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Holiday light safety

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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Hertford gets \$3 million in grant funds

Grant reduces amount to be borrowed for water, sewer upgrades

SUSAN R. HARRIS
 Editor

Hertford's water and sewer expansion/renovation project became less taxing on its residents with the receipt of a \$3 million grant.

Town Manager John Christensen was all smiles when he announced in the town board's regular meeting Monday night that the town

had received a grant from the state.

The funds came after the General Assembly reallocated proceeds of the Clean Water Bonds, changing the pool from a loan pool to a grant pool.

The grant drastically reduces the amount of money Hertford will borrow to fund its extensive water and sewer expansion/renovation project. While bids have not been received on the four-phase project, Christensen estimates the total cost to approach \$6 million.

Concern over capacity of the water and wastewater treatment plants, as well as the two systems' deteriorating condition, has been an ongoing issue for the town. About 3 years ago, the town began plan-

ning for an upgrade. Before applying for grant, bond or loan money, the town had to have engineering studies and cost estimates in hand. That process was completed in early 1998.

In November 1998, Hertford voters approved a \$4.8 million bond referendum to fund the improvements. The town also actively sought grant funds to lower the amount of bond money they would actually need.

Prior to the \$3 million grant, the town had successfully applied for an \$850,000 CDBG, a \$597,000 U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Authority grant, a \$472,000 USDA Rural Development grant, and a \$200,000 Rural Center grant. In

addition, Winfall will pay a \$455,000 add-on fee to tap into Hertford's wastewater treatment plant. Those funds totalled about \$2.5 million.

Christensen said the town may lose the \$472,000 because of the new funds. But even that will still leave the town with about \$5 million in funds that will not have to be borrowed to complete the project.

The project will be accomplished in phases, and will result in the use of the latest technology throughout the systems.

Phase I, with an estimated cost of \$500,000, will extend water and sewer service to the commerce center on Harvey Point Road, as well as update facilities, including pumping stations in town. Christensen

expects to go out for bids on that phase in about 60 days.

The second phase will increase the capacity of the water plant by 50 percent. Buildings will be added to the existing water plant to house state-of-the-art equipment and a third well will be added. Water tanks will be sand blasted and cleaned inside and out. That project will run about \$750,000.

The third phase will overhaul and modernize the wastewater treatment plant.

"Basically, we're going to be building a new wastewater plant," Christensen said, although the town will make use of some of the functional parts of the present system.

Christensen said Phase III represents major improve-

ments to the wastewater system. The town will build a land application system to discharge wastewater, rather than dumping the treated waste into the river. The town has an option on the Brinn Farm on Grubb Street Extended, which will be used for the spray field.

"We'll be up with the latest technology" once the system is in place, Christensen said.

Next, the town will upgrade its wastewater collection system, focusing on areas where rainwater infiltrates the pipes. The town will determine where the rain water is entering the system and fix the problem so that the clean water will not be treated. This will improve the capacity of the system.

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Grant to renovate visitors center

Center will house Main Street, Chamber

SUSAN R. HARRIS
 Editor

It wasn't delivered by Rudolph, but the town of Hertford Main Street Program got a welcome gift last week.

Main Street Program Manager Belinda Washlesky said the town received a \$17,000 Rural Tourism Development Grant from the state Department of Commerce. The funds will be used to renovate a downtown building to serve as a visitor and information center for the town and county. The town is working cooperatively with the Main Street Program, Chamber of Commerce and Perquimans County Restoration Association on the project.

Washlesky said a visitor's center is an important component of heritage tourism development. There is a need for a staffed office for tourists to visit to get information on local attractions, including shops, eateries, bed and breakfasts, local events and activities, and historic places.

The legislature appropriated \$300,000 to the Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development to fund programs that encourage the development of new tourism projects and activities in rural areas of the state. Over 100 applications for funding were received, and only 24 projects funded.

"We had applied for \$25,000 and I think we are very fortunate to be the recipient of \$17,000, the largest amount awarded to any individual applicant," Washlesky said.

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HOLIDAY CELEBRATION



Perquimans was filled with holiday cheer last week when several organizations sponsored Christmas activities. The Historic Hertford Business Association organized entertainment and a treasure hunt downtown. Tori and Kenny Nixon visited with Santa at Inteliport (top right) as part of the downtown events. The Antiques Dealers Association of Perquimans County offered mystery coupons on their first-ever ramble, which brought numerous visitors to their shops, including Hertfordshire Antiques (bottom right). The Extension's annual Christmas ramble allowed tours of three beautifully decorated homes, including the Church Street home of Frankie Eason (upper left), as well as Burgess Baptist Church, where refreshments were served. Hundreds turned out on the chilly night for the events.



Former county commissioner dies at home

Miller respected as leader

JEREMY DESPOSITO
 AND
 SUSAN R. HARRIS

Just three short days after stepping down from the Perquimans County Board of

Commissioners, Archie Miller died at home Thursday after a long bout with cancer. He was 51.

"He will definitely be missed," said Perquimans County Manager Paul Gregory, a longtime friend. "We shared a lot of good times and those memories will be cherished."

A Perquimans native, Miller was programs director at Pasquotank Correctional

Institute. Besides graduating from Perquimans County High School, he held a master's degree in education administration from East Carolina University.



Miller

Before going to work for the

Department of Corrections, Miller helped run Miller's Livestock, a family-owned and operated business, and also taught at Perquimans High School.

Commissioner Shirley Wiggins, who first ran for the Board of Commissioners together with Miller eight years ago, described him as a quiet man whose main concern

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Armed robber hits county

SEAN JACKSON
 The Daily Advance

A lone masked gunman robbed Tammy's hair salon in the Woodville community last Thursday at 7:15 p.m.

Perquimans County Sheriff's investigator Nate Zachary said last week that the description of the Tammy's robber fit that of suspects in a number of recent Elizabeth City business robberies.

"Basically (Thursday's robbery) fits the same MO (method of operation) as the (holdups) They've been having in Elizabeth City," Zachary said.

The suspect, described as a black male, walked into Tammy's, bandished a chrome-plated handgun, instructed an employee to empty a cash drawer, and then fled on foot with an undisclosed amount of cash, Zachary said. The suspect is approximately 6 feet tall, of slender build, and was wearing all black clothing and a dark-colored ski mask.

Anyone with information on this incident or the robberies in Elizabeth City should call the sheriff's department at 426-5615.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
 High: 48
 Low: 29
 PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
 High: 50
 Low: 38
 MOSTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
 High: 53
 Low: 38
 MOSTLY CLOUDY