

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

January 7, 2009

Vol. 77, No. 1 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

"News from Next Door"

35 cents

Winfall man jailed for death threats

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A Winfall man is being held in Albemarle District Jail without bond after allegedly threatening to kill a local magistrate.

According to the Hertford Police Department, Clifton Wood, 29, of 414 Catherine Street, started the new year by making threats against Chief Magistrate Billy Winslow during legal processing on charges stemming from a traffic stop. Wood reportedly told Winslow he was going to kill him when he gets out of jail.

Police say Wood's vehicle was stopped around noon on Jan. 1 near Mead's Store off Grubb Street Extended by the North Carolina Highway Patrol for a traffic violation. During the stop, police saw Wood clutching a toy in his shirt pocket. Police discovered that the plastic toy turtle action figure hid what is believed to be "crack" cocaine inside the turtle's shell.

When the suspect arrived at the police department, police found a stainless steel straight razor on the seat near Wood.

Once in the magistrate's office for processing on charges of possession of a Schedule II drug and carrying a concealed weapon, police say Wood became very loud, disruptive and vulgar, resulting in a contempt charge. The magistrate reportedly ordered Wood confined in jail for 30 days and fined \$100.

While explaining the contempt charge, Wood reportedly told Winslow he was going to kill him when he gets out of jail.

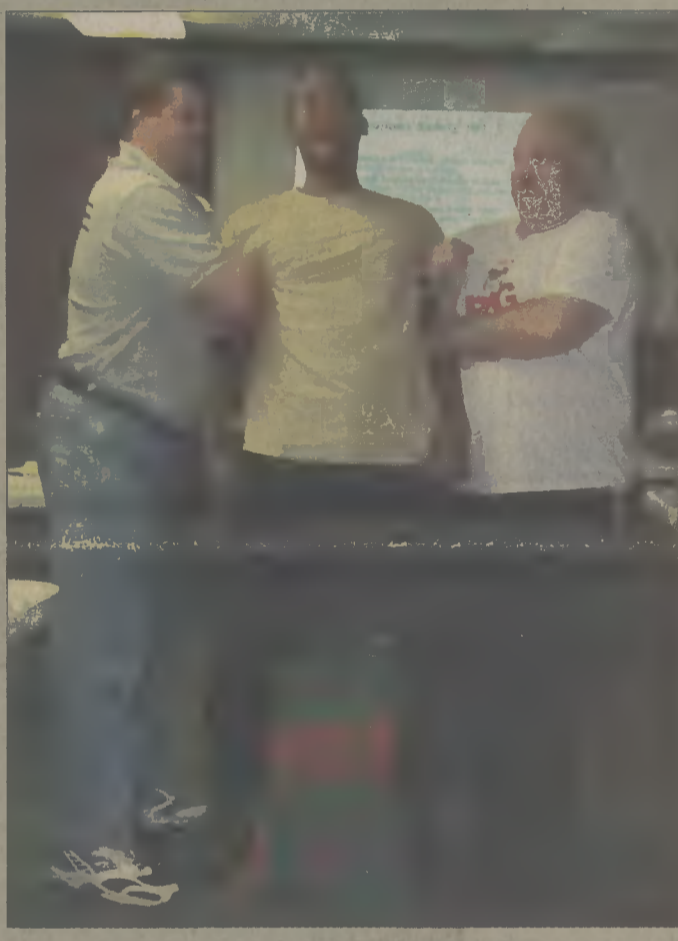
Wood was immediately transported to jail.

Electrifying



Perquimans Weekly photos by CATHY WILSON

OFFICER ERIC PRIEBE WITH the Hertford Police Department goes down on his knees after being tazed during a recent training exercise (top right). The Hertford officers now carry tazers which incapacitate those shot for just a few seconds, giving the officers time to handcuff a suspect, get them safely into a patrol car and away from others who might be in danger. Each time a tazer is fired, an informational trail is created that will allow the chief to know when the tazing took place, the duration of the shock delivered and other pertinent information. Before being allowed to carry a tazer, each officer had to experience it first hand by being tazed for a full five seconds. Tazing sends an electrical charge through the person shot. After the seconds-long charge stops, those shot most often collapse as their muscles react to the electrical stimulation. Hertford Police Chief Joe Amos said tazers can help officers avoid using deadly force in some situations, increasing safety for officers, those they are trying to apprehend, and those in the area.



Town store robbed

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Hertford Hardware was broken into Dec. 28 at 2:27 a.m. with over \$1,000 in chain saws reported stolen.

Two of the chain saws were recovered immediately afterwards when police found them on the ground beside the Embarq building on Grubb Street.

Hertford Police Chief Joe Amos said he and his wife were outside walking their dog on Market Street when the break-in alarm sounded. Amos spotted a suspect carrying a chain saw running across the Hertford Baptist Church parking lot and down Market Street.

