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# PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## Storm blasts through Perquimans

### Freak storm wreaks havoc here

ERIN RICKERT

Perquimans County residents are left cleaning up after last week's freak thunderstorm whirled through eastern North Carolina, ripping roofs from houses, flinging vehicles and snapping trees.

The storm turned a bright sky gloomy shortly before noon last Tuesday as sleet, snow, rain and hail were cast down by way of more than 65 mph winds, causing in excess of \$750,000 in damage.

"Every area in the county was impacted in some way," said Harry Winslow, emergency management coordinator for Perquimans County. "The damage was widespread."

Though a final count of the number of residents affected by the storm was not available at press time, Winslow said the figure was in the hundreds.

For 63 year-old Dorothy Owens, the reality of the storm's force was all too evident once the blur of precipitation cleared and she was able to see the



PHOTOS BY ERIN RICKERT

Lindsey Ferrell works to clean up nearly \$20,000 in damage at Farmer's Feed and Seed Wednesday, after a grain bin landed on top of the business's outdoor greenhouse in last Tuesday's storm.

nearly 35-foot pine tree resting on her Hertford home. "I don't believe this," Owens said. "I would never have dreamed this in a mil-

lion years." Sent crashing from its perch by Tuesday's high winds, the tree left a hole

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A nearly 35-foot pine tree crashes through the roof of Dorothy Owens home on Ballhack Road causing hundreds of dollars in damage.



Tuesday's more than 65 mph winds blew a FedEx trailer on top of a Jeep Cherokee owned by an unnamed Hertford FedEx driver.

### Winfall man dies in poisoning accident

CHRIS WHIPPLE  
The Daily Advance

Tuesday's weather may have set up conditions that led to the death of a Winfall man, found dead in his home last Wednesday, the apparent victim of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Teddy Langley, 50, co-owner of Action Auto on North Road Street, was discovered by a friend at about 7:30 a.m., according to Perquimans County Sheriff Eric Tilley. Langley's River Drive home in Winfall lost power during Tuesday's storm and Langley had run a gas-powered generator in his attached garage overnight.

Langley had two grown children and a granddaughter.

Langley was well-known in the auto dealership community, and his death was about all local dealers could think about during the Tidewater Auto Auction in Virginia on Wednesday, according to Charlie Jessup, an Elizabeth City auto dealer.

Langley had worked at most of the local dealerships in Elizabeth City, his brother, Tony Langley, said.

Langley was scheduled to drive out to the Tidewater Auto Auction on Wednesday morning. When he didn't show up, Elizabeth Meads, a close friend of Langley's and an employee of Action Auto, came by to check on him, Tilley said.

Meads last saw Langley alive about 9:30 p.m. Tuesday. She had been concerned about the generator and had warned him to leave a window open, Tilley said. When she came to check on him Wednesday, he was unconscious on the floor in the utility room.

Sheriff's deputies were dispatched at 7:52 a.m. and the Winfall Volunteer Fire Department was dispatched at 8:38 a.m. Kelvin Roberson, public works director

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## Driver hits school bus, is charged with DWI

ERIN RICKERT

A Perquimans County man was arrested on drunk driving charges after the pickup he was driving collided with a school bus in Hertford last Tuesday.

Richard O'Neal Jr., 34, was arrested and charged with driving while impaired, driving while license revoked and failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident after he struck a stopped Perquimans County School bus at the intersection of Grubb Street and Hiland Park Avenue.

Eight Perquimans County Middle School students were riding on the bus when the accident occurred around 4 p.m.

One student, who could not be named, was exiting the bus at the time of the

crash and was forced back into a seat by the impact.

The student was later transported to Chowan County Hospital to be checked for neck and shoulder pain. According to Brenda Lassiter, public information officer for Perquimans County Schools, the student returned to school Monday after suffering minor back injuries.

The other students and the bus driver, Elaine White, only reported minor injuries, police said. Most of the students left the scene of the accident with their parents. Gerald Waters, the owner of the 2003 Ford pickup truck O'Neal was driving, was also transported to Chowan Hospital with a head laceration and was later released, police said.



PHOTO BY ERIN RICKERT

Richard O'Neal Jr. of Hertford was charged with driving while impaired after the truck he was driving crashed into the rear end of a school bus last Tuesday afternoon.

Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy said O'Neal was taken to the Hertford Police Station for a blood-

alcohol test after officers detected an odor of alcohol on his breath.

The results of the test indicated O'Neal had a blood-alcohol level of .23 — nearly three times the legal limit in North Carolina.

Vanscoy said O'Neal already had his license revoked for a previous DWI charge.

O'Neal was released that evening after posting a \$1,000 secured bond. Vanscoy said Waters, who was also suspected to have been under the influence of alcohol could receive an aiding and abetting charge pending further investigation, but no more information was available at press time.

Waters' truck was totaled in the accident, but the school bus sustained no damage.

## Clothing store opens along Ocean Highway

ERIN RICKERT

The Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the newly opened Ava's Fashions in Hertford Friday.

Co-owned by cousins E. Annette Perry Riddick and Vera R. Murrill and their friend Jo Anna Lawrence, the store carries fancy hats along with women and misses fashions by names like Donni Vinci, GMI, Fifth Sunday and Ben Marc in sizes 6-34.

The store, located at 223 Ocean Highway South, is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-



PHOTO BY ERIN RICKERT

The Chamber of Commerce welcomed Ava's Fashions to the business community at a ribbon cutting Friday at the new store.

Friday and 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday.

Just weeks into business, Riddick said plans are already in place for merchandise expansion, which would include the addition of shoes and men's clothing.

"The whole thing is very exciting, a blessing," Riddick said. "We all have a love for clothes and fashion."

For Riddick, fashion has been her life after she spent close to 40 years in the hair-styling business — later selling dresses and embellished suits out of her car in Greensboro and at Harris

Shopping Center in Hertford.

Riddick said Murrill and Lawrence, both teachers at Riverview Elementary, were her two best customers.

"She had the dream for a long time and she shared it with us," Murrill said.

Now these women are using their fashion know-how to provide their customers with matching hats and embellished suits as well as a 30-day layaway option to help their patrons get what they need.

They look forward to welcoming customers.

### WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY  
HIGH: 49  
LOW: 39  
MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY  
HIGH: 48  
LOW: 35  
SHOWERS

SATURDAY  
HIGH: 47  
LOW: 40  
SHOWERS