

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

September 26, 2007

Vol. 75, No. 39 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

"News from Next Door"

35 cents

Burn ban off

Recent rains across the state allowed the N.C. Division of Forest Resources to lift its ban on open burning for all 100 counties effective Sept. 18.

Officials with the Division of Forest Resources decided to lift the burning ban because of a recent storm that dumped several inches of rain across the state. While recent rainfall and lower temperatures have reduced the fire danger, this small amount of precipitation has not ended drought conditions the state is facing. Residents should be especially careful as meteorological conditions could cause North Carolina to continue having warmer temperatures and below normal rainfall during the upcoming fire season. Officials are warning that if the drought continues, and there is an increase in the number of wildfires, the ban on burning could be reinstated.

NCDFR officials are issuing burning permits again. If people are going to burn, they need to take precautions because fires can still escape, causing catastrophic disasters.

Based on North Carolina's open burning laws, the Division of Forest Resources reminds those who plan to burn to get a permit and follow prescribed safety measures, including monitoring wind conditions, burning in late afternoon when conditions are typically less windy and more humid, clearing a perimeter around the burn area with a shovel or hoe, keeping tools such as a shovel and steel rake and a water hose handy, and burning only natural vegetation.

Burning household trash or any other man-made materials is illegal. Trash should be hauled to a convenience center.

Consider alternatives to burning. Some yard debris such as leaves and grass may be more valuable if composted.

Stay with your fire until it is completely out. In North Carolina, human carelessness leads to more wildfires than any other cause. In fact, debris burning is the No. 1 cause of wildfires in North Carolina.



Perquimans still on OLF site list

SUSAN HARRIS
Editor & Publisher

Stan Winslow has some disturbing news for those who thought siting an outlying landing field in Perquimans County for naval jet use was no longer an issue: We're still on the list of possibilities.

"I think we're more in the target now than we have been in a while," Winslow said last week after attending a meeting in Raleigh concerning an OLF in North Carolina.

The chairman of the No OLF Committee in Perquimans County, Winslow traveled to the state capital with County Manager Bobby Darden and fellow No OLF Committee member Matt Peeler to attend a meeting of the Governor's OLF Study Group and meet with state officials.

Winslow said the group was formed in 2004 and met a lot at that time, but mostly to discuss the controversial site in Washington and Beaufort counties. The governor charged the group with working cooperatively with the navy to find additional sites in North Carolina that might be suitable. At last week's meeting, what Winslow described as news that took practically everyone in the room by surprise was announced: The group suggested that two sites in Gates County and two sites in Camden County be added to the possible sites for an OLF.

But several factors make Winslow

think county residents shouldn't let the announcement of new possible sites make them comfortable. He sees Perquimans as a site that the navy would find attractive.

Adm. David Anderson, Atlantic Fleet Forces Commander, was the navy spokesperson in Raleigh. He told the group that encroachment has nothing to do with the need for a new OLF, that the navy needs more capacity. Winslow said that has not been a factor before. Development in Virginia Beach and noise have been factors discussed before.

Also, Anderson said that with only two jet squadrons going to Cherry Point, there is no longer a need for an OLF there. The Washington/Beaufort site was chosen because it is halfway between Oceana in Virginia Beach and Cherry Point. With no need to support Cherry Point, Winslow said Perquimans may become the choice to support Oceana.

"It's very much back on the table," Winslow said of Site A, which swallows the Whiteston community.

Also, the proposed sites in Gates and Camden are just that — proposals. The sites were forwarded to navy officials, who will decide whether to place the sites on the final list of possibilities within 60 days. Winslow added that the sites proposed by Virginia officials have likewise not been officially added to the list of possible sites.

In response to the renewed interest in Perquimans, Winslow has reactivated the local No OLF Committee, which will meet tomorrow night.

The Governor's OLF Study Group is planning a trip to Northeastern North Carolina to learn how the OLF would affect the area and speak with residents here. Winslow said once the date of that meeting is known, the No OLF Committee will hold a public meeting about a week in advance of the visit to discuss a plan of action, providing the county gets sufficient notification. He said that county residents must be prepared to show how the OLF will negatively affect the area.

