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East Carolina University welcomes new chancellor.  
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SCAN ME

Volume 123:  
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# Bertie Ledger-Advance

THURSDAY • MARCH 18, 2021

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## New company will provide 60 jobs

### High Speed Gear locates in Bertie County

THADD WHITE  
Bertie Ledger-Advance

WINDSOR – A new company already has 31 employees and is looking to bolster that number in the coming

months. High Speed Gear, which makes tactical gear for military and law enforcement, has relocated a portion of its Swansboro-based business to Bertie County.

“They were looking for somewhere to expand, and the place needed to have folks who could sew,” Bertie County Economic Development Director Steve Biggs said. “Not only does Bertie

Count have experienced sewers, but we have space for them.”

High Speed Gear is operating in a portion of the old Wrangler building on County Farm Road. The company began operation last week with 31 people who were hired during a job fair in Feb-

ruary. Biggs said the company conducted 43 interviews, and hired 31 as they look for people to cut, sew, assemble and ship their products here in Windsor.

The story of how the com-

See JOBS, 3

## Inmate dies by suicide

Bertie Correctional reports death

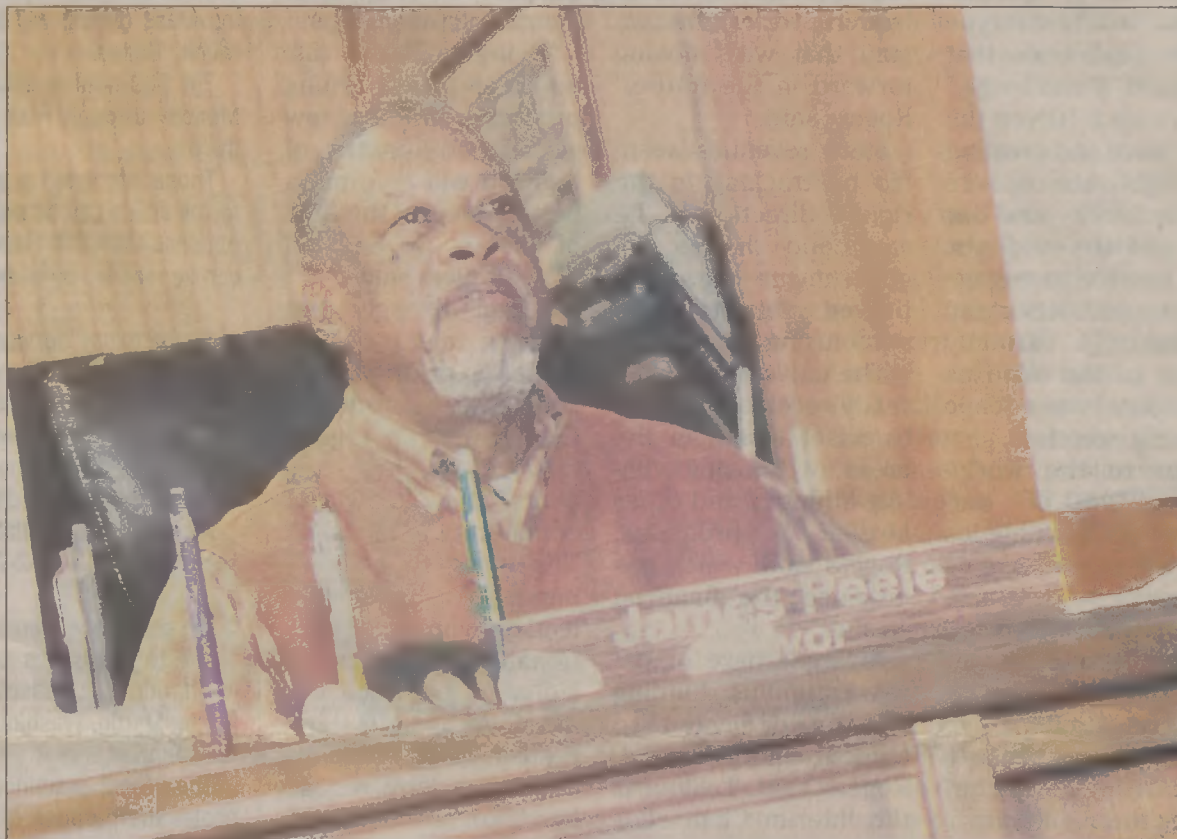
THADD WHITE  
Bertie Ledger-Advance

WINDSOR – Windsor Police Chief Justin Jackson confirmed Thursday afternoon an inmate at Bertie Correctional Institute is dead of an apparent suicide.

The inmate, identified by the N.C. Department of Corrections as Rashaun Mason, 33, died today (Thursday), and was found in a housing area of the prison around 1:20 p.m. Prison medical staff and Bertie EMS paramedics attempted to resuscitate Mason, but he was pronounced dead at 1:38 p.m. at the facility.

Windsor Police Lt. Frank Ratzlaff said he and Windsor Police Officer Dennis Smith responded to the scene and an investigation has

See DEATH, 3



GENE MOTLEY / Eastern North Carolina Living

James Peele is one of the champions of his community highlighted in the latest edition of Eastern Living.

## Peele highlighted in Eastern Living

WINDSOR – James Peele loves Powellsville.

The current mayor of one of Bertie County’s smallest towns says he was talked into running for commissioner, and felt obligated to stand for mayor following a sad period in the town’s history.

But, whatever the reason, Peele has become a tireless advocate for Powellsville and his people.

