

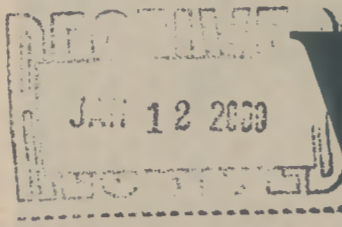
PERQUIMANS COUNTY LIBRARY
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HERTFORD NC 27944

Lady Pirates claims two wins
page 7

Outreach ministry honored
page 3

Open Door receives grant
page 2

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



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35 cents

Fire destroys auto body shop

Wind hampers efforts to quell Monday blaze

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Firefighters don't know yet why an auto body shop on Center Hill Highway erupted into flame Monday morning.

Assistant Hertford Fire Chief Todd Tilley said Tuesday morning that the cause of the fire, which consumed the shop and three vehicles inside, is still under investigation.

Hertford firefighters were dispatched to the shop at about 11:30 a.m. Monday. The shop is located behind Colonial Cabinets on Center Hill Highway, beside the county convenience center. They arrived to find the building fully involved in flame. The Hertford crew called for a tanker and additional manpower from Winfall to help contain the fire. Tilley said while the cabinet shop was never in immediate danger, the wind hampered efforts to extinguish the fire.

He said because the investigation into the blaze is not complete, it is not known if any chemicals or other com-



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Wind blew dark black smoke from an auto body shop blaze on Center Hill Highway Monday afternoon. Firefighters arrived to find the shop fully engulfed with three cars inside. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

pounds generally found in body shops had any impact on the fire.

Firefighters were on the scene until about 3 p.m. Monday, then reported back

around 7:30 when sparks caused one timber to reignite. Tilley said the wind probably caused the second blaze.

The body shop was operated by Roland Gilliam. Erie Haste

owns the building.

Traffic was routed around the area on Don Juan Road and Sunshine Lane by Hertford police officers as firefighters worked to tame the fire.

The EMS service was on the scene. Tilley said that the fire department is beginning to have EMS dispatched to all structure fires as a precautionary measure.

Filing period opens

Newcomers among first to file for office

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Two challengers are the first to file for seats on the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners.

Randy Lassiter, a Democrat, and Vernon Hammons, a Republican, were the first two candidates to file for the three seats open on the county board. The seats are presently held by Archie Miller, Bert Hayes and Shirley Wiggins. Hayes has said he will not run again.

As of Monday afternoon, no candidates had filed for the three non-partisan seats up for election on the school board. They are held now by Helen Shaw, Wallace Nelson and Thomas L. Riddick.

Deborah Reed has filed to keep her job as register of deeds. Reed is a Democrat.

The filing period opened on Jan. 3 and will close on Feb. 7 at noon. Residents who wish to vote in the May 5 primary must register by April 7.

Those who will turn 18 before the general election on Nov. 7 are eligible to register and vote in the primary. However, those who have not turned 18 cannot vote for school board candidates in May because that election is not a primary.

Under the county's electoral plan, all school board and commissioners' seats are at-large. The three candidates with the most votes in the non-partisan school board race in May will be seated in June.

In the county commissioner race, the three Democrats and three Republicans with the most votes will appear on the ballot in November. The top three vote-getters in that election will be seated in December.

Elections Director Eula Forbes said the Board of Elections hopes to have the voting machines in place by the primary. The county approved the purchase of the voting machines last fall. Forbes said the U.S. Justice Department must approve the county's use of the voting machines before they can be ordered and used for an election.

Two arrested for holiday break-ins

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Perquimans deputies solved a rash of robberies the old-fashioned way, with tips from the community and solid detective work.

Deputy Nathan Zachary said last week that two suspects were arrested and charged with several holiday burglaries after the sheriff's department pieced together evidence of their alleged involvement in at least three larcenies. Information that led to solving the cases came from people in the community who learned about possible stolen items and following the leads as they came in, Zachary said.

Charles Louder, 42, of Route 4, Hertford, and Charlie Spellman, 34 of Herrington Village, Elizabeth City, are charged with felonies including breaking and entering, larceny, and possession of stolen goods. Zachary said other charges may be filed.

Louder and Spellman were first interviewed on Dec. 17 when Sheriff Eric Tilley stopped the pair for suspicious behavior. The two told conflicting stories about how items in the car, including power saws, a drill bit set, fishing poles and tie down straps, came into their possession. Tilley confiscated the items until he could investigate further.