That shouldn't be too difficult. While the navy's study, based on the 2000 census, showed that 575 people in 259 homes, plus churches and businesses, would be displaced by an OLF, the county's updated numbers put that number at 787 people in 355 homes. Hundreds of other residents would be able to retain their homes, but would be in areas with restrictions placed on their properties — and deafening noise. Close to 20,000 acres of farmland, some of the richest in the county, would be taken out of production and off the tax books. The communities of Whiteston and Nicanor would effectively be gone, and family farms handed down through generations would lie fallow.

Fire siren to sound again

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

No, it's not an air raid. We're not being bombed.

The siren you hear blowing in town is the renovated siren used by the Hertford Fire Department.

Years ago, local firefighters were summoned to respond to fires by the sound of a loud fire siren blowing. There was a long and short whistle code that gave firefighters a clue about what kind of fire they were responding to, and sometimes, even where. And every Saturday at high noon, the siren wailed long and loud.

Over the years, the siren was disabled when the transmitter was moved from the old ice plant off Grubb Street to the county's tower in Winfall. Firefighters are notified of fires now by a paging system. Today's firefighters, still a volunteer brigade, wear radios that alert them when a fire call is received at Central Communications. They know whether they're responding to a fire, an accident, a gas leak, electrical problems, a fire alarm or another type of emergency situation that requires their training and equipment, and where they'll be going before they arrive at the station.

While they will continue to be notified by pagers, members of the fire department wanted the old siren back in service as well.

"That's the way it was back when I joined 30 years ago," remembers Robert Reed, fire chief. "Now we're paged out with pagers, but we want the public to know when we have a fire call."

Todd Tilley is working to getting the siren back up and running. Parts have been ordered.

"Hopefully, it will be back up in two to three weeks," he added.

The siren will be tied into the radio system being used by the department. The siren will sound whenever the department needs to respond to a call, and will sound on Saturdays at noon.

Pink Turtle suns in downtown Hertford

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

There's a new turtle in town, and it's pink!

The Pink Turtle of Historic Hertford Fine Jewelry and Gifts, Inc. celebrates with its grand opening this weekend in the former shop occupied by Belinda's of Hertford. The shop that sports a fresh new look opens on Saturday from 2-6 p.m. and begins its regular hours Oct. 1.

Rachel and Stephen Gunther first bought the downtown property and then decided to open the specialty shop. Its fresh new look includes a distinctive pink accent wall accompanying a black and white tiled entrance way.

The reason for the name is obvious.

"The turtle is so important to the town of Hertford," Rachel said. "We decided to go with a fun twist on it."

The shop carries many of the same lines of fine jewelry previously stocked, but has added two new designer lines including Dev Valencia and Alwand Vahan. Silver, crystal and pewter gifts are available as are Knork flatware, Gourmet Grillware, and Wilton Armetale.

"We're still carrying some of the more popular items that were found here before, but we are expanding those lines," she added.

Perquimans Weekly Photo by CATHY WILSON

RACHEL GUNTHER UNPACKS ONE of several styles of Seiko clocks offered at The Pink Turtle of Historic Hertford Fine Jewelry and Gifts, Inc. located at 139 North Church Street. Grand opening is Saturday from 2-6 p.m. The new shop opens full time Oct. 1.

Gunther also stocks baby gifts, picture frames, men's items, jewelry boxes, handbags that can be monogrammed, shoes and gifts, as well Seiko clocks.

Seiko and Bulova watches are also available as is a small line of collegiate gifts highlighting Duke, UNC, NC State and Wake Forest.

The shop's bridal registry is still a popular ser-



vice offered, and Manager Anita Garrett encourages brides to set up private consultations after hours.

Store hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. — 5 p.m. For more information, call 426-7404.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 83
LOW: 66
SCATTERED T'STORMS

FOOTBALL FRIDAY
HIGH: 85
LOW: 61
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 78
LOW: 59
SUNNY