“I want the best service for our citizens,” he said. “I want us to be an affordable community. I think it’s paramount that Powellsville keeps it’s



small-town flavor.”

Peele is profiled in the current edition of Eastern North Carolina Living, and is one of

14 people the magazine profiles for their work championing the communities in which they live.

Eastern North Carolina Living’s “Where the living is good as gold” is a nod to Big Smo and Darius Rucker’s “My Place.” As in the song, the profiles are of people who invite people to come on over to “my place” be that a town, county or just a crossroads.

“We have some people that are just wonderful champions of their communities,”

See PEELE, 3

## Relay set for Aug. 21

Event will be Drive-Up again in ‘21

THADD WHITE  
Bertie Ledger-Advance

WINDSOR – Relay For Life in Bertie County will operate as a Drive-Up event for the second straight year.

“Out of an abundance of caution and concern for our cancer survivors and their families, Relay For Life of Bertie County will operate as a Drive-Up event again this year,” Bertie County American Cancer Society President Bobbie Parker said, adding the caution was due to safety concerns during mass gatherings due to COVID-19.

The event is also moving this year, as it will be held at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 21. It will remain in the parking lot of Bertie High School with a parade line-up located in the Bertie Mid-

See RELAY, 3

## Bertie County Schools planning for reopening

GENE MOTLEY  
For the Bertie Ledger-Advance

WINDSOR – Sunday, March 14, marked one calendar year since schools across the state were initially closed for in-person instruc-

tion due to COVID-19.

For Bertie County Schools, Monday will mark as close to a return to some learning normality, at least for the time being.

At a called meeting on Feb. 22, the Bertie County Board

of Education voted to reopen schools for in-person learning beginning March 22.

The board’s decision means the district will continue to provide remote learning to students whose

parents/guardians do not feel comfortable sending their child/children back to school at this time.

Bertie is implementing Plan B, or a hybrid plan. The returning students will be divided into two groups

(Cohort A and Cohort B) and will receive in-person instruction on separate days from 8 a.m.-to-1 p.m.

Cohort A will be in the classroom on Mondays and

See SCHOOLS, 3

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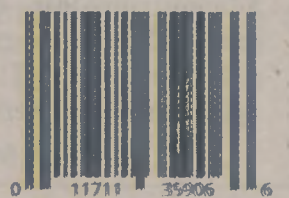


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