

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2020

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Tribute to a Country Doc

Coastal Carolina Family Practice celebrates 25 years of service

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

Perquimans County's favorite country doctor, Robert Earl Lane, is celebrating 25 years of service at Coastal Carolina Family Practice in Hertford. Doc has been helping people for

nearly 50 years – 42 years of that time in Perquimans County – so it was natural to want to know more about him. First, Doc said his name is not just Robert – no – it's Robert Earl – use his first and middle names. When said correctly, using all three names – Robert Earl Lane – rolls off the tongue and it's one of those endearing things Southerners do, particularly those from the deep South. Lane is from Mississippi, attended

Mississippi State, studied medicine at Tulane University in New Orleans and served as a doctor aboard a nuclear submarine during the Vietnam era. When 2023 rolls around, Lane, 77, with a birthday ahead Feb. 23, will have been practicing medicine for 50 years. "I enjoy what I do – the people are the best," he said. Lane's clinic used to be downtown across from the newspaper office on See **DOC, A2**



PHOTO BY MILES LAYTON
 Dr. Robert Earl Lane is the founder of Coastal Carolina Family Practice in Hertford, which is celebrating its 25th birthday Monday at the clinic on South Church Street.

BEYOND THE BOOKS

County's Black History

BY MICHELE LAWRENCE
 Perquimans Librarian

Cartier G. Woodson, an African American historian, educator, and publisher, created "Negro History Week" in 1926 to celebrate achievements and contributions of African Americans.

In 1976, it grew to the month long celebration we observe today. While there are many in our community that deserve recognition, I am going to mention just a few today in keeping with the theme for Black History Month 2020, "African Americans and the Vote".

CALE



WOODSON

Hugh Cale, an African American born in Perquimans County, was elected to the NC General Assembly in 1876 according to Capital News Service. He was also a county commissioner in

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Perquimans Farm Bureau Wins Award

BY STAFF REPORTS

GREENSBORO — Perquimans County Farm Bureau was recently named the winner of the 2019 County of Excellence Award, Division 3.

The county organization was judged North Carolina Farm Bureau's most effective in its membership class in implementing programs, services and activities that build active county Farm Bureaus and fulfill the mission of the organization.

The award ceremony took place during NCFB's 84th annual meeting, Dec. 8-10, at the Joseph S. Koury Convention Center, Sheraton Greensboro Hotel at Four Seasons.

"This award is presented to the county that executed the best all-around effort for

See **FARM, A3**



COA President, Hertford Mayor Speak

Hertford mayor talks at reception in Edenton

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
 For the Perquimans Weekly

EDENTON — When College of the Albemarle President Jack Bagwell interviewed for his current position, the first stop in his interview process was the community college's Edenton-Chowan campus. On Tuesday, Feb. 4, Edenton was the first place to host a reception for Bagwell, as the 1767 Chowan County courthouse served host to about 50 citizens and members of the COA staff.

Bagwell noted that as an administrator at COA, his job includes helping faculty and staff take that next step in their own professional development.

"I get to try to make sure that the process is running a solid making sure we have the resources put in place for everyone, much like I used to do in lab set up," he said. "I think life gives you opportunities. Providence gives you opportunities to establish yourself, grow yourself, change yourself over time."

Edenton has always welcomed Bagwell, the former biology professor noted. That friendliness is a regional phenomenon.

"When I talk to someone relatively new to this area of northeastern North Carolina, everyone had the same reaction," he said. "I cannot believe how friendly people are, how welcoming they've been. So kudos to you as representatives of that. Community development is hinged on how we receive the incoming workforce."

While COA and other surrounding universities are involved with local high school and school districts, the college is looking for community partnerships, Bagwell said.

"We've got programming, training at the campus here locally and some of our other campuses,"



PHOTOS BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON/CHOWAN HERALD

Earnell Brown, mayor of Hertford, talks about her experience at the College of the Albemarle on Tuesday, Feb. 4, at the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse.

he said, noting the recent groundbreaking on a facility in Currituck County.

Each of the seven counties in the COA region has a different set of needs.

"Each community has a different set of expectations in a way. They are fantastic to work with," he said.

Bagwell noted that while COA works with high schoolers, the college needs to bring in career-changers, those who wish to switch jobs.

