

Rocky Mount TELEGRAM

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New Vanderbilt team facing ECU
SPORTS, B1

Top cop proposes high-tech anti-crime system

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer

New Police Chief Robert Hassell recently appeared before a budget work session of the City Council and sought support for a proposed real time crime-fighting intelligence center, but he is going to go back, do more research and consult legal scholars.

Hassell faced questioning, particularly from Councilwoman Chris Miller and Councilmen Reuben Blackwell and Andre Knight.



HASSELL

The council before Hassell became the police chief on May 3 discussed having cameras to support present ShotSpotter technology. ShotSpotter is a system of sensors designed to detect, locate and alert the police of gunfire in real time.

During the June 2 budget work session, Hassell spoke about hav-

ing a Fusus online platform for Rocky Mount as the best solution to meet the needs of the police department. Fusus is headquartered northeast of Atlanta and is in the business of unifying data and live video feeds into cloud-based crime-fighting centers.

A cloud-based system is one in which information is stored, managed and processed on a network of remote computer servers hosted on the internet, rather than on local servers or personal computers.

Hassell told the council having a Fusus platform for Rocky Mount would provide visibility via cameras not only managed by the municipality but also via the cameras of residents and businesses who give the police department access through partner agreements.

Hassell made clear to the council that participation in the platform by residents and businesses would be voluntary.

Hassell also said that a community portal would be placed on the municipality's website so partici-

pants can register their cameras. The registry would be set up to ensure the names of the partners remain anonymous.

He said the platform would be managed by the police department and would be at the municipality's Emergency-911 call center.

He said there would be a series of phases to put the platform in place, with pre-planning first, followed by implementing the equipment, testing and an evaluation

See **SYSTEM**, A2



FILE PHOTO/ROCKY MOUNT TELEGRAM

Tar River Academy has been operating in the old James Craig Braswell school building at 224 S. Pearl St.

Tar River Academy slated to close

BY AMELIA HARPER
Staff Writer

The Nash County Board of Education voted unanimously Monday to close Tar River Academy in its present form and vacate the building that it now occupies at 224 S. Pearl St. in Rocky Mount.

The Nash County Board of Education Administrative Services and Operations Committee last month approved a recommendation by Superintendent Steve Ellis to close

the facility. The full school board voted in May to hold a public hearing in June on the closure as required by law.

That public hearing was scheduled for Monday during the regular meeting of the school board. However, no one signed up to speak at the hearing and no one spoke out on the issue at the meeting.

Tar River Academy, an alternative school in Rocky Mount designed to provide extra support to middle and high school students

who struggle to fit into the framework of traditional schools in the district, has been operating in the former James Craig Braswell School building. But that 81-year-old building has outlived its usefulness, Shannon Davis, executive director of maintenance and facilities, told school board members last month.

"Tar River Academy is in need of a major renovation or be relocated to another campus," Davis told members of the Administrative Services and Operations

Committee last month. "The building is taking on moisture through the brick. The walls are plaster and the moisture is causing it to delaminate from the walls. The mechanical system needs to be totally renovated. The electrical system needs to be updated. The plumbing fixtures and restroom partitions need to be replaced. The dining room is in the basement and moisture is seeping through the walls."

See **CLOSING**, A4

Eight sites on river fail water tests

Fecal bacteria found

From Staff Reports

Eight sites in the Tar-Pamlico watershed were classified as possibly unsafe for swimming in the second round of testing of Sound Rivers' annual Swim Guide program.

The sites tested positive for fecal bacteria at numbers exceeding the recommended state and federal criteria for recreation, the organization announced.

The bacteria was located at Sunset Park in Rocky Mount, Tarboro's River Road, the Town Common and Port Terminal in Greenville, Yankee Hall at Pactolus and Mason's Landing, Havens Garden and Pamlico Plantation in Washington. Ten other testing sites along the Tar-Pamlico basin were safe for swimming.

Boaters, swimmers and their pets should avoid the

water or practice caution at these sites, as exposure may come with an increased risk of gastrointestinal illness and skin infections, Sound Rivers reported.

Swim Guide is an international water-quality program conducted locally by Sound Rivers, a Washington, N.C.-based nonprofit that promotes conservation in the Tar-Pamlico and Neuse river basins.

Each week, a team of Sound Rivers' volunteers gathers water samples at 46 popular recreation sites from the Raleigh-Durham area to the Pamlico Sound. The samples are tested for the bacteria E. coli by Sound Rivers' staff and results are released to the public, providing an easy way to find out where it's safe to swim.

Notifications are post-

See **WATER**, A4

Police charge suspect in girlfriend's assault

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer

A 44-year-old man with an extensive prior record is charged with false imprisonment of a woman late last month, records said.

Wayne Morgan Coley Jr. is accused of detaining Kathy Brum without her consent on May 20, Edgecombe County District Court records said.

Coley also is charged with assault inflicting serious injury because he attacked her to the point she suffered a broken left foot, the records said.

Both offenses are considered misdemeanors.

Officers found out that

there had been an instance of domestic violence in the 100 block of Dalewood Drive in East Rocky

Mount when they assisted a woman who arrived at the police department to report what had occurred, police Cpl. Ricky Jackson said in a brief news release.

The woman told officers that she and her boyfriend, Coley, had been involved in a physical altercation and that when she attempted to

See **ASSAULT**, A4



COLEY

Sex offender charged with kidnapping

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer

A 30-year-old man with a prior record — including for committing a sex offense — is charged by Rocky Mount police with committing felony second-degree kidnapping last month, records said.

Bobby Ray Lewis III is accused of confining Sara Alice Marie Black for the purpose of terrorizing her, Edgecombe County District Court records said.

Additionally, Lewis is



LEWIS

charged by Rocky Mount police with committing misdemeanor assault on a female because he allegedly pulled one of Black's arms, causing bruising, the records said.

Officers responded at 8:43 a.m. on May 17 to the 2300 block of Meadowbrook Road in East Rocky Mount, a police incident re-

ported said. Specifically, officers responded to a report of a domestic disturbance and found out from the woman that her boyfriend, Lewis, had taken her cell phone and would not allow her to leave, police Cpl. Ricky Jackson said in a brief news release.

Lewis' bond was set at \$5,000, unsecured, with the terms of the bond making clear he cannot be within 500 feet of Black or her residence while the case is pending, Edgecombe Coun-

ty District Court records said. The bond is unsecured due to Lewis having a medical condition.

In North Carolina, an unsecured bond means an accused person does not have to come up with money to post a bond to avoid being jailed. If the accused fails to appear in court for a hearing, then the court can order the accused to pay the amount of that bond.

Lewis also is charged by the Edgecombe County

See **KIDNAPPING**, A4

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