

'Get Patriotic in Person' See page A7 for info

# The Courier-Times

Weather Outlook TODAY: Hi 83 Lo 60 SUNDAY: Hi 89 Lo 65 MONDAY: Hi 90 Lo 66 TUESDAY: Hi 92 Lo 66

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Our 129th Year — No. 41

Roxboro, North Carolina

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75¢

www.personcountylife.com

## Council increases business privilege license fees

By PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT C-T Staff Writer pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

Roxboro business owners will soon have to pay more for privilege licenses, but the increase will not be as steep as expected and businesses will be protected from revealing their incomes.

City council members discussed changes in the way the city charges businesses to operate in Roxboro during the first work session for the fiscal 2011-12 budget this week, and voted to increase the fees. After hearing from business owners in a public hearing and a special informational meeting, council members decided to set the base fee for a privilege license at \$75, up from the \$50 currently charged. Businesses will pay the base fee for gross receipts up to \$1 million. Those who have receipts of between \$1 million and \$3 million will pay an additional \$200, and the fee will increase in \$200 increments for every additional \$2 million in gross receipts, up to a cap of \$25 million.

Roxboro City Council held a public hearing on possible increases in business privilege license fees during its May regular meeting, and several business owners, along with the chairmen of the Chamber of Commerce board and the county Economic Development Commission, spoke in opposition.

After hearing comments, members of the council said they needed more time to consider the points made during the public hearing, and to begin work on the city's budget for fiscal year 2011-12, which begins July 1, before making a decision on how to charge for business

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### The Courier-Times "Weekly Poll"

#### This Week's Question:

Do you think the General Assembly should approve shortening the early voting period prior to elections from 18 days to 11 days?

- Yes, it is too long now
- Yes, it will save money
- No, the 18 days are needed
- It does not matter to me

Cast Your Vote On-Line At www.roxboro-courier.com

#### Results of our latest poll:

Will the escalating gas prices cause you to alter your summer vacation plans this year?

- Yes, will have to alter plans - 34%
- Yes, will have to cancel plans - 16%
- No, will not change plans - 32%
- I am not sure yet - 18%

## PCC GRADUATION

# 'We are in control of our lives'

## ■ Piedmont Community College's 41st commencement exercises held Friday night at Person High School

By GREY PENTECOST C-T Staff Writer greypentecost@roxboro-courier.com

For almost 600 Piedmont Community College students, Friday evening was a celebration of hard work and accomplishment, as they were awarded degrees, diplomas and certificates during the college's 41st commencement exercises.

The Person High School football field appeared to wear a blanket of forest green as the soon-to-be graduates donned their robes and listened to those who commended them in their remarks for the occasion.

Shirley Deal, CEO of Caswell Family Medical Center, and the first recipient of the PCC Alumni Partnership's Alumnus of the Year award, encouraged the graduates to "serve, share and support" PCC as they began their journeys after graduation.

Deal said she started out as an LPN, and had always wanted to get a degree in nursing. While she was working fulltime, Deal said PCC gave her an opportunity to earn an associate's degree in nursing 18 years ago.

"Regardless of where you live," Deal said, "there will always be a connection between you and PCC, the college that gave you the opportunity to change your lives."

State Sen. Rick Gunn of Burlington (R-Alamance, Caswell) was the featured speaker for the event. Serving his first Senate term, Gunn is the vice president of the commerce and insurance committees, and is a member of the appropriations on general government and information technology, joint regulatory reform, program evaluation and transportation committees.

Gunn told the graduates they had made a lot of people proud, and that he hoped they had made themselves proud, because they deserved it.



Photos by Richard Smith / Smith's Photography

### WAY TO GO — State Sen. Rick Gunn (left) congratulates Charles Lambert for receiving his Piedmont Community College degree Friday.

Gunn remarked, "Piedmont Community College, and the community college system in general, to me, is the most important institution in this whole state, for this very reason, because what Piedmont Community College does, and what the community college system does, creates avenues for success."

He acknowledged that the students came from "all walks of life," and had different reasons and motivations for what they had done. He said that because of "sacrifice, determination and dedication," each of the students had reached a level of success they were being recognized for Friday evening.

Gunn shared success stories of a few of the graduates present, one being Jonitta Davis, who as a single parent earned a degree from PCC in computer programming, and was named PCC's Academic Excellence Award winner for 2011.