Amos, dressed in shorts, tee-shirt, baseball hat and dock shoes, gave chase and radioed his pursuit to Officer Melissa Kight who was responding to the burglary call. Amos said he lost sight of the suspect when he ran behind some residences.

Police believe the thieves entered the hardware store, located on Church Street, through a back window. Investigation is continuing.

Anyone with information regarding the break-in is urged to contact the police department at 426-5587. Callers may remain anonymous.

Woman steals vehicle

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A 20-year-old homeless woman has been charged in connection with the theft of a vehicle from a Snug Harbor residence Dec. 29.

According to the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department, Crystal Meny is charged with motor vehicle theft and is being held in Albemarle District Jail under \$5,000 secured bond following the Dec. 29 incident.

Deputies were notified around 3:14 a.m. that someone stole a 1998 Jeep Cherokee from a residence at 249 Dogwood Drive.

Sheriff Eric Tilley said Sgt. Kendall Harrell responded to the scene and met the vehicle traveling on Snug Harbor Road. Harrell stopped the vehicle and found Meny behind the wheel. She was the only occupant of the car, police said.

Tilley said Meny apparently tried to enter the residence first by jiggling the door handle, and when she couldn't get in the house, she apparently checked out the car and saw that the keys were left in the vehicle. Meny was not legally allowed on the property, he added.

"The property owner had some type of restraining order in effect," he said.

County manager reviews accomplishments, expectations

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A new year brings thoughts of past accomplishments along with expectations for the future.

County Manager Bobby Darden was asked what he feels was accomplished here in 2008, what did not get accomplished, and what the county can look forward to in 2009.

Basically the economy has and will impact all three categories.

Darden said completing two school projects, beginning the process of bringing a seafood industrial park into the county's commerce center, honoring the county's veterans, and starting a shoreline stabilization project behind the recreation center were all high points of 2008.

The county completed renovations and additions to the high school to the tune of \$14 million over several years. After years of planning and two years of construction, the project was completed with the dedication of the school's new gym and opening of the renovated media center.

The project, he said, was financed with \$11 million in low-interest USDA Rural Development loans and \$3 million from county and

school reserve funds as well as North Carolina Educational Lottery proceeds.

In addition, the county funded the completion of HVAC improvements at Hertford Grammar School with a cool \$1.7 million from county reserve funds.

Darden feels that the letter of intent signed to create a partnership with the state's North Carolina Seafood Industrial Park Authority to construct a marine-based industrial park within the county's Commerce Centre is a big step forward in economic development.

The county has identified some 80 acres on the site that could be used for the park that state officials believe could bring six boat builders to the area and create approximately 400 jobs.

Twenty-six sites from 11 counties along the coast and waterways were considered for the new marine industrial park. The Perquimans site was selected because of things in place such as the county's advance planning work, location, water and transportation access, utilities and site certification.

Darden also believes honoring the county's veterans by dedicating the new veterans monument on the courthouse green was also a highlight of 2008.

In addition, the county began a shoreline stabilization project in the commerce park behind the recreation center that will protect the county's property and ultimately allow more public access and low-impact recreation on that site.

While much was accomplished last year, Darden says one project uncompleted stands out: not funding the roof replacement at Hertford Grammar School.

"The slow economy, specifically land transfer tax revenues, has delayed this project," he said. "Land transfer tax receipts are down 75 percent from three years ago."

Looking to 2009, Darden is optimistic about the county finalizing the operating agreement for the seafood industrial park as well as possibly receiving substantial funding from a federal economic stimulus package for infrastructure and facility projects.

On the downside, Darden is realistic when it comes to the economy and the impact it is making on local governments.

"The slow economy in 2009 will continue to impact county revenues and make the county's 2009-2010 budget the most challenging in years," he said.

Hybrid car to visit Hertford

The new North Carolina Public Power plug-in hybrid electric vehicle will arrive in Hertford Jan. 7 and will tour the town until Jan. 13. The vehicle is one of the latest energy efficient advances among cars and can achieve approximately 100 miles per gallon of gasoline—roughly double the normal mileage of a standard Toyota Prius.

"We are delighted to show the citizens of Hertford what NC Public Power is doing to promote energy efficiency," said Mayor Sid Eley. "This new plug-in hybrid electric vehicle is an excellent way to demonstrate to drivers how much they can save on gasoline."

The vehicle will be on display at the town's municipal building located at 114 W. Grubb Street. Anyone wishing to see this vehicle or request demonstrations may contact Town Manager John Christensen at 426-1969.

The NC Public Power plug-in hybrid electric vehicle debuted in mid-September. Prior to its most recent appearances
CONTINUED on page 8

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 53 LOW: 32
CLOUDY/WINDY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 48 LOW: 33
SUNNY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 54 LOW: 43
PARTLY CLOUDY

