

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Youngsters hit the field for T-ball action — See photos Page 8

"News from Next Door"

JUNE 27, 2012 - JULY 3, 2012

50 cents

County OKs budget with no tax increase

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

County commissioners approved a \$12.7 million budget for the next fiscal year with no tax or utility fee hikes and provided county employees a two percent pay increase.

Following a public hearing Monday night during which no citizens spoke, commissioners put their stamp of approval on the budget that funds county schools slightly more than last year.

Funding for the county departments basically remained the

same as last year due to continued slow growth of revenues.

Revenues from property taxes are expected to increase by less than one percent next year with sales tax revenues projected to grow by about three percent. Building inspection fees, register of deed fees, and land trans-

fer tax revenues are expected to remain constant.

"I just appreciate what the staff does here," said Chairman Ben Hobbs. "It's been going on for a while, not just this past year. The staff still provides services and keeps their budgets intact. In a financially difficult year, I think

we've done well."

The proposed budget funds county schools \$3.1 million, social services \$2.3 million, sheriff's department is about \$1 million, EMS \$853,000, and the Albemarle District Jail \$854,000.

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RIDING HORSES OFFERS THERAPY FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Seventh-grader Tyquen Fain can't use his legs to walk, but climbing on top of a horse is his first step toward freedom.

The 12-year-old suffers from neuropathy in both of his legs following surgery as a child for club feet. He uses a wheelchair and crutches to get around. Because of his handicap, he's different from his friends who walk and run.

But when he rides a horse at Verity Therapeutic Riding and Educational Center in Perquimans County, Ty no longer feels "different". He's finally free to be like everyone else.

"I feel like I can do everything everybody else does when I am on top of that horse," said Fain who's been learning how to ride at the center since January. In addition to his new-found freedom, Ty also has strengthened his legs and core muscles in his body and improved his posture by riding horses.

Fain's happiness at finding freedom, improving self-confidence, and becoming stronger while horseback riding is what VTREC is all about. Owner Gail Smith and instructor Cindy Martinez are not licensed therapists of any kind. They simply teach riding skills that may help the rider, strengthen the rider, or just provide calm relaxation. They believe that equine assisted therapy can help children and adults with both mental and physical disabilities not only to gain confidence but improve motor skills as well.

Plus, people, especially children, just seem to love riding horses.

"Sometimes horses can be the best friend you have," said Smith. "They give unconditionally and expect nothing in return. Horses know naturally how to show uncondition-



STAFF PHOTOS BY CATHY WILSON

Volunteers Kaylin Copeland (left) and Breanna Jackson (right) help Tyquen Fain, 12, as he prepares to mount the horse Perfect Chunk of Trouble. Ty suffers from neuropathy and is unable to use his legs.



Breanna Jackson (left) and instructor Cindy Martinez help Colby Harris get used to touching the horse as part of his riding experience. Colby is autistic.

trying to cope with grief, and those suffering from cancer.

In fact, it was a medical condition that lead Smith to look into opening a therapeutic riding center. The retired social services worker suffers from chronic fatigue and Fibromyalgia. When her husband gave her a horse for her 50th birthday, she found comfort and therapy in riding.

"Working with Shadow (her horse) made a difference in my overall health...physically, emotionally and mentally," noted Smith. "It takes a lot

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al love. This is a relatively new field of therapy, but there continues to be new research to validate all the anecdotal evidence

we see everyday in the arena."

Their six students (age 5-12) include kids in wheelchairs or who

are autistic, mentally challenged, or learning disabled. Smith says she plans to eventually open it to adults in hospice, those

Town approves \$6.2M budget

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Members of Hertford Town Council approved a \$6.2 million budget Monday night with no tax or utility rate hikes and provides town employees with a three percent pay raise.

The only increase in costs to citizens is the trash can fee which increases from \$7 to \$9.23 per can.

The town's general revenue fund is expected to grow by one percent this fiscal year, thanks to a projected six percent increase in state collected revenues and just over one percent more in property taxes collected.

The police department's budget is expected to increase by nearly two percent since the town has to pick up the costs of a full time position that has been funded through a grant that ends June 30.

The town's fire department budget will increase by 1.79 percent because of equipment and vehicle maintenance needs in the department.

The street department will increase by 3.2 percent while the town's sanitation department budget will decrease by over \$10,000 because customers are paying the full cost of curbside collection.

The town's Department of Motor Vehicles budget remains virtually unchanged.

The town's water and sewer revenues are expected to decrease by almost \$96,000 because of water conservation (less water used) and no residential growth.

Revenues for the town's electric fund are expected to decrease by nearly \$290,000 due to milder temperatures over the winter and spring. The cost of the town buying power is stable and not expected to increase at this time.

Celebrate the Fourth on July 3

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Thanks to the efforts of several local volunteers, the annual Fourth of July fireworks display will be held in Hertford this year on Tuesday night, July 3, at dusk in Missing Mill Park.

Officials estimate the fireworks will be shot around 9 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket to relax and enjoy the show.



Those planning the event say a non-motorized children's patriotic parade will form in the parking lot of Hertford Baptist Church at 4:30 p.m. and travel through

downtown Hertford to the park where food vendors and live entertainment will kick off the holiday celebration around 5 p.m.

"Come on out and have a good time," said Vera Ridick, one of several volunteers who stepped up to help organize the pre-fireworks events at the park after the Chamber of Commerce passed on the annual project earlier in the year.

Not wanted local citizens to lose their Fourth of July celebration, volunteers from Hertford, Winfall and Per-

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Gang expert says know what your child is doing

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

If their show of hands is any indication, local school parents believe there is a substantial gang problem in Perquimans County but they don't know what signs to look for to identify if a gang problem really exists.

That was the overall consensus of the large group of parents and local officials who filled the auditorium at Perquimans County High School last Wednesday evening during an open community awareness forum



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Felecia Vaughn (left) talks with Danya Perry, director of Programs and Youth Development for Communities in Schools of North Carolina, after a forum on gang awareness.

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