundraiser events, and it was there that he picked up a regular customer - Tony Award winner and costume designer, William Ivey Long.

Southern Belles

When Debra Cake took over the old News Group building to create an antique mall, she was faced with 22,500 square feet of warehouse and a lot of hard work.

"The hard part was cleaning up the ink," she said. The ink from the former business had to be scrubbed off the floor.

Cake painted the floor and began putting up partitions to form booths. As vendors began seeing her vision for the business, they began signing up. Cake opened the doors on Sept. 1. Now, she has more than 50 sellers at Southern Belles, an antique mall located on Old Highway 17 just outside Perquimans County.

The smoke-free mall contains a mixture of antiques, crafts and flea market items. Some items are new. Some items are totally unexpected, like the line of commercial size non-perishable foods.

A highlight in the mall is what Cake calls the trellis

of lights - a lighted latticed walkway filled with framed art.

Cake has a vision for her multi-purpose business. She hopes to add a restaurant, auction house and a farmers' market. She also plans to hold the weekend flea market indoors during cold weather.

A few items are simply for show, such as an old printing press, a wringer washing machine and spinning wheel.

While the variety of items seems endless, there are a few things Cake doesn't sell, such as highly scented items like candles and incense that people may be allergic to, and used clothing.

"I don't want it to look junkie," she said. She does carry vintage clothing, including formal period gowns and accessories.

Angela Burket of Heritage Shores Plantation is in the process of setting up a booth. She carries antiques, linens, glassware and crafts, including her own hand-painted items. Currently, she has a vegetable bin she painted with a hen and rooster in the shabby chic style, an old

wicker writing desk with a floral design and a doll cradle with a hand-painted Teddy bear.

"It's going to be a wide range of different items," Burket said.

Bea Bea Long-Harrell of Woodville sells one item that she calls Earth Angels. A seamstress for more than 50 years, Long-Harrell owns Sew Fine Fashions in Elizabeth City.

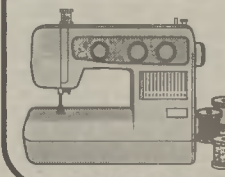
The angels are an offshoot from her sewing and alterations business. Made of abaca straw from a tree that grows in the Caribbean, the angels can be used as tabletop figurines or tree toppers, Long-Harrell said. She paints them and makes their clothing.

"The reason they are called Earth Angels is that they are more of earthly style from different time periods," she said.

Cake continues to look for unusual items that can't be purchased in a typical discount store, she said. She hopes to eventually have more than 100 sellers at the mall.

"I'm trying to get things you just can't buy anywhere," she said.

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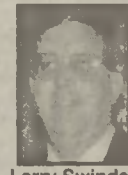
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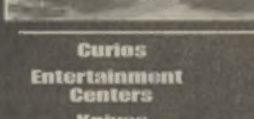
5 pc. Dinettes ...\$99



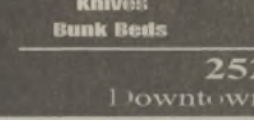
4 pc. Bedrooms ...\$199



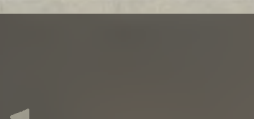
3 pc. Coffee Table set ...\$49



Lamps ...\$9



Roll Top Desk ...\$59



Paint ...\$4.99/gallon



Marble Top Tables ...\$16



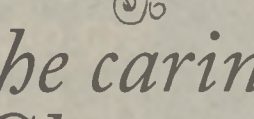
Day Beds ...\$89



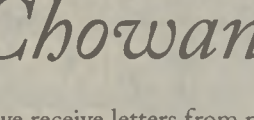
Mattresses (starting at) ...\$69



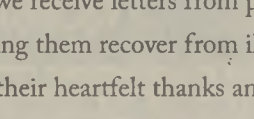
Bar Stools ...\$17



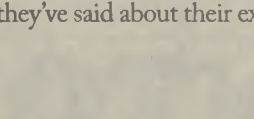
Recliners ...\$129



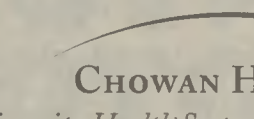
Chest ...\$59



Rugs ...\$49



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Giving Thanks



Thank you so much for the care you gave to my mom during her illness. Your personal touch made a difference and we greatly appreciate all that you did.

Thanks for the wonderful care you all gave my dad during his stay there. Your attitudes, patience, smiles and concerns meant the world to us. You are a dedicated staff. Keep up the good work.

Thank you so much for all you did for me while I was in the ICU. I know it is your job, but you all went above and beyond the call of duty to help me out. Thanks again for nursing me back to health and answering all my questions. You are great!

to the caring staff at Chowan Hospital

Every day we receive letters from patients and families thanking us for helping them recover from illness and injury. We truly appreciate their heartfelt thanks and want to share some of the nice things they've said about their experiences at Chowan Hospital.

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