Zachary would later learn that the items were apparently stolen from a shed behind a Bagley Swamp Road residence earlier the same day. At the time Louder and Spellman were stopped, the owners of the items did not realize they were missing, Zachary said.

The two have also been charged with a break-in at a

Hurdletown Road home on Dec. 20. From that home, a TV, VCR, furniture and other items were stolen. Louder and Spellman were charged with that incident after the victims reported that they had been told where their stolen TV and VCR were located. Zachary said officers believe the pair sold the TV and VCR to someone who did not know the items were stolen.

Spellman was arrested in December in Elizabeth City. Zachary went to Albemarle District Jail where he was detained to interview him in early January. During that interview, Spellman gave Zachary information that led to discovery of the owner of the items Tilley had confiscated on Dec. 17, as well as the disposition of a pressure washer stolen from Hertford Hardware on Nov. 24. The pressure washer was recovered in Elizabeth City on Jan. 4.

Louder was charged with felonious larceny and felonious possession of stolen goods in the pressure washer case. Both men were charged with felonious breaking and entering, larceny and possession of stolen goods in the other two incidents.

According to Albemarle District Jail personnel, Louder has been released, while Spellman was still in custody Monday.

Zachary said the department is encouraging people to keep an eye out on their property, and to report stolen items promptly to increase the likelihood of recovery. Some of the items allegedly stolen by Louder and Spellman have not been recovered, Zachary said.

In addition, Zachary recommends that people keep outbuildings locked.

PCRA chooses new site director

Webb assumes duties at Newbold-White

David Webb is now the site manager for the historic Newbold-White House.

Webb was hired by the Perquimans County Restoration Association and began his duties on Jan. 3.

The North Carolina State University graduate brings a wealth of experience to the position. He was most recently Exhibit Design Technician for the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation in Raleigh. In this position, he worked on visitor center projects for Jockey's Ridge, Carolina Beach, Mount Mitchell, Hanging Rock, and Williams B. Umstead state parks. Webb's duties included researching and writing exhibit text, planning and compiling design specifications for visitor center exhibits, and writing scripts and coordinating production of audio-visual interactives.

Prior to his work with the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, Webb was Historic Site Curator for Historic Oak View County Park in Raleigh. There, he conducted historical and artifact research for educational and interpretive programs, developed site tours, designated and fabricated exhibits, and researched for new exhibits.

Webb, who has family roots in Gates County, is enthusiastic about the potential of the Newbold-White House.

"I have family ties to the area and a great interest in the history of northeast North Carolina," Webb said. "I'm excited about the opportunities that the Newbold-White House offers for teaching history for the community and I look forward to continuing the work of the site to teach history in a non-traditional setting."

Webb holds a master's degree in public history from N.C. State. His undergraduate degree in history is also from NCSU.

The Newbold-White House interprets early 18th century life in North Carolina. Dating back to 1730, the house is the oldest brick house in the state and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The house is authentically restored and features period furnishings. Guided and group tours are available. It is

located just off Harvey Point Road.

The house is operated by the Perquimans County Restoration Association. The association promotes the cultural heritage of Perquimans County and preserves the early 18th century character of the Newbold-White House.

The site is closed for winter and will reopen March 1.

For information about the house, volunteering as a docent at the site, donating to or joining the Perquimans County Restoration Association, or general information, call 426-7567.



David Webb

King Day activities set for Monday

Martin Luther King Jr. Day will kick off with a breakfast at Captain Bob's Restaurant. The Rev. Keith Vaughan of Hertford Baptist Church will be the speaker. Reservations are required by Jan. 13 by calling 426-2020. The breakfast is sponsored by Perquimans 20/20 Vision Coalition and Communities in Schools.

Perquimans Middle School

will host and co-sponsor a program from 10 a.m.-noon. Guest speaker will be Henry Johnson, state Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction. The program will include a panel discussion of ways to help all children achieve to their fullest potential. Parents and students are urged to attend and participate in the discussion. The Bay Branch Girls Outreach

Team will perform. The program is co-sponsored by the Council of Negro Women. The event will conclude with a hot dog lunch.

Rev. Jasper Horne, pastor of First Baptist church in Ahoskie, will speak at the NAACP service at Galatia Baptist Church. A motorcade will form at Missing Mill Park at 1 p.m. and travel to the church.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 74
Low: 41
PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
High: 52
Low: 38
MOSTLY SUNNY

SATURDAY
High: 51
Low: 26
PARTLY CLOUDY