

P3/C2*****CAR-RT LOT**C-001
PERQUIMANS COUNTY LIBRARY
110 W ACADEMY ST
HERTFORD, NC 27944-1306
MAR 28 2007

Matthews honored

Page 2

Sports updates

Page 7

Local pens book

Page 9

March 28, 2007

Vol. 75, No. 13 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

35 cents

County to Navy: You're not welcome

Residents speak

MARGARET FISHER

"Our church is on sacred ground," Amber Winslow, 12, told a Navy judge last Wednesday. "You don't mess with God."

Winslow was one of 95 people, mostly residents of Perquimans, that came to a public hearing to voice their opinion about an airstrip that the Navy is considering building in the township of Belvidere.

Winslow's church, Up River Friends, and her home are located in the core area that the Navy would have residents ousted from if they were to build an outlying landing strip in Perquimans. The church has been there since 1866, Winslow said.

Officially, about 815 people came to the hearing at the high school. Unofficially, Navy representatives said that there could have been as many as 1,100 because not everyone signed in, said Plymouth Mayor Brian Ross.

Diane Layden said that the home she was born and

Continued on page 10



DAILY ADVANCE PHOTO BY JOON POWELL

Perquimans County residents leave no doubt where they stand on the possibility for the U.S. Navy building and operating an outlying landing field in the Belvidere Township. Over 800 people packed the high school last Wednesday evening during a public hearing hosted by the Navy regarding the Environmental Impact Studies done in conjunction with consideration of constructing an OLF in Eastern North Carolina.

Leaders opposed

MARGARET FISHER

The day U.S. Navy officials came to Hertford for a public hearing on a proposed landing airstrip, agricultural commissioner Steve Troxler released a letter to the Navy urging not to locate in Washington County.

Troxler told Navy Secretary Donald Winter in the letter that "North Carolina has lost 300,000 acres of forest and farmland since 2003 and has led the nation in farm loss for two years straight."

He recommended that the Navy find a more suitable site than Washington County, the Navy's preferred site located near Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge.

The majority of land the Navy wants to take over is used to grow corn and soybeans, not only valuable feedstock, but from corn is derived one of the most viable gasoline alternatives — ethanol

Continued on page 10

Bridges studied for future work

MARGARET FISHER

Special panels have been placed around town by the N.C. Department of Transportation to mark locations around the S-bridge for surveying.

The markers will pinpoint exact locations in aerial photos to be taken this week, said Jason Smith, Division I locating engineer with DOT in Williamston.

About 12 panels have been placed in the area, including on Church and Grubb streets.

The photos will be matched up with specific coordinates in order to produce planning sheets for a new bridge to be constructed, Smith said.

DOT has earmarked \$15 million for the bridge to be rebuilt in 2013.

The survey will help determine whether to rebuild and widen the causeway or build a bridge all the way across the water.

The causeway portion of U.S. Highway 17 Business is listed in the Transportation Improvement Program as funded for planning and design, but not for construction.

tion.

Local DOT officials made a request to Raleigh in December for approval to combine the two projects.

"The project is going to be so similar that there's no need to have two projects," said Sterling Baker, DOT division maintenance engineer in Edenton.

In another bridge project, the 1965 southbound Perquimans high-rise bridge is slated to be resurfaced in a process called hydrodemolition.

The project, estimated to cost as much as \$1.5 million, will include removing the top layer of concrete down to the first layer of rebar by a high pressure water process and resurface with an overlay of concrete, said John Abel, division bridge maintenance engineer in Williamston.

An inspection of the bridge was completed last Wednesday. In the inspection, the underside of the bridge was determined to be in good condition, making the bridge a good candidate for hydrodemolition, Abel said.

"The bridge, itself, is in really good shape in relation to its age," he said.

All the bridge joints will be replaced and debris will be vacuumed up in the process so that there is no spillage into the river.

DOT officials will pursue funding for the project, and no date has been determined for work to begin.



PHOTO BY MARGARET FISHER

Panels shaped like arrows are located around town by NCDOT to point out specific locations in relation to the S-bridge. The markers are being photographed from the air and will be used in planning for a new bridge.

Shoaf is Hertford planner, HHI chief

MARGARET FISHER

Brandon Shoaf's job is to make the town of Hertford an attractive and appealing place so businesses will want to relocate here and residents will want to stay.

Shoaf left a position as regional planner and rural planning and global positioning system coordinator for Albemarle Commission to become the town's planner and Historic Hertford Inc. coordinator.

The HHI position became vacant last fall when Wendy Jewett left. At the time, town counselors were debating whether to share the services of a planner with the county. They decided to combine the two positions into one with the stipulation that the HHI duties would focus on bringing business into town, rather than coordinating events.

Beginning Jan. 8, Shoaf, who has lived in Perquimans for three years, took on his new role.

One of his high priorities is to work on a pedestrian plan.

"I think there needs to be some kind of connection to the Recreation Center and the Food Lion," he said regarding a walkway/bikeway across U.S. Highway 17.

He's also begun working on revamping the town's zoning map, resolving snags in the code enforcement ordinance and formulating an overlay plan for the town's main gateway at Church Street and U.S. Highway 17.

The town is currently surveying residents as to what roads they would like to be paved with sidewalks. Besides sidewalks, sidewalk upgrades and multi-use trails are also beginning to be planned.

Shoaf serves in an advisory role for HHI, which is the town's Main Street Program. There are a good many businesses from outside the



Brandon Shoaf

town that have joined, he said.

"I think there are a lot of folks in town that should be a part that are not," he said.

HHI's goal is to increase business downtown while promoting a small-town atmosphere.

Shoaf said that he will seek a grant that will enable him to draw in business to the riverfront.

Prior to working at Albemarle Commission, Shoaf interned at the Regional Development Institute in Greenville and was a farm duty supervisor at Carolina Classic Catfish Farm in Ayden.

Shoaf graduated from the N.C. Rural Economic Development Center's Economic Development Institute and Georgia Tech's Economic Development Institute in 2006.

Hertford changes water rate schedule

MARGARET FISHER

Hertford town councilors agreed to set water rates in the extraterritorial jurisdiction in line with the town's minimum fee instead of county rates.

The county changed from a tiered rate to \$6 per 1,000 gallons for less than 20,000 gallons. But the town of Hertford charges a minimum fee of \$13.90 for up to 3,000 and \$5.32 per 1,000 gallons

above that.

So the town will be charging ETJ residents who are hooked up to the town's water system a minimum of \$13.90, regardless of whether households use one, two or three thousand gallons in a month.

The new charge will be reflected in the bill to be sent out in April and due in May, said Town Manager John Christensen.

WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 588, Low: 42
SHOWERS

FRIDAY
High: 60, Low: 40
SUNNY

SATURDAY
High: 65, Low: 50
MOSTLY SUNNY