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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Resident Roy Reed celebrates 90th birthday pg. 4

Middle schoolers win in state patriotism essay contest pg. 10

Recreation department teams celebrate victorious seasons pg. 7

MARCH 4 - MARCH 10, 2009

"News from Next Door"

35 cents

Stimulus funding sought

County seeks money to upgrade water treatment plant

CATHY WILSON
STAFF WRITER

Perquimans County is seeking economic stimulus funding for two drinking water projects.

County Manager Bobby Darden said funding is being sought to upgrade the county's water treatment plant in Winfall and build a water line to the Pasquotank reverse osmosis water plant currently under construction within a half mile of Perquimans County.

The funding is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The North Carolina Drinking Water State Revolving Fund is expected to receive \$67 million from that act for



Darden

"shovel ready" drinking water infrastructure projects.

"Our consulting engineers, Diehl and Phillips, had about 90 percent of the design work completed on these two projects when we first learned of possible stimulus funding for "shovel ready" projects," wrote Darden in an email.

"They completed the design and have submitted them to the state for review and approval. If we had not been far along in the design, these projects would not be eligible since we have to have state approval of the plans by March 31 to be eligible."

Upgrading the water treatment plant in Winfall is estimated to cost \$4 million. The 34,000 ft. water line to neighboring Pasquotank County is estimated to cost \$2 million.

The county is submitting the application for the funds not knowing whether or not funding will come in the form of grants or loans, or what loan terms and rates might be.

"In my opinion, if we cannot get substantial grant funding or very favorable loan terms, we may be better off seeking normal private financing options," Darden added.

Upgrading the water treatment plant would entail re-

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Historic Site opens for season



PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

The Newbold-White House opened March 3 for the season. The historic home is open Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Self-guided tours are available when docents are not on duty Mondays and Sundays. Their first lecture of the season will be held March 10: "Native Americans-The Beginnings of Muscadine Viticulture" by Marjorie Rayburn. For more information, call 426-7567.



Town moves to improve or demolish area houses

CATHY WILSON
STAFF WRITER

It's a slow process, but Hertford officials are methodically chipping away at the number of substandard houses in town.

Out of 43 houses identified, 24 have either been improved or demolished since the town developed its most recent list of substandard housing five years ago. Of the remaining 19 properties on the list, two are currently being processed for code enforcement.

Houses located at 309 Dobbs Street and 324 King Street are currently in the legally-required red tape pipeline that will eventually lead to either improvement or demolition.

The two-story house at 309 Dobbs Street was inspected by the building inspector, and a report of his findings was posted on the front door of the house in February. Property owner Louise Reid has 60 days to respond to the notice.

The smaller house at 324 King Street, owned by Sidney Parsons Jr. and Inell Guess, has also been inspected by the building inspector with his findings turned over to the town's attorney for processing.

Town Manager John Christensen explained that the process to demolish an abandoned building in town is long. The town budgets about \$12,000 annually to further the cause. With an average case costing the town between \$4 — \$6,000, only a little can be done each year.

"Of course, if the owner won't improve the house, our goal is to demolish the house, place a lien on the property, and recover the cost of demolition from the owner," Christensen said.

The town is currently trying to collect funds from two owners whose properties have already been demolished.

The house at 309 Market Street, owned by William T. Davis, was declared unfit for human habitation by the building inspector on April 19, 2007, Christensen said. On Aug. 13, 2007, council approved a resolution authorizing the removal of the home which was torn down by the town that October.

The owner was billed in November 2007 and a lien sent to the courts in February 2008. Davis was asked to pay the lien instead of facing foreclosure in April 2008.

The complaint for judgement was filed in May 2008 with the owners served by June 2008.

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Hearing on banning euthanasia by gas nets strong local reactions

Animal lovers line up on both sides of bill

CATHY WILSON
STAFF WRITER

A proposed law banning euthanasia by gas in animal shelters is the subject of a legislative committee hearing today in Raleigh.

