

Spooktacular garden plants

Page 3

Lady Pirates win round one

Page 7

County updating land use plan

Page 9

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WEEKLY

35 cents

No one injured in bus wreck

MARGARET FISHER

A close encounter on the causeway left a school bus marred, but no resulted in no injuries. The driver of the other vehicle was charged.

This was the second accident in about a month involving a school bus with minor damages where charges were filed against a driver in another vehicle.

It also happened on Wednesday during the N.C. Highway Patrol's "Operation Stop Arm," a week when troopers are promoting bus safety awareness around schools and bus stops.

At about 4:10 p.m., Anthony Wills was driving bus No. 111 back to Perquimans County High School after dropping off all the students.

He was going into a curve when he saw an approaching vehicle riding the center line, said Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy. Wills edged over to the right as far as he could when the car crossed the center line.

The car, driven by Edmond Hegedty Sr., 54, of Hop Bottom, Penn., allegedly hit the left front quarter panel of the bus and scraped the side of the bus as it passed.

Hegedty allegedly told Vanscoy that the bus had crossed the center line, but Vanscoy said that the evidence on the road showed the opposite.

Tire and rim marks on the pavement where the car struck the bus and the car's left front tire blew were on the side of the road where the bus was traveling.

"Based on all the evidence there at the scene, Mr. Hegedty was charged with driving left of center," Vanscoy said. There were two passengers in the car, but no injuries were reported.

Damage to the bus was estimated to be about \$3,500 and the car's damage was about \$5,000.

Wills drove the bus to the school's maintenance garage where it was checked out until about 7:30 p.m. when it was deemed fit to carry students again the following day, said the school's public information officer, Brenda Lassiter.

All smiles



PHOTO BY MARGARET FISHER

A dedication of Winfall's new unmarked 4-wheel drive police car took place last Thursday at the Town Hall where politicians and other officials gathered. John Cooper, state director of U.S.D.A. Rural Development, presented a ceremonial check for \$43,800 to Winfall Town Mayor Fred Yates. The monies include a \$28,800 low interest loan and \$15,000 grant. Also pictured are Winfall Police Chief David Shaffer, Congressman G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., Sen. Robert Hollomon, D-Hertford, Betty Jo Shephard, representative for U.S. Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C. and Janet Bradbury, eastern representative for U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C.

Winfall manholes damaged by DOT

MARGARET FISHER

Damages caused by mowing over the town of Winfall's manhole covers is causing town officials to try to obtain reimbursement from the N.C. Department of Transportation.



The mowing is contracted out by DOT, said Kelvin Roberson, Winfall's public works director. Because the grass around the manholes, most of which are located on the banks of ditches, is high, the mowers are running over the covers and damaging them and the cement rings that surround them, he said.

Three covers and rings have been replaced and there are at least five more that need repairing. The cost to replace a lid and ring on one manhole is estimated to be about \$140 plus labor, Roberson said.

The problem was spotted after Tropical Storm Ernesto dumped several inches of rain in the county causing water to infiltrate the sewer system. One pump ran continuously for 18 hours, he said.

A smoke test revealed leaks in eight of the manholes. Extra water in the system translates to extra costs paid to the town of Hertford.

"We're paying for every gallon that goes over (to Hertford's treatment plant)," Roberson said.

The town is now looking for a way to install markers on at least 50 of the more than 70 manholes in the town. However, they recently priced markers at \$50 each.

The state has required the town to place the covers in the ditches, Roberson said. Normally, they are watertight. But the state's side mowers are rolling over some of them and causing the concrete to crumble away and cause leakage.

If DOT's contractor mowed more frequently, they could see the covers and avoid them, Roberson said.

The town is taking photos of the covers and putting together cost estimates of repairs to be submitted to DOT for reimbursement, said Mayor Fred Yates.

Wells noted for health programs

SUSAN HARRIS

Making healthy lifestyle choices has become top-of-mind nationwide. Perquimans County Schools has taken an active role in promoting good health through a number of initiatives.

For his leadership in stressing health for students and staff, Dr. Kenneth W. Wells has been named the North Carolina 2006 Healthy Schools Superintendent of the Year.

The award is presented for demonstrating outstanding leadership to advance school-based policies and programs improving the health of students. Wells will be recognized during a state conference.

According to his nomination information, Wells has continued efforts already in place when he came to Perquimans five years ago, and has also overseen new programs designed to promote good health. Believing that students learn most effectively by seeing good behaviors modeled, Wells has provided health and wellness improvement opportunities for schools staff in addition to programs geared to students.

Students have benefitted from such initiatives as:

- Participation in the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program which provides free fresh and dried fruits and fresh vegetables to students and



Perquimans County Schools Superintendent Dr. Kenneth Wells was named the 2006 Healthy Schools Superintendent of the Year.

staff throughout the school day at Central and Hertford Grammar schools. The program goal is to

Continued on page 11

Wind causes Friday power outage in Hertford

MARGARET FISHER

Windy conditions last Friday were the cause of a power outage that affected part of the downtown and the surrounding residential area.

Shortly before dark, the windy conditions caused some tree limbs to blow one of the four circuits in the town.

It tripped out a recloser, causing an outage of about 40 minutes, said Hertford Town

Manager John Christensen.

That's the amount of time it took a town lineman, Chris Warden, to drive into town, find the problem at 207 Front St., trim back the burned limbs and reset the recloser at the plant, Christensen said.

A crackling noise coming from the line and a dead branch near the power line were an easy clue for residents and linemen to spot where the problem originated.

Melanie James, a resident at 204 Front St,

was sitting on her porch at the back of her house when the outage occurred.

"There was this flash and boom, and I just grabbed the phone and called 9-1-1," she said.

Town Councilman Carlton Davenport, who lives at the house where the outage happened, said that the town used to keep the trees trimmed, but they haven't been trimmed for a long time.

"I can tell you, they'll trim them now," he said.

Bids over budget for PCHS gymnasium project

MARGARET FISHER

The \$11 million the county is providing for Perquimans County High School is not enough to build the new gymnasium, School and county officials realized after construction bids were opened.

A.R. Chesson came in with the lowest bid at \$11.5 million, including about \$10.8 million for the gym project and nearly \$700,000 for roofing over the administra-

tive offices. Equipment costs bring the total to nearly \$14 million leaving a \$3 million shortfall.

Five percent of the \$11.5 million needs to be reserved as contingency funds during the construction process, said Superintendent Kenneth Wells.

Officials are left with a choice of cutting back on the project or obtaining additional revenue sources. The project was cut back earlier when construction costs increased after months of delays.

Wells said that some portions of the project might have to be delayed or paid at a later time, although delays can mean increased costs down the road.

State bonds that helped build Central Elementary School and renovate Hertford Grammar School stopped being offered in 1996 and the district doesn't meet the qualifications for current grants, Wells said about obtaining non-loan funds.

County commissioners attend-

ed a workshop on Monday night to discuss how to resolve the situation.

The county has paid more than \$1 million for the relocation of Jimmy Hunter Drive and part of the architect fees, said County Manager Bobby Darden.

"The board proposes that the county not look to recoup those fees out of the loan process," Darden said.

There are also leftover monies

Continued on page 11

WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 60, Low: 49
MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 68, Low: 48
RAIN/THUNDER

SATURDAY
HIGH: 67, Low: 42
MOSTLY SUNNY