

PERQUIMANS COUNTY
110 W ACADEMY ST
HERTFORD NC 27944

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Albemarle, Tideland EMCs may merge

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Albemarle EMC and Tideland EMC have entered into a shared management contract that may be the first step in a merger between the two cooperatives.

Albemarle EMC General Manager Jeff Edwards issued a news release announcing the new relationship between the entities. He said that the cooperatives have jointly hired the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association National Consulting Group to perform an in-depth study of the potential merger process. The study will include extensive financial analysis, reorganization of existing staff and the coordination of technical issues. A final report to the combined boards of directors of the cooperatives is expected late this month.

The study is the second authorized by the two electric providers. The Cooperative Finance Corporation in Herndon, Va., performed a preliminary analysis that projects substantial savings should the two utilities merge. Member-owners of each utility may reap such benefits as short-term rate stabilization with the potential for long-term rate decreases, a broader base of retail services and improved disaster response.

Edwards said the merger discussion is in response to operational efficiency issues and new state law, House Bill 476, that broadens the base of business for electric cooperatives. House Bill 476 allows the cooperatives to add energy- or telecommunication-related services to their business. At present, Tideland EMC is the parent company of Tideland Energy Resources, which offers gas appliance sales and service and commercial fleet vehicle maintenance. Albemarle EMC plans to offer surge suppressing soon. More services could be offered in the future.

Edwards said a merger would not involve closing any of the offices presently operated by the two entities.

The shared services agreement allows each EMC to more fully utilize its own specialized services and staff in areas such as engineering, accounting and marketing.

Edwards is serving as interim general manager of Tideland while continuing to serve as general manager at Albemarle EMC during the study phase. If either of the cooperatives' boards of directors reject a merger proposal, Tideland EMC will resume its executive search process to fill the position of general manager. If both boards approve the merger proposal, the memberships of both cooperatives will vote to make the final decision.

Tideland EMC is the result of the merger of three electric cooperatives and one privately owned power company. It serves more than 20,000 electric accounts in Hyde, Beaufort, Dare, Pamlico, Washington and Craven counties. The utility maintains full service offices in Engelhard, Pantego, Grantsboro and Ocracoke.

Albemarle EMC serves over 9,600 electric accounts in Chowan, Perquimans Pasquotank, Camden and Currituck counties. Corporate headquarters are in Hertford.

Both EMCs are members of the Touchstone Energy national network of electric cooperatives.

Reward offered in nail incidents

Hunt club members put up \$500 for info on person throwing nails in driveways

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

The victims hope the perpetrators get nailed.

Perquimans and Chowan residents are flocking to tire centers and service stations to have tired repaired or replaced after running over roofing nails that are showing up by the handfuls in driveways, farm paths, and even roadways. The areas hit so far are between Sandy Cross and County Line roads, Great Hope Church and

Beech Springs roads, and the 4-mile Desert. The highest concentration has been in the Belvidere area.

Perquimans Sheriff Eric Tilley said his department received over 20 calls between the first reported incident around Dec. 17 and Dec. 28. Tilley added that he had heard of many unreported incidents and that the Chowan County Sheriff's Department is also investigating complaints in that county.

From what Tilley can piece together, it appears the nail-throwing may be hunt club related. Lots of fingers are being pointed, especially in the Belvidere area, Tilley said. Many of those fingers are being pointed at the Chappell Hill Hunt Club.

According to club president Lucious Roy Chappell and vice president Ken Banks, the nail incidents began after some property owners

posted their land, closing it to hunting. That action came because people said the hunt club was hunting in unauthorized areas, the hunt club officers said. It's also why the hunt club is getting blamed for the nails.

But Chappell and Banks said the hunt club, to their knowledge, is not responsible for the tire-puncturing escapades. In fact, some club members have had nails scattered on their property twice.

To help find those responsible for the nails, Chappell and Banks collected \$500 to be used as a reward for anyone with information leading to the arrest and conviction of the guilty party or parties. If the person convicted is a hunt club member, Chappell and Banks said the member's membership will be revoked.

The incidents have kept tire shops busy. Walter Matthews of Ned's BP

said last Friday that he has fixed at least 35 tires, and possibly 50, damaged by nails. Norman Young Tire Center reported about 55 tires brought to their shops, some of which had to be replaced due to extensive damage.