Davie's Law, a proposed bill that would provide for humane euthanasia by injection in animal shelters throughout the state, will be discussed today (March 4) in the House of Representatives' Agriculture Committee. Rep. Annie Mobley, who represents Perquimans County in the house, is a member of that committee.

The proposed law is named after a puppy, Davie, who was gassed in an animal shelter elsewhere in the state, but survived and was later

found alive in a plastic bag thrown in a dumpster along with the bodies of other puppies who did not survive the gassing. As a result, Davie's cause was eventually taken up by the North Carolina Coalition for Humane Euthanasia and other groups to spur the new law.

Currently, North Carolina has 32 animal shelters, including the Tri-County shelter which serves Perquimans, Chowan, and Gates counties, that still primarily use carbon monoxide gas to euthanize unwanted animals. Another 63 shelters in the state have already changed primarily to lethal injection.

Animal lovers in Perquimans are firing up the internet, sending emails to garner support for the proposed law which has been introduced into both the House and Senate. Both bodies have assigned the proposed law to committees.

"It is time to stop the gassing, that's all. It is barbaric," wrote Andrea Boone in an email to this newspaper. "It is a black eye for these three counties and bad publicity, too."

Lois Schneck, a new board member for the Perquimans SPCA and owner of The Sound Pet in Edenton, has worked on a "grass roots campaign" in support of the proposed bill for several weeks.

"We have made great progress towards getting this bill passed," she stated. "We have collected close to 200 signatures on a petition in my store. The first installment has been sent to the American Humane Association. It's going to take still more effort, but I am confident that this bill will pass."

Actually, there are two bills that have been introduced in the

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Euthanasia takes toll on shelter workers

CATHY WILSON
STAFF WRITER



Mary Bass, director of the Tri-County Animal Shelter in Tyner which serves Perquimans, Chowan and Gates counties, plays with Little Bit, a Pomeranian mix female that was brought into the shelter two weeks ago.

Little Bit is spayed and housebroken and waiting for a good home that has no other animals.

Call the shelter at 221-8514.

Mary Bass plays God every day at work.

She's the one who decides which animals at the Tri-County Animal Shelter in Tyner live or die. Each day, she watches as animals are brought in from Perquimans, Chowan, and Gates counties, and dropped off with hopes of finding good homes for adoption. Photos of dogs and cats are placed on PetFinder, and ads are run in the local newspaper telling of each personality, encouraging others to find a place for them not only in their hearts but in their homes as well.

When that doesn't happen, the decision of what to do with the animal falls on Bass.

Rescue groups are contacted, and even many of the shelter technicians take animals home with them to adopt. Bass herself has five dogs, four cats, and one bird at home. Still, many animals eventually face death either in the shelter's gas chamber or by lethal injection.

For Bass, it's an emotional roller coaster that takes a ride

each day, even when she's on vacation. She is the only person at the shelter authorized to give the go-ahead for euthanasia.

"You don't take this job because you don't love animals," Bass said looking at a colorful cat curled up on her desk in the front office of the shelter. "We do love animals. It's very hard on us to put any of them down. But, I always tell my employees, you can love them, you can treat them, you can walk them...but just don't name the animals because it just makes it harder on yourself when and if the time comes."

Bass has worked with the shelter for the past 14 years. She knows the pain of becoming attached to the shelter animals and then having to put them down.

"My first rule is not to give them a name," she said. "If you name them, there is an automatic bond between you. If the animal comes in already named, then we'll keep the name and call the animal by his or her name."

It's not hard to become attached to the animals after car-

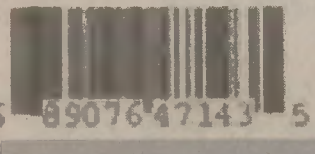
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WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 55 LOW: 41
MOSTLY SUNNY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 68 LOW: 46
FEW SHOWERS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 63 LOW: 46
MOSTLY CLOUDY



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