

## Happenings

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## Tanker overturns, spills fertilizer on U.S. 17

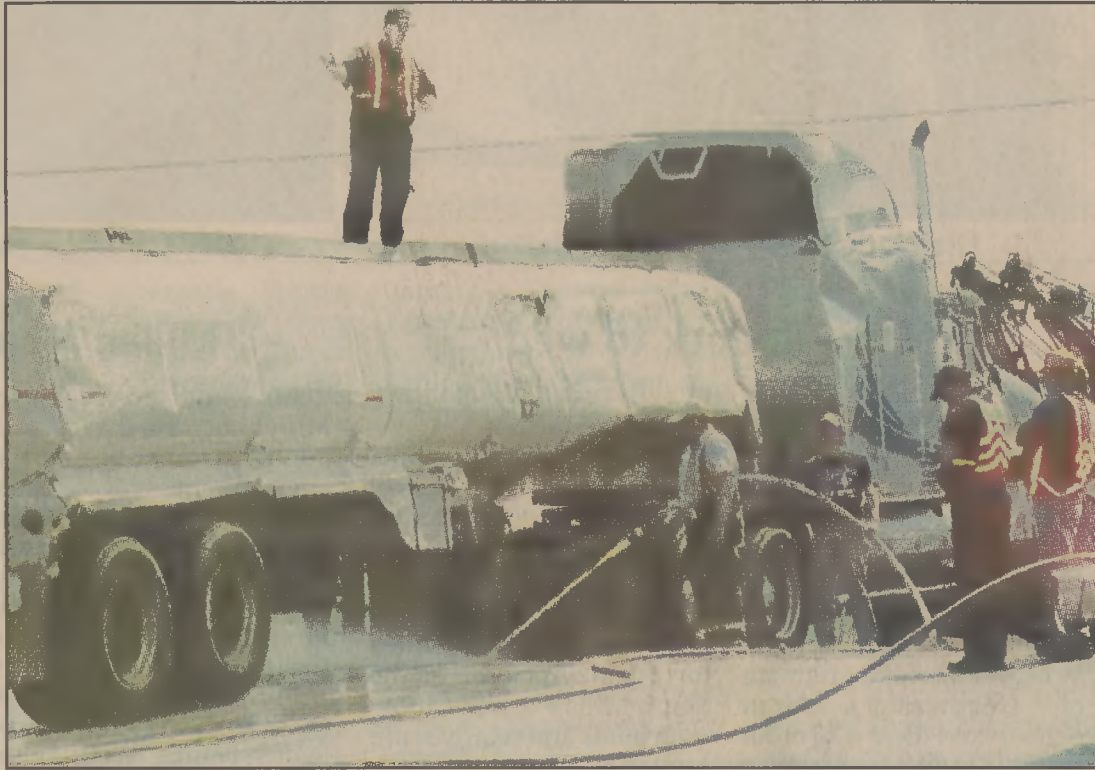
Driver breaks  
shoulderCHIP ROMANOVICH  
The Daily Advance

A tanker truck overturned on U.S. Highway 17 a few miles south of Hertford last Tuesday morning, spilling approximately 1,000 gallons of a nitrogen fertilizer-water mixture onto the roadway.

The spill, which was contained to a ditch in the highway median, will cause no long-term environmental damage, said Perquimans County Emergency Management Coordinator Harry Winslow.

"It's just the fertilizer that the farmer puts in the field," Winslow said. "It's non-flammable. It's all been contained (and) will be pumped up."

The driver of the truck,



Daily Advance photo

Members of the Bethel Fire Department hose down a section of U.S. Highway 17 where a tanker truck transporting nitrogen-based fertilizer overturned last Tuesday, spilling part of its load.

Jay Jefferson, 39, of shoulder in the accident. Hospital and released. Tarboro, suffered a broken He was treated at Chowan State Highway Patrol

Trooper J.H. Blizzard said the accident occurred about 10:30 a.m. as Jefferson tried to make a left turn onto N.C. Hwy. 37.

"He was traveling south on U.S. 17, and attempted to make a left turn on N.C. 37," Blizzard said. "I think he might have taken his turn a little too fast considering his vehicle and the load he was carrying. It just rolled right over on its left side."

Jefferson, who was wearing a seat belt, was cited for exceeding a safe speed, Blizzard said.

The tanker, which is owned by Benjamin William Marsh of Beaufort, was carrying 49,000 pounds of a 30 percent nitrogen-70 percent water mixture at the time of the accident.

