

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020

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Tri-County Animal Shelter's Pets of the Week



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Pirates keep hold of their top ranking in conference



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Interact Club sends Christmas greetings to elderly

## Hertford Creating Phone Alert System

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

Starting in about two weeks, Town of Hertford will start notifying citizens of emergencies and events through a phone call system. The Town will have the capability to send mass messages, group calls or just call an individual citizen with Town business. New system will alert



HURDLE

"This is an effort to have our citizens informed about the

citizens to emergencies and unplanned events. "We ask all citizens to call or stop by the office to update your contact information," Town Manager Pam Hurdle said.

Town and surrounding events and news as soon as they happen." Hurdle said the system, which will take about two weeks to build, gets its call information from the Town's utility customers. She advises people to update the system with their most recent phone numbers because there may be many accounts with old phone numbers that have been changed.

Folks can call 252-426-5311 or come by town hall to update information. Town Hall's move to a phone alert system comes on the heels of series of recent unplanned events that occurred within a few days of each other including a shooting, boil advisories and a gas line rupture. Perquimans County has a similar alert system in place that is known as Code Red.

To register for that system, citizens need to go to the county's web page - click under departments on the website, then click Emergency Services and then the Code Red sign up link will be on that page. See: <https://www.perquimanscountync.gov/departments/emergency-services>

Miles Layton can be reached at [mlayton@ncweeklies.com](mailto:mlayton@ncweeklies.com)

## Former HPD Officer Convicted

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

Dallas Dewayne Hale, formerly a sergeant for the Hertford Police Department, was convicted recently of misdemeanor assault and battery in Perquimans County Court. When HPD responded to a report of a domestic dispute around 1:20 a.m. Feb. 29, Lorenzo Blount allegedly refused to obey police instructions, became verbally hostile, resisted arrest, threatened Hale and spat on him, according to court documents. Hale used force to subdue Blount.

According to court documents, Hale punched Lorenzo Blount in the head while Blount was in handcuffs.

The incident was recorded by both body-worn and dashboard vehicle cameras.

Hired Jan. 7, HPD terminated Hale March 5 alleging "excessive use of force."

NC State Bureau of Investigation initiated an investigation to determine whether to suspend or revoke Hale's certification as a law enforcement officer.

Hale was arrested Sept. 3 by the Surry County Sheriff's Department and charged with misdemeanor assault and battery.

Hale plead not guilty, but was convicted Wednesday (Dec. 9) in Perquimans County Court. He was sentenced to unsupervised probation and to pay associated court costs and fees.

According to court documents, Blount plans to appeal his case to Perquimans County Superior Court.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Because Piedmont Natural Gas crews had been working around the clock to repair a gas line that ruptured last week by Wynne Fork Road, crews were able to complete repairs Tuesday - 24 hours ahead of schedule.

## Piedmont Repairs Gas Leak

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

Piedmont Natural Gas finished repairing the ruptured gas line on Tuesday, according to Perquimans County Emergency Services.

Gas line was damaged Dec. 8 by a state Department of Transportation bridge construction crew during the erection of a new bridge on Wynne Fork Road.

Monday morning, crews successfully installed the newly built bypass line.

Work on Tuesday connected the new line to the existing natural gas transmission infrastructure and tested the system.

Monday's inclement weather did not delay construction as expected, and PNG was able to complete the work a full 24 hours ahead of schedule, according to Julie M. Solesbee, Public Information Office for Perquimans County Emergency Services. During the repair work, cus-



For about a week, motorists were advised to avoid traveling near where the gas line was being repaired at Wynne Fork Road.

tomers in northeastern North Carolina continued to receive reliable natural gas service to heat homes and fuel businesses.

Displaced families were able return to their homes Tuesday evening.

Solesbee said of the more than 20 households that had to evacuate after the gas line ruptured, six

households were still evacuated as of Monday evening. PNG provided various lodging for those that have been impacted.

The new bypass line is fully operational and natural gas is no longer being released into the air.

During the past week, residents

See GAS, A3

## ROUND-UP

### Thanks Santa, Brothers and Planter's Ridge

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

A round-up of all things Perquimans County...

First, letters to Santa will be published in the Dec. 24 edition - lot of good letters.

Moreover, see what Santa had to say about these letters - it's a surprise. Also, a story about Santa will appear in next week's Perquimans Weekly.

A taste of what's to come, here's a couple of letters to Santa from Tammy Murray's second grade class at Perquimans Central School:

**Dear Santa,** Hello! My name is Ashlyn. I am 7 years old. This year I have been an absolute angel! The nicest things I did this year are I helped other people, fed a homeless lady, and helped my mom do things. I hope you, Mrs. Claus and the reindeer have been well! A few gifts I'm wishing for this Christmas are a Baby Alive baby doll and new bike. Have a safe trip on Christmas Eve! Love, Ashlyn

**Dear Santa,** Hello! My name is Brycen. I am 7 years old. This year I have been pretty good. The nicest things I did this year are I helped

See ROUND-UP, A3



## State Funds Available for Home Repairs

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

Local home owners needing repairs should consider applying for a state grant to perhaps fix those wobbly back porch steps or that hole in the roof.

North Carolina's Housing Finance Agency's Essential Single-Family Rehabilitation (ESFR) program finances major repairs for homeowners who are elderly or have disabilities and whose in-

comes are 80 percent or below of the median for their area.

Perquimans County residents are eligible to apply for consideration on a rotating, three-year basis, and there is \$160,000 in funds remaining in the balance for 2020. The next opportunity in PQ should be 2023. There are several qualifying factors to the program.

Assistance is provided through local governments or nonprofit agencies that partner with the state. These local organizations determine if you are eligible and if so, contract for and supervise the work.

If you are approved, you could receive assistance in the form of a secured but interest-free, deferred loan, forgiven at \$5,000 a year, to pay for necessary repairs.

"The ESFRLP is a wonderful program - not only does it offer residents the opportunity to repair and stay in their homes, it contributes to local preservation efforts and improves property values in the community," said Sharon Smith, Special Projects Administrator Albemarle Commission.

Homeowners who wish to be considered should contact Mike Barnette, program manager with McDavid Associates as soon as possible. Apply before midnight Dec. 31 so as to get the process started at <https://www.nchfa.com/current-homeowners/repair-your-home/single-family-rehabilitation-program>

Albemarle Commission ESFRLP Eligibility Criteria Households are eligible if:

■ Homes must be owner-occupied; the homeowner must have been living in the home for at least 6 months from the date of application.

■ Households must meet the low-income eligibility requirements - no more than 80% of the county's median family income (the program uses the U.S. Department of H.U.D.'s adjusted income limits by household size).

Perquimans County - \$40,000

■ Homeowners must be current on property taxes or on a payment plan for delinquent property taxes. If on a payment plan, its terms must be current and will require official, written verification (on department letterhead) from the Tax Department.

■ The total after-rehab value

of the intended property must be less than 95% of the area median purchase price (HUD) to qualify as affordable housing.

■ Applicants must have homeowner's insurance and provide a copy of the policy as a part of their application packet.

■ Applicants must be current on their mortgage payments or show documentation of satisfaction of Deed of Trust.

■ Homes may not have a pending foreclosure.

■ Properties are eligible if they meet all of the following requirements:

■ The property must require at least \$5,000 of improvements.

■ The property must not cur-

See REPAIRS, A3



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