"So I always do a paraphrase. Somebody taught me this recently and I love and I keep saying it. I think it hits home. ... Diversity is making sure that everyone is invited to the party. Inclusion is making sure everyone at the party is dancing. Sometimes you can be at the party and be around the periphery. We want to make sure everybody's dancing."

During the reception, COA student and Hertford Mayor Earnell Brown talked about her time at the community college, where she is working on a fine arts degree.

Brown knew of the area, as she grew up visiting family in Belvidere. The former Washington,



College of the Albemarle president Jack Bagwell speaks Tuesday, Feb. 4, during a reception at the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse.

DC, resident, had been a manager, administrator and diplomat.

"When I retired I said, let me turn off the bean counter and turn on the artistic side," she said. "Out of all of my accomplishments, I did not have a four-year degree. So I said I want to go back to school."

Brown attempted to attend Elizabeth City State University because her mother went there. However, the university would not take her credits.

Brown noted that many retired people like her

want to go back to school — not for continuing education but to earn a four-year degree. Their experiences should be taken into account then they apply for school.

"We need programs that take into account our experience level, our training, travel or certifications," she said.

While going to college, Brown started learning about Hertford and wanted to get involved and help address some of the

See **COA, A2**

ROUND-UP

Snakes — You Can Cook Them

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

A round-up of all things Perquimans County... First, due to space and time constraints, not to mention a sick editor who has caught the crud that's been going around town, the joyous comings and goings of Hertford Town Council's multi-hour meeting Monday will appear in a future edition.

Next, Elizabeth Jones of Hertford, formerly of Edenton, sent me a photo of a large water snake she discovered at the very end of East Punch Alley on Feb. 5.

Originally, folks thought it might be a water moccasin, but after posting the photo to the newspaper's very active Facebook page, Phil Fisher commented that the snake has different patterns than a moccasin, so it is probably a non-poisonous water snake.

Because it's still winter, it seems reasonable that we'd get a reptile reprieve, but since it has been so warm, maybe not so much.

Sandy Harrison reported a sighting of two copperheads at Holiday Island.

While Joseph Leotta was kayaking, he saw a rattle-snake resting in the mud by John's Island, not really an island, in Edenton Bay.

Cathy Harrell commented about how snakes are beneficial — and she's right.

I'm not a big fan of snakes. Depending on where you go boating or kayaking, you

See **LAYTON, A2**

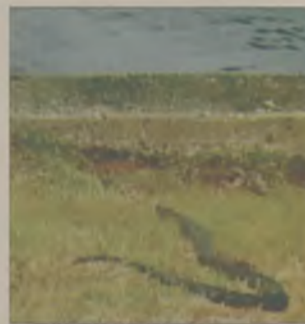


PHOTO BY ELIZABETH JONES

Water snake or delectable treat?

O'Brien named general manager for region's newspapers

BY JULIAN EURE
 for Perquimans Weekly

Sean O'Brien has been named general manager for The Daily Advance, the Chowan Herald and The Perquimans Weekly, Robin Quillon, president of Adams Publishing Group Eastern North Carolina, announced last week.

As general manager, O'Brien, currently advertising director for the three newspapers, will oversee all operations of the three newspapers, including its editorial,

advertising and circulation departments, Quillon said.

"I am very pleased to announce the promotion of Sean to general manager of The Daily Advance and sister weeklies," Quillon said. "Sean is a true newspaper professional in every aspect. His dedication to excellence in journalism shows by his determination to be the very best. Sean has earned the respect of his peers and I have no doubt that he will succeed in his new responsibilities."

O'Brien, who will con-



O'BRIEN

to his new role.

"Since moving here six years ago, Elizabeth City has been very welcoming and I have met some amazing people," he said. "I'm glad to be a part of this great town."

O'Brien, who grew up

in Frisco where his family owns a business, has been advertising director for the three newspapers since 2014. Before coming to Elizabeth City, he worked in Greenville as advertising/digital manager for Cooke Communications North Carolina, the previous owner of The Daily Advance, for 4½ years. Prior to that, he worked as an account executive at the Rocky Mount Telegram for 3½ years.

"I've been with our group of papers now for 14 years and have seen

many changes during that time," O'Brien said. "I'm excited to see what the next 14 years will have to offer."

In addition to his experience working for Cooke Communications North Carolina and now Adams Publishing Group North Carolina, O'Brien also has been a member of Mid-Atlantic Newspaper and Marketing Executives for seven years, serving on its board of directors and a stint as its first vice president.

See **O'BRIEN, A3**