Tilley said if the guilty party is caught, he will see that the perpetrator is charged with every possible offense, including injury to personal property and vandalism. He also said the guilty party could be forced to pay restitution to victims.

Victims who have not reported a nail incident should file a report with the sheriff's department in the county in which the incident occurred.

Anyone with information about the incidents should also call the Perquimans County Sheriff's office at 426-5615 or the Chowan County department at 482-8484.

REPEAT CHAMPS

Pirates pull off tourney win in overtime

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

It was everything a championship game should be when host Currituck took on reigning Daily Advance Classic champs Perquimans last Wednesday in the 1999 final. When the final buzzer sounded for the second time, the Pirates had retained title to the tournament trophy.

Tournament MVP Jarrod Cooper capped a Perquimans come-back when he drove the lane through a minefield of Knights with 6 seconds left in regulation to tie the game. Cooper hustled back on defense to help keep Currituck from putting up a Hail Mary at the buzzer.

When the next buzzer sounded, Perquimans owned a 53-50 lead and the championship.

Michael Everett got the night started off on the right foot for the Pirates with back-to-back threes. Currituck responded with two threes to go up by three, then Cooper tied it with a tres of his own. At the end of the first quarter, Currituck was up 17-13. The homesteaders maintained a slight lead throughout the second period, but Cooper wouldn't let them get too far ahead. With the Knights up 28-22, Cooper hit a three with 5 seconds left in the quarter.

Currituck went up 36-29 in the third before Pirate coach Luther Overton called a time out with 3:42 left. The Pirates scored eight unanswered points to



Daily Advance photos

Pirate Jarrod Cooper was named MVP of The Daily Advance Holiday Basketball Classic last Wednesday after executing some key plays for the champion Perquimans team. The Lady Pirates (below) didn't perform so well, falling to Edenton in the title game. (See page 6)



regain the lead for the first time since the beginning of the opening quarter.

Cooper opened the final stanza with a three, but Currituck scored the next eight to go up 44-40 courtesy of Perquimans' poor execution. At 1:23, the Knights were up 48-46. The team called two timeouts before Cooper put the game on his shoulders and drove in for the tying bucket.

Neither team could get much going offensively during the overtime due to excellent defense by both squads. Perquimans was up by three

when Currituck put up a long shot at the buzzer that hit the rim and bounced off.

For his leadership at crucial points in the contest, Cooper was named MVP. Clifton Jenkins also had some big plays for the Pirates.

Cooper finished with 14 points; Bevon Miller, 12; Everett and Jenkins, 10 each; Monte Tunnell, four; and Anthony Winslow, three.

Perquimans got into the final by spanking Edenton, 67-53.

Edenton sliced through Perquimans' first quarter

man-to-man defense, so Overton employed three zones the rest of the way that aced the opponents' offense. Then the Pirates put on a scoring show.

Everett and Jenkins led the way with 17 points apiece, while Cooper added 13. Bevon Miller contributed six; Winslow and Tunnell, five each; and Justin Roberson and Derek Hurdle, two apiece.

Last year was the first tournament victory for the Pirates, who played a couple of their best games of the season in Barco last week.

Property revaluation notices to go out soon

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

How much is your property worth?

Perquimans residents will soon find out how much their property is worth for ad valorem tax purposes. Revaluation notices are expected to go out to property owners at mid-month.

Bob Pearson of Pearson's Appraisal Service, the company performing the revaluation, told commissioners in December that values have risen sharply in some areas in the county, while actually falling in others.

"Some of these changes (in property values) are pretty extreme and we wanted to let you know what's happening," Pearson told commissioners. To make his point, Pearson gave commissioners preliminary values on their own properties. The values of the six properties rose 12-112 percent.

Waterfront properties and areas of high growth will find values up considerably, while Pearson said lot values in Holiday Island have actually dropped since the last revaluation eight years ago.

The objective of the state-mandated revaluation is to have all properties appraised at market value. Property owners will have an opportunity to dispute the values at hearings which will be advertised in this newspaper.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 58
LOW: 30
PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 64
LOW: 45
SCATTERED SHOWERS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 56
LOW: 38
PARTLY CLOUDY