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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

35 cents

Rayburn earns state honor
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Man injured in wreck Monday

CATHY WILSON
Editorial Assistant

A single vehicle accident Monday morning in Belvidere sent one man to Sentara Norfolk General via helicopter.

Trooper M. J. Kerrigan with the North Carolina Highway Patrol said Jose' Antonio Reyes, 38, of Corapeake was injured when the 2001 Ford pickup truck he was driving wrecked on Highway 37 around 8:16 a.m.

Traveling westbound, the truck rounded a curve when it ran off the roadway, overcorrected, rolled over crossing the center line, and landed in a ditch on the opposite side of the roadway. Reyes was not wearing a seat belt when the accident occurred.

Kerrigan said neither alcohol nor speed contributed to the accident.

Members of the Perquimans Volunteer Rescue Squad responded and transported Reyes to meet Nightingale, which landed at the Perquimans County Softball Fields in Winfall.

Belvidere/Chappel Hill Volunteer Fire Department assisted at the scene of the accident, and the Winfall volunteer firefighters helped coordinate Nightingale's landing on the ball field.

Hail from the chief



Ensign Christopher Pulliam, President George W. Bush, and father Scott Pulliam, a retired chief petty officer with the Coast Guard, pose for pictures following Ensign Pulliam's graduation from the United States Coast Guard Academy May 23. Ensign Pulliam, of Hertford, is a graduate of Perquimans County High School.

Pullian graduates from Coast Guard Academy

CATHY WILSON
Editorial Assistant

While most college graduations are memorable, Christopher Pulliam's commencement was especially poignant. Not only did he receive his commission as an officer in the United States Coast Guard from his father, but he met the president of the United States as well.

The 23-year-old Hertford resident graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy on May 23 in New London, Ct. He received his commission as ensign from his father, Scott Pulliam, a retired chief petty officer with the Coast Guard. President George W. Bush was also on stage and helped with the presentation as well.

"It was one of the most exciting moments of my life," said Pulliam. "Meeting the president was quite an honor, but having my dad there with me was very special. I could not have done this without the help of my parents."

The president congratulated Pulliam on

his accomplishments, and then posed with him for pictures.

Proud papa Scott also shook hands with the president, but completely forgot the commander-in-chief's presence when son Chris walked on stage.

"At that moment, all I could see was Chris, and I completely stepped right in front of the president of the United States to hug my son," said Scott. "This was Chris's day, and even the president being there couldn't take that away from my son. It was an awesome experience."

After taking pictures, the president gave Scott a Texas style slap on the back, saying "God bless you and God bless your son," words that impressed both Pulliam men immensely.

Pulliam graduated with honors in 2002 from Perquimans County High School. With his father stationed at the Elizabeth City Coast Guard base for 10 years, Chris grew up admiring the search and rescue teams flown out of the local base. As a young boy, he dreamed of becoming a pilot and even considered joining

the Air Force. But, after attending a religious retreat as a teenager, he decided he'd rather fly to save lives than take lives, so he set his sights on the Coast Guard. His goal is to one day attend flight school and pilot helicopters for search and rescue missions for the Coast Guard.

Competition getting into the academy is tight, and Christopher was concerned his College Board scores weren't high enough for entrance. He didn't believe a student from a small town in North Carolina had a chance of being accepted. Anxious, he threw his academy application into the trashcan.

"It got close to the deadline for sending in that application," remembers his mother, Gina, "so I asked him where the application was so we could send it in. He told me he didn't think he would get in, so he threw it away. We made him dig in the garbage can and find that application."

He did apply, and his concerns rang true when he first received a rejection letter. But a few weeks later, he received

a second letter asking him to attend the Naval Academy Prep School to help him prepare for the Coast Guard Academy, the smallest of the nation's four military academies.

Pulliam attended the Navel Academy Prep School for a year where he learned study skills that helped him complete the next four years in the academy, which earned him a degree in government. The first two years were especially tough. Twenty-one semester credits are required during the first two semesters, as well as taking part in a competitive sport.

Even though the 6'3" Pulliam ran cross-country, played baseball, and competed on the school's hunter safety team in high school, he chose to row in college. He served as a member of the academy's men's crew team for four years.

Ensign Pulliam is currently attending boarding officer school in South Carolina. He is assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Dependable and is scheduled for deployment to the Caribbean next month.

Board taps new super, chair

SUSAN HARRIS

It was a night of change at the regular school board meeting Monday night, with a new superintendent sworn in and a chairman and vice chairman chosen for the coming year.

Dwayne Stallings, tapped several months ago to

replace retiring superintendent Kenneth Wells, was formally sworn in and presided over his first school board meeting.



Stallings

The meeting was held at Central School, which earlier hosted a reception in Stallings' honor.

Stallings' first order of business was to preside over the election of a chair and vice chair of the board for the coming year.



Nelson

Wallace Nelson was named chairman with the support of fellow members William Byrum, Gail Hill and Gloria Mason. Walter Leigh and Helen Shaw voted for Leigh for chair.

Nelson abstained.

Walter Leigh retained his post as vice chairman with votes from Byrum, Leigh, Shaw and Nelson. Hill backed Mason, who abstained.



Leigh

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 86, LOW: 36
ISOLATED T'STORMS

FRIDAY
HIGH: 88, LOW: 73
SCATTERED T'STORMS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 90, LOW: 73
SCATTERED T'STORMS

To our readers

No, it's not your imagination. This week's edition really is a little narrower.

We've converted to a smaller newsprint size, which we call the "web" for short.

The Perquimans Weekly is now printed on a 24-inch web — that's the width of two printed pages, side by side. Through last week, the newspaper was printed on a 25-inch web.

The change was made for three reasons: (1) It saves newsprint; (2) It saves costs; and (3) It saves trees. The change reflects the Cox Newspapers "Cox Cares" initiative, focusing on environmental issues. (See the web-link "Living Green" on Dailyadvance.com.)

The length of the newspaper is the same — 21 inches of print space, and the web conversion has not affected any content. If you have any questions, call or email us: 426-5728; pwpublisher@earthlink.net

Susan Harris
Editor & Publisher