He also spoke about Charles Lambert,

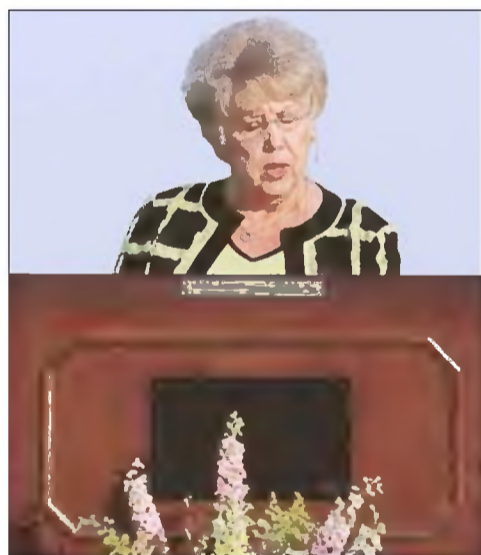
who dropped out of high school but went on to earn his GED. During Friday's commencement Lambert received his associate's degree in business, and has been accepted to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro for the fall semester.

Gunn also mentioned Lisa Wiley, a widowed, full-time mother and student, who received an associate in arts degree yesterday evening.

Gunn noted that he had read the Hites project that Wiley had led the Phi Theta Kappa honor society in completing (as its president). With the project, the participants talked to students about what community college had meant to them, and produced a booklet from the information gathered.

Gunn said the project "does make a difference," and that he had shared it with the state Senate.

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Alumnus of the Year recipient Shirley Deal encourages PCC graduates to 'serve, share and support.'

# Number of days for early voting may be trimmed from 18 to 11

By PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT C-T Staff Writer pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

"If [House Bill 658] does pass it will affect the voters of Person County," said Elections Director Brenda Whitlow, re-

garding the state legislature's move to shorten the early voting period.

"I don't really know if we can start early voting any earlier than the specified time on this bill if it does pass," said Whitlow. "I do know that the voters in Person County love one stop voting and

this would mean less time for them to get to a one stop location and vote."

The North Carolina House of Representatives last week narrowly passed a measure that would reduce the current

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## Water rate hike to be discussed by city Monday

By PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT C-T Staff Writer pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

On Monday, Roxboro City Council will meet a second time to consider the fiscal year 2011-12 budget.

Interim City Manager Tommy Warren presented a proposed budget at the regular May meeting last week, but council members asked for minor revisions to be made before they considered adopting the budget.

Warren did not propose giving city employees a cost of living adjustment (COLA) but council member Ralph Clark said he would like to see a two percent raise included in the budget.

Clark also opposed Warren's suggestion to raise water rates by 14 percent and sewer rates by two percent.

"We're living in a society where times are tough on people," said Clark, "and we don't need to add to it."

Mayor Samuel Spencer said, "With the figures presented" in the budget proposal, "I don't see the wisdom of looking at a COLA at this time."

Mayor Pro-tem Merilyn Newell suggested finding "a happy medium" on Clark's suggestion to not increase water and sewer rates.

Regarding the COLA, Newell said, "I'd like to find" the funds to give city employees a raise, "but I want to make sure we're not setting ourselves up for problems in five to 10 years."

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Check out the C-T's Area Restaurant Guide in today's edition!

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# Timberlake man sentenced to approximately 5 years on over 160 sexual exploitation of minor charges

By TIM CHANDLER Courier-Times Editor tchandler@roxboro-courier.com

A Timberlake man pled guilty this week in Person County Superior Court to three counts of failing to register as a prior Internet sex offender and to over 160 charges of third degree sexual exploitation of a minor.

Rickie Music, 45, of Timberlake was sentenced to between 57 and 69 months in prison after he pled guilty to the

charges Wednesday as part of a plea arrangement.

The 160 charges of third degree sexual exploitation of a minor were linked to photographs of child pornography reportedly found on Music's computer.

Music, who has a prior for possessing photos of child pornography, was also required by law to register as an Internet sex offender before creating Internet accounts such as Facebook, MySpace or having an e-mail address.

According to a press release from

District Attorney Wallace Bradsher, Music did have online accounts on Facebook and MySpace, but "these social networking sites were not used by the defendant to download or distribute child pornography."

According to court records, the charges against Music stemmed from the fact he possessed "visual representation" of children between the ages of two-years-old and 13-years-old involved in various sexual activities with adults.

Sheriff's deputies arrested Music

in March after receiving information from the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force that Music reportedly had child pornography on a computer in his residence.

"Based on the defendant's prior record and our structured sentencing laws, the judge [Wayne Abernathy] would have had the discretion to give him probation," Bradsher said. "I could

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Rickie Music