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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

35 cents

Voters flock to register, change parties

National, local races spark interest

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

New voter registrations here since Jan. 1 total 459, and more than 100 county voters have changed their party affiliation in time for the May 6 primary election.

According to Eula Mae Forbes, director of the Perquimans County Board of Elections, 105 voters in the county have switched from Democrat, Republican, or unaffiliated. Friday was the deadline for switching parties and to register to vote before the primary election.

Five Democrats switched to Republican and 15 changed to unaffiliated.

Sixteen Republicans switched to Democrat while 48 jumped to unaffiliated status.

Thirteen unaffiliated voters in the county switched to Democrat and eight switched to Republican.

While choosing the Democratic presidential nominee is drawing more voters to change parties in order to vote their choice in the primary statewide, local elections here are stirring up interest as well.

Four Democrats and one Republican candidates are vying to run on their party's ticket seeking three seats on the county's board of commissioners.

Republican Sue Weimar is seeking re-election and is unopposed on her party's primary ballot. Her name will automatically be placed on the ballot for the November general election.

Incumbents Mack Nixon and Shirley Wiggins are being challenged by newcomers Tommy Riddick and Neil Trueblood for the Democratic ballot. Voters will get to vote for one, and the top three vote takers will run in the general election in November.

Voters who have registered as Democrats will receive a democratic ballot to vote on in the primary and registered Republicans will receive the republican ballot. Those registered as unaffiliated may choose to vote on either the democratic or republican ballot.

There are also seven people vying for three school board seats in the May 6 election. The school board election is nonpartisan and each voter may vote for one candidate. The top three vote takers will be elected and take office in June.

One-stop absentee early voting starts April 17 and continues until May 3. One stop absentee early voting in Perquimans County will be conducted at the elections office located at 601A South Edenton Road Street (the Extension building).

SIGNS OF SPRING



SPRING IS TRYING TO burst out all over despite occasional cooler days and nights. Ann Goodwin and her neighbors work in their yards and even sweep the street gutters to help keep their neighborhood clean and pretty underneath the blossoming dogwood trees on Highland Park.

PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Second swap shop opens

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

When you take your trash to the convenience center, you can also pick up a bargain or two.

Perquimans County's second Community Swap Shop opened April 5 at the U.S. 17-south convenience center between Hertford and Edenton. The first swap shop in the county opened several years ago at the trash collection center located on Center Hill Highway west of town.

Brad Gardner, convenience sites manager for Albemarle Regional Health Services, said the second swap shop was built because the first one proved to be so successful.

"We had several requests for another one," he added.

Residents may donate or pick up (at no charge) usable household goods, tools, building materials, sports equipment, toys and tabletop small appliances at the swap shop.

But, you can't swap clothes, tires, chemicals, liquids, mattresses, box springs, broken items, pets or plants.

Perquimans County funded the shed, which cost approximately \$1,500 for materials, movement and signage.



Perquimans Weekly photo by CATHY WILSON

THE COUNTY'S SECOND COMMUNITY Swap Shop opened April 5 at the U.S. 17-south convenience center between Hertford and Edenton. Residents may donate or pick up (at no charge) usable household goods, tools, building materials, sports equipment, toys and tabletop small appliances at the swap shop.

The swap shop was built by the Chowan Center of the College of The Albemarle's construction and technology class including Troy Capehart, Marcus Rawls, Emmanuel Matthews, Cindy Evans, Sandra Taylor and Mark Musante. The instructors were Michael Parityka and Chuck Haskett.

Gardner explained that the swap shop is primarily a waste reduction tool that encourages residents to reuse rather than dispose of useful items.

He pointed out, however, that using the swap shop can also save the county

money on tipping fees. It cost the county approximately \$62 a ton to dispose of the county's trash, he said.

"For every pound of trash we keep out of the landfill, we save three cents," Gardner said.

The Swap Shop is open during regular convenience center daylight hours: Monday-Saturday 7 a.m.-7 p.m., Sundays 1-6 p.m., and closed on Thursdays.

For more information, or if a civic group or club would like a presentation on this or other local waste reduction efforts, call Gard-

Emergency call system in place

Perquimans County has taken a significant step in upgrading its ability to communicate critical emergency information to its residents through an automated telephone message delivery system.

While local land line phone numbers have been automatically included in the system's database, residents are urged to register their unlisted or cell phone numbers so they can be included in the event of an emergency.

Perquimans County's Emergency Notification System (PCENS), an automated telephone message delivery system, was activated in early October 2007. PCENS can quickly deliver a voice message to telephones throughout the county. This emergency notification service is being provided by FIRSTCALL Network, Inc.

PCENS will be activated and calls made to the affected area during emergencies in which there is a threat to life or property.

Examples of such emergencies include natural

Fuel prices affect local budgets

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

The rise in fuel prices is not only affecting your pocketbook, but it's impacting the budgets of local governments as well.

If prices continue to rise as expected through the end of this fiscal year (June 30), local governments will go over budget in the fuel category.

It takes a lot of fuel to keep those big yellow school buses on the road, so Perquimans County School System has been hit the hardest this year. In addition, they also face added costs for heating and cooling the high school's new 27,105 square foot gym that opened in March. The school's old gym didn't have heating or air conditioning.

The old gym will become the new media center so providing heating and cooling for that facility will add to the costs as well.

According to Brenda Lassiter, the schools' public information officer, rising fuel prices is putting the squeeze on the local school district's budget.

"Though the school year has not ended, administrators say fuel prices have depleted their annual budget for bus transportation and/or heating and cooling," she said.

The school system budgeted \$189,000 for fuel this fiscal year and had spent \$149,000 of that by the end of March with three months left till the end of the fiscal year.

"If rates of fuel remain steady at the current price, it is expected that the school district's budget shortfall in this area will be \$10,000," Lassiter added.

Since the system does not have an underground or above ground tank, the school system must fill a fuel truck with 1200 gallons of diesel every three days to fuel their 30-bus fleet which typically gets 6-8 miles to

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WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 72 Low: 53
SUNNY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 80 Low: 59
SUNNY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 75 Low: 58
ISOLATED T'S/TORMS



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