

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door" **RECEIVED** APRIL 15 - APRIL 21, 2009

FREE THIS WEEKEND BOAT SHOW

see page A3 for details

35 cents

Winfall will not sell plant

Documents point to planned sale

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

By Susan Harris
Editor

The town of Winfall is not trying to sell its water system to the county.

"Winfall is not trying to sell you anything," Mayor Fred Yates told commissioners last week.



Yates answered Perquimans Board of Commissioners' Chairman Mack Nixon.

Yates appeared before county commissioners April 6 after a recent newspaper article reported that Winfall was trying to sell its water system to the county, and County Manager Bobby Darden said the county didn't plan to buy it.

But that's not what documents obtained by this newspaper indicate.

In a Feb. 9 letter written by Yates to Sharon Edmundson, director of the Local Government Commission's fiscal management division, Yates stated: "...we are in negotiations with Perquimans County for them to totally take over our water system and all operations. Since we are currently purchasing our water from them, this would be an easy transition. We feel it would take a financial burden off of the town and at the same time save the customers money.

"Part of the negotiations would possibly include some form to cash considerations from the county for our water system. This would allow the water and sewer fund to reimburse the general fund for the loans given to this fund. The proposed takeover would take effect July 1, 2009."

The LGC is a division of the state treasurer's office.

Edmundson met with Winfall officials on Feb. 24 to discuss the town's dismal financial condition.

In a letter dated March 23 to Yates, Edmundson wrote: "Your decision to negotiate the sale of your water system and all its operations to Perquimans County effective

See WINFALL on Page A2

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 60 LOW: 45
MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 68 LOW: 49
SUNNY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 73 LOW: 55
PARTLY CLOUDY



Warriors arrest citizens for Relay



PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTOS BY CATHY WILSON

A little prayer could help! Galya Collins and Greg Clark, pastors of Hertford United Methodist Church and Hertford Baptist Church respectively, plead for "bail" after being "arrested" Saturday during the fun-filled jail-a-thon sponsored by the Woodland Warriors Relay for Life team. About a dozen folks from around the county were brought in, held in the makeshift cell in front of the courthouse annex building, and raised at least \$200 bail each before they were released. Organizers say the "prisoners" raised about \$2,500 to help fight cancer.



Above, The Woodland Warriors who held a bake and hot dog lunch sale Saturday did a brisk lunch business which included feeding some of the employees in front of the U.S. Highway 17 bridge.

At right, collecting coins to help flush away cancer Saturday were Patricia Cartwright and her daughter Casey. Patricia knows what donations to the Relay for Life can do. She is a cancer survivor after being diagnosed with melanoma in 2002.



Butterfield slim on stimulus details

Local school system projected to receive nearly \$800,000 in funds

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

While local school officials expect to receive federal stimulus funds for the school system, they haven't been told yet how to use it.

Congressman G.K. Butterfield announced recently that the schools in his district could see more than \$78 million in federal stimulus funding including funds for Perquimans County schools.

The Perquimans County School System is projected to receive \$344,961 in Title I funds and \$411,000 in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds. Half of the funding is expected to be distributed this spring, and the second installment is expected later this fall.

Title I is the largest federal elementary and secondary education program that authorizes federal aid to local schools for the education of disadvantaged students. The allocation formula primarily considers the number of children aged 5-17 in poor families and the state's level of per pupil spending for public K-12 education.

IDEA provides funding to states for the education of children with disabilities. The allocation formula considers the number of children receiving services and a district's relative poverty.

Superintendent Dr. Dwayne Stallings expects limitations on how Title I and IDEA funds can be spent, but



PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Congressman G.K. Butterfield spoke briefly last week to school administrators from northeastern North Carolina meeting at Perquimans County High School. He announced recently that the schools in his district could see more than \$78 million in federal stimulus funding including funds for Perquimans County schools.

hopes the funds can be used to help fill in funding gaps appearing in normal state allocations. He added that the funds can only be used for the next two years, and should be used on innovative projects or student development improvement programs that haven't been done before due to lack of funding.

"Of course, when the funding for those projects is gone, we have to pick up that cost," he said.

How and where to insert federal stimulus funds into the '09-10 school budget is just one of the issues facing school administrators.

Funding sources are not as robust as in the past, and the system has actually lost about 100 students, meaning less state funds as well.

The start of the 07-08 school year saw 1,802 students in the Perqui-

mans County school system. That number dropped to 1,711 the beginning of the 08-09 school year.

School officials believe the drop is due to families moving out of the area looking for work elsewhere.

And, school officials are waiting on the state's own budget approval which may affect class size as well as local funding.

"The economy is bleak right now. We recognize that funding sources are not as robust as before."

Stallings believes, however, that retirements and attrition will take care of any funding holes that might appear in the ongoing budget process, but notes that staff may be shifted depending on the needs.

The board will hold a work session at PCHS April 23 at 7 p.m., then approve a budget on April 27.

Wandering toddler found safe

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

A one-year-old toddler is safe after walking away from the home she was left in unattended Tuesday morning.

Hertford Police Chief Joe Amos said the little girl was left alone at 408 Meads Loop Road by her father, Kenny Felton. Felton, police said, left the sleeping child to visit with friends in another residence in Meads Trailer Park. The child apparently awoke while her father was gone and walked out the door barefoot, wearing only a tee shirt and a diaper.

Luckily, a neighbor saw the child walking around outside and took the child back inside her home, police said. When a family member could not be found, the neighbor carried the child to the child's grandmother.

Amos said police were notified around 8:40 a.m. after the mother returned home from taking an older sibling to school and stopping by a store on the way home. Felton tried to stop the mother from notifying police of the missing child, Amos said.

"They looked around for a while on their own before they called us," he added.

The child was unharmed even though the morning temperature was in the low 40s.

Police said Felton became belligerent during their investigation and would not cooperate with police.

Felton, 48, is charged with misdemeanor child abuse by neglect as well as resisting and obstructing a police investigation, Amos said. He was transported to Albemarle Regional Jail under a \$1,000 bond.

The Perquimans Department of Social Services was also notified, Amos added.

Group begins to market water-side campsites

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

Roanoke River Partners, Inc. (RRP) will market and take reservations for the county's three recreational water-side campsites on the Perquimans River and its tributaries.

Perquimans County commissioners agreed last week to partner with the non-profit group to promote the sites and book reservations at Bear Garden Point, Cypress Woods, and Mill Creek camping platforms located on the Perquimans River and two tributaries, Mill and Raccoon creeks. The group will take reservations via phone and online through its website www.roanokeriverpartners.org. They will collect the \$10 per person per night reservation fee with a nightly minimum of \$20 per campsite.

In addition, RRP will market the sites via the group's website, distribute brochures and other information to potential visitors, and promote the site during their speaking engagements around the state.

RRP will also report to the county how many reservations are scheduled quarterly, and provide a report of reservations and camping fees collected on an annual basis.

RRP will keep 35 percent of all rentals as their service fee.

The Mill Creek site, situated in an old cypress gum forest, offers two platforms connected by a boardwalk and can be accessed from the public boat ramp in Hertford. The paddling trail from Hertford to the campsite meanders along an official state-designated birding trail.

See CAMPSITES on Page A2