

The Courier-Times

75 Cents



VICTORIOUS!
The Rocket girls basketball squad claim first win of year Thursday night A7



N-S RIVALRY:
Southern tops Northern in crosstown middle school basketball action A8



FRIDAY HOOPS:
Find out how the Rocket boys fared in non-league action at Halifax, Va. A6

GOOD MUSIC:
Sons of Allen to celebrate homecoming concert; Arise Quartet slated for concert at Faith Independent Baptist Church B4

DEATHS

- Ronnie Jural Adcock, 58**
Rougemont
 - Gina Talbott Bagby, 50**
Virginia, Va.
 - Stanley Carroll Foster, 63**
Roxboro
 - Leenoid Jackson, 64**
Roxboro
 - John Thomas Walters, 67**
Bahama
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Recreation, Arts & Parks makes move to new location at Sansbury

BY GREY PENTECOST
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The Person County Recreation, Arts and Parks Department relocated to the building next door to its former Long Avenue location Tuesday, providing a better atmosphere for employees and customers alike.

The department's offices are now located in the Annex Building on 303 S. Morgan St. According to Recreation, Arts

and Parks Supervisor John Hill, the Annex's more modern office spaces were being used for storage of athletic equipment, whereas the department's employees were working in the older offices beneath the gym.

It made more sense, he said, to "flip-flop" the arrangement.

Hill said the switch was made in only a day, thanks to the teamwork between the Internet Technology, General Services and Recreation, Arts and Parks departments.

In addition to providing employees with a more modern work environment, the move has put the offices in a more centralized and accessible location for the public.

Hill pointed out that moving the offices out of the gym building opens up that space to more recreational programming opportunities, where fitness classes or other activities could be held.

"We're stepping out of the box

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The Person County Recreation, Arts & Parks Department is now located at a new site at the Huck Sansbury Recreation Complex.

SBI probe leads to charges against former deputy

BY TIM CHANDLER
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A former deputy with the Person County Sheriff's Office was arrested Wednesday on a pair of drug-related charges following a probe by the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation's (SBI) Division of Environmental Crimes Unit.

Charles Christopher (Chris) Wheeler, 39, of 780 Brooks Dairy Rd. was charged Wednesday with felony counts of obtaining a controlled substance by fraud/forg-

ery and trafficking a controlled substance.

Person County Sheriff Dewey Jones said Wheeler was in his 11th year as a deputy with the sheriff's office.

According to Jones, Wheeler was terminated from his position Tuesday.

"Once it was brought to my attention that an investigation was ongoing, he was placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation," Jones said. "After we received the



Charles Christopher Wheeler

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Person's jobless rate drops for 3rd straight month

BY TIM CHANDLER
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For the third straight month, Person County's unemployment rate declined, according to numbers released Thursday by the Employment Security Commission (ESC) of North Carolina.

The latest ESC numbers indicate that Person County's jobless rate in October dropped 0.2 percent to 9.4 percent. That decrease came after drops of 0.6 percent in September and 0.2 percent in August.

One year ago, Person County had an unemployment rate of

8.9 percent in October.

Statewide in October, the unemployment rates decreased in the majority of North Carolina's 100 counties. Rates decreased in 83 counties, increased in 12 and remained the same in five.

Rates decreased in all 14 of the state's Metropolitan Areas for the second consecutive month.

"October data showed a decrease in all of the state's metropolitan areas," DES Assistant Secretary Lynn R. Holmes said. "While unemployment rates dropped in most of

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MIKE FLOYD | COURIER-TIMES

Person High School students helping out at museum

The Person High School masonry class and its teacher Kenneth Dixon took on the job this week of rebuilding the sign in front of the Person County Museum. The crew is using blank bricks that had been harvested from the walkways to make way for new commemorative bricks following last month's Veterans Day ceremony. Students pictured in the photo include Kevin Newton, Jacob Bowers, Jansen Clark, Jared Pickett, Josue Chavez, Jade Poole, Calvin Barker, Cody Williams, Tyler Ragsdale, Travis Wilkins, Matt Prince, Jeremy Townsend and Jon Thornburg. Students not pictured include Daniel Jones, Brandon Farr and Chad Johnson.

Undercover operation nets another arrest

BY TIM CHANDLER
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Deputies with the Person County Sheriff's Office arrested another suspect this week in connection with "Operation Peek-A-Boo," a five-month undercover investigation.

Law enforcement officials arrested 42 persons in October.

Operation Peek-A-Boo, which began in May and continued through September, utilized video and audio equipment to help document illegal drug activity.

The vast majority of those arrested in connection with the investigation were placed under secured bonds of \$100,000 after the District 9-A district attorney's office bypassed the district court level, sought indictments from the Person County Grand Jury and then sought secured bonds in Person County Superior Court.

On Thursday, Dennis Paul Lunsford, 49, of 154 Loftis Loop Rd. was arrested on felony charges of possession with intent to manufacture, sell and deliver a controlled substance.

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Commissioners host Community Conversations event Monday

BY TIM CHANDLER
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The Person Board of County Commissioners heard from 10 Personians Monday when it hosted its third Community Conversations gathering in the past

seven months.

Monday's informal meeting with citizens and commissioners was held at the Kirby Civic Auditorium. Approximately 40 people attended the event, which was held in an attempt to receive feedback from the community about services offered by Person County

and to receive suggestions for improving county government.

"The Community Conversations was a great opportunity to hear from our residents," County Manager Heidi York said. "Our aim was to create a comfortable environment for folks to dialogue with the board.

"Again, I am so proud of the willingness of the commissioners to avail themselves, their commitment to transparency in government and of their efforts to be effective listeners," York added. "We take our residents' comments seriously."

York said there were several

items that she was currently following up on as a result of Monday night's forum.

Avie Lester, president of the Person County branch of the NAACP told commissioners Monday he was "very concerned

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