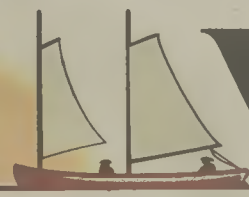


THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



South Creek rolls past Pirates, 7

"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2015

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50 cents

Speaker challenges local teachers

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Perquimans County educators were urged last week to find their "why."

That could be "why" they are in the classroom, "why" a student behaves the way they do, or "why" things are the way they are in the community.

Bonner found his "why" and it wasn't what he thought it would be when he was a standout athlete at Perquimans County High School in 2008.

At the time his "why" for going to going to Winston-Salem State University on a basketball scholarship was to make it to the NBA.

He played his freshman year, was redshirted his second year and then transferred to Elizabeth City State University.

"I recognized basketball wasn't cutting it," he said in an interview last week. "I saw my real purpose, as a teacher. I love kids."

Now Bonner, who is 6-foot-5, teaches second graders at South Greenville Elementary in Greenville. He's been accepted into a the Principal Fellows program at East Carolina University in 2016 to receive his masters degree in school administration.

Bonner called his address to teachers gathered



Michael Bonner Jr. gestures to the crowd last week during convocation ceremonies at Perquimans County High School.

STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

at the Perquimans County High School auditorium for convocation Wednesday "humbling."

"But I wasn't nervous at all. A lot of educators there taught me as I was growing up. It was like talking to family."

Bonner said he was blessed to have the key things. Education, he said,

is made up of a triangle — teachers, students and parents.

He said Michael and Freda Bonner were tough but supportive parents.

"They weren't the richest parents, but they were rich with love," he said. "I had the complete triangle."

Bonner praises his mother, Freda. She worked in a

school cafeteria when she was pregnant. She's now a guidance counselor at Perquimans Central School and his father is an advisor at ECSU.

"She was pregnant with me scrubbing floors," he said.

But at age 30, Mrs. Bonner went back to college to get a degree from Eliza-

beth City State University. The job she landed in turn helped pay for some of the things Bonner had growing up. Without that, "I wouldn't be here."

"Your 'why' matters. You don't know who it connects to."

He also urged teachers

See SPEAKER, 7

Winfall post office closed

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The U.S. Postal Service closed the post office in Winfall for safety reasons while it looks for another location.

Chuck Adcock, a district representative for the postal service, told a crowd Wednesday that the floor of the 122-year-old building on Main Street was so rotten he nearly fell through.

"I have to consider the safety of our employees," Adcock said. "It's in bad shape."

Some postal customers in Winfall can't get home delivery but they are offered a free P.O. box. The Winfall boxes have been moved to the Hertford Post Office for now.

"This is temporary," Adcock said.

The Winfall office officially closed on Friday.

Mayor Fred Yates said the owner of the building at 317 Main St. where the post office was has offered to tear it down if the post office brings in a mobile unit. Adcock said no mobile unit is available at this point, but it is something the postal service is looking at.

Yates said he wants something to happen quickly.

"We want it to be as expedient as possible," Yates said. He also wants to see a new post office in the same location as the old one and he doesn't want to see Winfall lose the 27985 zip code.

Winfall Town Councilman Ken Rominger said the building has been in poor shape for years. He was postmaster there from 1999 through 2003.

"There were places where you had to step gingerly," Rominger said.

Rominger said he'd like to see the postal service

See POST OFFICE, 4

Students head back to class for the new year

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Perquimans County Schools got off to a smooth start Monday even though some teaching positions remain unfilled.

One vacancy — that of principal at Perquimans Central School — was filled Monday night. The Perquimans County School Board approved Bonita Jones for the job. She had been assistant principal at Perquimans County Middle School and was briefly called to fill in as an assistant principal at Perquimans County High School.

The Central vacancy was

created when Chante Jordan resigned as principal at Perquimans County High School. She was replaced by Melissa Fields who had been principal at Central.

Monday's decision puts principals in place at all four schools, but there are other vacancies.

Perquimans County Middle School started the year missing a language arts teacher, a math teacher, a social studies teachers and a career technical education teacher. School spokesperson Teresa Beardsley said the school system is trying to fill those slots as quickly as possible.

The school system did bring back 27 teacher's assistants even though the General

See STUDENTS, 4



Jamyal Seala, (left) and Alison Cole practice on a keyboard during music class Monday at Perquimans Central School.

STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS



JONES

Deputies arrest marijuana grower in Belvidere

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A 52-year-old Belvidere man was arrested Aug. 19 for growing \$150,000 worth of marijuana.

James Kenneth Rountree of County Line Road, was charged with manufacturing marijuana and possession with intent to sell. He was released under \$2,000 cash bond.

Perquimans County Sheriff Eric Tilley said his office got a tip to check out the area in the 1200 block and go down a farm path.

"As soon as you pulled in the path, you could see it," Tilley said.

Tilley described the haul of 50 large plants the largest his department has

seen this year.

Some of the plants were more than six feet tall. Tilley said Rountree also grows seedlings of plants like watermelons for area farmers, and there were greenhouses there but the marijuana was growing outside.

Tilley estimated the value of the plants at \$3,000 each.

"The boy has got a green thumb," Tilley said of Rountree. He said marijuana-growing operations have just a few sprigs. "These plants were really healthy."

Rountree is scheduled to appear before a judge for his first appearance on Sept. 2.

See DRUG BUST, 7



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

The Perquimans County Sheriff's Office seized about 40 pounds of marijuana on Aug. 19. James Kenneth Rountree, 52, Countyline Road, was charged with manufacturing marijuana and possession with intent to sell.

Band leader promises a treat for Indian Summer Festival

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Al Woodruff said Hertford music lovers should be prepared to have some

fun when his band — The Main Event — performs Sept. 11 during the Indian Summer Festival. The performance will be from 7-10 p.m. on the courthouse green.

Woodruff, 54, was born in Virginia and his father was a musician in the Army.

"By the age of 15 I was pretty much performing

with Dad's band," he said earlier this month.

He said The Main Event was created in the 1980s.

For the past 15 years or so, the band has been based out of Greenville, but before that it was based wherever Woodruff was living at the time.

"We do about 15 dates a year in North and South Carolina and Virginia."

"The band puts on a very energetic show," he said.

"We have members ranging from their mid-20s to their mid-50s and a mix of lot of experience. Some have music degrees and have toured with other bands in the past."

Woodruff has shared the stage with groups such as The Four Tops, The Temptations and Kenny Rogers.

"It should be fun," he said of the Sept. 11 event.

For the past three years, The Rhondels has performed at the Hertford festival.

"I think some people are in for a pleasant surprise," Woodruff said.

In August the band is scheduled to play at six events, including four wedding receptions, a pri-

vate party at the Peanut Festival Street Dance in Fountain.

Other members of the band are:

Scott Pagona, trumpet and vocals, joined the Main Event Band in 2005. Before that, he played and recorded with groups including The Pamlico Sound

See ISF, 2

