

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

35 cents

OSHA looks into HPD issues

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A complaint alleging safety or health hazards has been filed against the town and its police department.

The town's notice is dated Sept. 8, notifying them that a complaint was filed through the Division of Occupational Safety and Health with the North Carolina Department of Labor. The complaint alleges that police officers aren't provided adequate/appropriate safety gear such as ballistic vests and riot control gear. The complaint also states that insufficient staff is available to provide back up support in the event of a crisis, and that employees are subjected to hostile/unsafe working environments as a result of insufficient staffing.

Town Manager John Christensen said Diedrik Lewis, a safety compliance officer with OSHA, visited the town last week for an inspection of the police department. Diedrik, he said, looked at equipment throughout the department.

Christensen said that while the town has not received a final report, the officer indicated to him that the officer would not recommend any action be taken against the town.

Diedrik, contacted by email, responded, saying that it is a continuing open investigation and that he could not comment on it.

The complaint stems from a situation that occurred Aug. 31 when two females were stabbed on Stokes Drive during the early morning hours. A lone town police officer was on duty at the time, and when he responded, he eventually faced an angry mob of about 80 persons, some throwing rocks and bottles.

The officer called for back up and one county deputy responded as well as two Chowan County deputies.

Police who responded drew their weapons in an effort to control the scene so that emergency medical personnel could respond and help the injured, including a 14-year-old.

Due to high turnover, the town police department is down to four officers with one of those out on sick leave. The department also does not have a chief.

The town manager is handling administrative matters for the department, and the county sheriff's department is answering calls when Hertford has no one on duty.

REMEMBERING 9/11



Photo courtesy PERQUIMANS COUNTY SCHOOLS

STUDENTS AT CENTRAL SCHOOL observe the anniversary of Sept. 11, 2001, the date of the terrorist attacks against the United States that killed people in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania. Most students at the school were not born on that date, which brought so much horror to America.

Town starts chief talks

Interviews set for this week; Christensen responds to officer claims

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Hertford Town Manager John Christensen is expected to begin conducting interviews for a new police chief this week.

Letters have been sent to eight candidates for the position. Interviews conducted by a committee were slated to begin Sept. 15.

Both Christensen and town council have been criticized recently for taking so long to name an official police chief following the resignation of former Chief Dale Vanscoy who left in March to join the Edenton Police Department.

Former sergeant Brian Riddick was named interim police chief immediately after Vanscoy left. After nearly six months of serving as interim chief, Riddick also left. He joined the county sheriff's department amid concerns of lack of support from town management. He also voiced concerns over working extensive hours without compensation.

The town's police department is now down to four officers. Their only sergeant is out on sick leave, leaving just three patrolmen to cover the town. Sheriff's deputies are answering calls when no police officer is on duty.

In explaining why the town had not named a chief since March, Christensen said Riddick was a strong candidate for the job, but lacked a complete advanced certification, one of several requirements the town needs in a chief. Because Riddick didn't meet all of the town's requirements, Christensen said Riddick's best opportunity to secure the position was by working and showing town officials he could do the job.

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Students encouraged to graduate

State urges graduation as success tool

SPREE is no longer just a colorful candy to first graders at Central School.

Each student received a pack of SPREE to help them remember the importance of high school graduation. SPREE is an acronym for Students Pledge 2 Reach Education Excellence.

"Graduate from high school" was the message delivered by Superintendent Dr. Dwayne Stallings, school board members, County Manager Bobby Darden, Minister's Council Chairman Bishop Landon B. Mason, Winfall Mayor Fred Yates and Herford



Photo courtesy PERQUIMANS COUNTY SCHOOLS

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LEADERS participated in Graduation Awareness Week at Central School last week. Graduation Awareness is a statewide initiative aimed at encouraging high school graduation to first graders.

Mayor Sid Eley.

Sept. 7-13 was proclaimed Graduation Awareness Week in North Carolina by

Gov. Mike Easley. High school graduation is a minimum requirement for successful adulthood today,

and yet, approximately one-third of the North Carolina students who enter high school each fall will not graduate within four years.

This creates an epidemic that will have a lasting impact on the future of the country. Research shows that students who drop out of school make a "million-dollar mistake" - the difference in lifetime earnings between the average high school dropout and a bachelor's degree recipient.

Community leaders recently signed a resolution, pledging energies to ensure successful academic performance and school engagement for students in Perquimans County. They delivered this message, targeting the class of 2020 - current first-graders at Perquimans Central School.

Shamrock's Bingo opens on Ocean Highway

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Shamrock's Bingo offers an evening of entertainment with a chance of winning a cash jackpot.

Located in the new MCS Shopping Center at 220G Ocean Highway, the beach bingo opened Aug. 6. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held Saturday by the Chamber of Commerce.

Owned by William and Nancy Go, Shamrock's Bingo offers many different ways to play Bingo as well as the supplies needed to enjoy the game including markers, gluers and other Bingo necessities. Free coffee is available to those who enjoy playing the game, along with snacks and sodas.

Nancy, who also man-



Perquimans Weekly photo by CATHY WILSON

THE PERQUIMANS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE held a ribbon cutting Saturday afternoon at Shamrock's Bingo, a new business located at 220G Ocean Highway in the new MCS Shopping Center. Owned by Nancy and William Go, they are open nightly except Thursday from 6 p.m. until midnight.

ages the facility, said beach bingo differs from normal bingo by allowing the players to "come and go" anytime.

"You can play as many cards as you like," she added.

No admission is charged, and players pay by the num-

ber of Bingo sheets played. So far, the largest jackpot has been \$150, she said.

Smoking is allowed while playing. "Smoke-eaters" have been installed to help clear the air for those who don't smoke.

In a Bingo parlor, one might think the name Shamrock refers to the luck of the Irish in playing the game. But, Shamrock's is actually named after Go's American Eskimo Spitz dog, a beloved pet who received many awards from police in helping protect his neighborhood before he died. His picture and attributes hang behind the counter in his memory.

Shamrock's Bingo is open every night except Thursday from 6 p.m. until midnight. For more information, call 482-7915.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 80 LOW: 66
FEW SHOWERS

FRIDAY
HIGH: 77 LOW: 63
FEW SHOWERS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 76 LOW: 63
MOSTLY CLOUDY

