

Senior Health Fair planned

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A Walk Back In Time

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Relay for Life set for this weekend

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THE PERQUIMANS

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Schools lockdown after gunshots heard

CHRIS WHIPPLE
Staff Writer

Two Perquimans County schools closed their entrances and exits to all visitors for about 30 minutes Friday after students and staff reported hearing gunshots, a school official said.

No one was hurt, but

Hertford Grammar and Perquimans County High schools went on lockdown as part of the Safe Schools Plan, said Brenda Lassiter, a spokeswoman for the school district.

During lockdowns, no one but law enforcement officials are allowed entry or exit from a school.

The gunshots originated in the vicinity of King

Street, said Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy.

"Shots were fired, staff heard it, reported it, and, for safety purposes, the schools went on lockdown," Vanscoy said. "The shots were in the area of King Street and Railroad Avenue, between the high school and grammar school."

Vanscoy said officers

responded and talked to witnesses in the area who confirmed that there were shots, and who saw a white sport utility vehicle leaving the area.

Police were investigating the incident but no suspects had been identified by late Friday afternoon, Vanscoy said.

"We had children outside at Hertford Grammar

and the high school and gunshots rang out," Lassiter said. "Both principals put their schools on lock-down as part of the Safe Schools Plan. We wanted to keep intruders who might be involved from fleeing into our school buildings."

Lassiter used the schools Connect-Ed communication system to call parents

Friday afternoon to let them know what happened. The new communication system can transmit a recorded message to about 3,000 telephones in about 10 minutes, Lassiter said.

"This lockdown was for precaution only and both schools were able to secure their buildings and students within four minutes,"

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County water meters to be read monthly

MARGARET FISHER

Perquimans County residents can expect to start getting their water meters read by a county contractor beginning with their June bills.

Nearly 30 years ago, about 2,000 residents were reading their own meters and having it read annually by the county. But with population growth more than doubled to about 4,700 customers and drinking water supplies no longer unlimited, that method has become inefficient and costly.

Bellwether Management Solutions, the same company that reads county electric meters, will be reading water meters on a monthly basis. Customers may find that they have a previous charge or a credit on their first bill to "catch up" to the new billing system.

"(Charges) depend on

the diligence of reading or guessing," Darden said.

If, for some reason such as dogs in the yard, the meter cannot be read, an average of the previous three months will be used.

Customers' bills are currently being read to establish a base read. June bills will be read between mid-May and mid-June. The new bills will accurately show thousands of gallons used and the charge, Darden said.

The benefits of monthly billing are that customers won't have to read their meters, won't have a large "catch up" bill once a year and will be able to detect leaks sooner, said Perquimans County Manager Bobby Darden.

A new leak policy replaces the former large losses of water policy. Now, the burden of proof falls on

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GATHERING FOR PRAYER



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Over 80 people gathered on the courthouse lawn last Thursday at noon to observe National Day of Prayer. The local event was sponsored by Communities in Schools and the Perquimans County Schools Minister's for Education Council.

Inspection sticker thief nabbed

MARGARET FISHER

A man's clean record enabled him to reduce his felony theft charges to a misdemeanor for stealing state inspection stickers from a local auto shop.

John "David" Love, 41, of Elizabeth City was charged with two counts of possession of inspection stickers unlawfully and four counts of felony larceny in March. "Most people don't know (unlawful possession of state inspection stickers is) a felony," said H.H. Gillam, inspector for N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles.

Love told District Court Judge C. Christopher Bean that he had a lapse of think-

ing when he took four inspection stickers from Wayne's Auto on Snug Harbor Road.

Because of his clean record and cooperative attitude, his charges were reduced, Gillam said. In addition, Love won't lose his job, he said.

Love, who has worked at Coast Guard Base Elizabeth City for about a year and a half and as an air traffic controller for 17 years, made an appointment at Wayne's to get one of his four vehicles inspected. Owner Wayne Ward was out purchasing an extra supply of inspection stickers when Love arrived at

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ACCIDENT



PHOTO BY MARGARET FISHER

Steve Tresider of Just Truckin' in Florence, S.C., lands the back end of a tracker-trailer in a ditch in front of White Hat Seed in New Hope after picking up a load of seed. Tresider used the narrower of two driveways to exit during his first visit to the plant. It took a tractor pulling from the front and a tow truck using a cable on the side to upright the trailer. In the meantime, the eighteen-wheeler's landing gear had kept it from toppling.

Brusko fire ruled arson by SBI lab

CHRIS WHIPPLE
The Daily Advance

Commerce Center burned Sunday, April 16.

The building, owned by Michael Brusko, was the Commerce Center's first, built in 2001, Vanscoy said. Since the fire, the home-building and design firm has set up temporary offices in a trailer at the site.

Brusko said he received many offers of assistance from the community after the fire.

"There has just been an overwhelming amount of

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The Hertford Police Department has received confirmation that a fire that destroyed a home-building and design firm's offices in the county commerce park last month was deliberately set.

The State Bureau of Investigation's crime lab determined last week that gasoline was present in soil samples taken from the rear of the building, according to Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy.

The single-story brick building at 1124 Harvey Point Road in the

Canvass affirms election results

SUSAN HARRIS

Tuesday's canvass affirmed the May 2 primary election results.

According to Eula Forbes, Board of Elections Director, final vote totals for local offices were:

Sheriff

Eric Tilley 1,494

David Layne 735

Clerk of Superior Court

Todd Tilley 1,133

Sheila Onley 1,093

Board of Education

Wallace Nelson 1,127

Walter Leigh 488

Gloria Mason 357

Vivian Winslow 356

Gary Saul 166

Records show that 2,621 of Perquimans' 8,485 registered voters cast ballots in the primary, with 499 of those voters using either absentee or One Stop ballots prior to May 2.

It was the first election during which the new voting machines were used, and elections officials reported that there were no problems with the equipment. Final totals were called in from all seven precincts just over an hour after the polls closed at 7:30 p.m.

There were also no delays or problems at the polling places on election day.

There will be no local races in the November general election.

Local birding trails approved

MARGARET FISHER

Two local paddle trails in Perquimans County have been approved to be a part of the North Carolina Birding Trail.

The Upper Perquimans River Trail begins at The Teachers Park, a canoe docking facility and small boat ramp in Belvidere, and continues for at least five miles. The Mill Creek Paddle Trail begins at Larry's Drive-In and is about two and a half miles. Another trail, Raccoon Creek Paddle Trail, was not approved but can be accessed at the same location.

"(Having trails approved) is a

pretty big deal," said Wendy Jewett of Historic Hertford Inc. "It's a huge thing for birders."

Salinda Daley is the N.C. Birding Trail coordinator with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. A three-panel nomination committee visits sites that are submitted for review of whether they are suitable as bird watching trails, she said.

The site must have public access, be able to withstand a potential increase in public use of the site and be a quality habitat where birds can be seen along the trail.

Public access shouldn't disrupt the habitats of wildlife - particularly those of rare birds, Daley said.

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WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 84, Low: 62
SUNNY

FRIDAY
High: 79, Low: 62
SCATTERED T'STORMS

SATURDAY
High: 78, Low: 59
THUNDER SHOWERS



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