In addition to the nitrogen-water mixture, approximately 30 gallons of motor oil, hydraulic oil and diesel fuel spilled from over-turn-

er tanker truck, Winslow said. BMW is expected to hire an environmental firm to clean up that spill. Meanwhile, Royster-Clark Inc., a fertilizer company that makes the water-nitrogen fertilizer mixture, will pump out the ditch, Winslow said.

Following the accident, members of the Bethel Community Volunteer Fire Department sprayed the roadway with water, and the Department of Transportation brought in "three or four pickup loads" of sand to contain the two spills, Winslow said.

Because of the accident, traffic was diverted at the Perquimans County line on U.S. 17 until the highway was reopened at 12:50 p.m. Winslow said.

Perquimans County commissioners hired Winslow as Emergency Management Coordinator on April 2.

Seneca:  
Large fish  
kill near  
HertfordWeather, low  
oxygen level  
kill herringROBERT SHILES  
The Daily Advance

Hot weather and low oxygen levels are being blamed for a significant fish kill along a one-mile stretch of Goodwin Creek, located just northwest of Hertford.

Ernie Seneca, a spokesman for the N.C. Division of Water Quality, said Thursday that about 2,000 adult herring each between eight and nine inches long - were found dead in the creek that flows directly into the Perquimans River on Wednesday.

A field officer for the state Wildlife Resources Commission reported the kill, and two state Water Quality staff members from the division's regional office in Washington, N.C., immediately investigated, Seneca said.

"It looks like we have a seasonal event here. We found the dissolved oxygen levels in the water to be very low," Seneca said. "The reason I'm saying seasonal, is that this may have been a double hit. There was stagnant swamp water mixing with the creek water, and this was coupled with the warm temperatures we've been having."

Fish kills usually occur between May and October, when temperatures are higher, Seneca said. This type of natural fish kill, he added, is not unusual and is a state-wide phenomenon.

## EVERYBUNNY HAD FUN



PHOTOS BY SUSAN HARRIS

Everybunny had fun in downtown Hertford Saturday when the Easter bunny arrived in time for breakfast with area children. The day went on to include photos with the bunny, a decorated hat contest and an egg hunt. For the adults, there was a flea market and merchant specials throughout town. The annual event was sponsored by the Historic Hertford Business Association.

Potato Festival back  
in Albemarle area

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Folks in the Albemarle found the Potato Festival quite a-peeling for many years, so a group of residents went back to its roots to dig up the tradition once more.

The Albemarle Potato Festival will return to the area on May 18 and 19 in downtown Elizabeth City. Held at various times over a 30-year span beginning in the 1930s, the Festival was an area-wide celebration.

As in times gone by, months of preparation have gone into planning this year's tribute to the region's hard-working farmers and the agriculture community in general.

The 21st century version will include a parade, live entertainment, free food, children's activities, classic car displays, and more.

A pre-event party is set for May 18 when the Fat Ammons Band will fill Roebuck Stadium on the ECSU campus with favorite beach and oldies sounds beginning at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and proceeds will benefit the Museum of The Albemarle. Call 335-1453 for tickets.

The preliminary Festival schedule calls for a kick-off parade on Saturday at 10 a.m. North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture Meg Scott Phipps will serve as grand marshal and will be accompanied by "Spud," the official Festival mascot.

Gates will open at the Waterfront Park at 11 a.m. for sail boat races, children's activities, a car show, antique farm implement display and entertainment.

At 11:30 a.m., the Little Miss Tater Tot contest will be held. Old-fashioned games will follow at noon. Time is running out to sign up for the Little Miss Tater Tot pageant. Contestants must be 5 by May 1. Entry forms must be postmarked by April 20 and be accompanied by an entry fee of \$10. Ten contestants will be selected from the entries. The \$10 fee will be returned

to those not selected to participate in the pageant. Entry forms are available at the chamber office in participating counties, or if there is no chamber office, at the county manager's office.

The National Potato Peeling Contest will be open to teams and individuals at 1 p.m.

The U.S. Coast Guard will perform a search and rescue demonstration at 3 p.m.

There will also be a Potato Recipe Cook-off at that time at the Pasquotank Extension Center. The deadline to enter is May 4. Perquimans County residents who wish to participate but cannot be present on May 9 may enter. Call the Perquimans Extension Center at 426-7697 to enter and for more details.

An awards and recognition ceremony is set for 6 p.m.

There will be free french fries and Frito-Lay chips given during the event.

Counties included in the Festival area are Beaufort, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington.

For further information, check online at [www.NCPotatoes.org/festival](http://www.NCPotatoes.org/festival).

WEEKEND  
WEATHER

THURSDAY  
High: 61  
Low: 42  
PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY  
High: 71  
Low: 54  
MOSTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY  
High: 77  
Low: 59  
MOSTLY CLOUDY