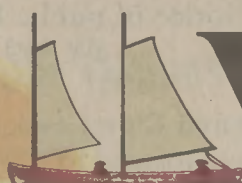
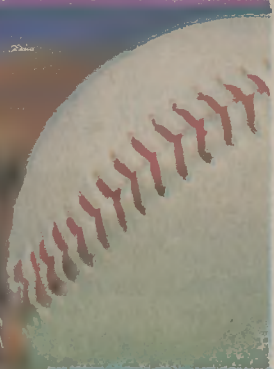


# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



PCHS baseball team makes 23-year history



"News from Next Door"

MAY 27 - JUNE 2, 2009

RECEIVED

MAY 27 2009

35 cents

## Resident says town law enforcement doesn't meet needs

By Cathy Wilson  
Staff Writer

Murielle Harmon feels she's been victimized twice: once by the five people charged in connection with the theft of approximately \$15,000 in jewelry from her home May 2, and again by a locality that doesn't have a police department office open on weekends or an investigator to help

solve crimes. "You have to become a victim before you know what is needed here in law enforcement," Harmon told Hertford leaders May 11.

Harmon and her husband, Blake, vacationed out of town recently and left their house in the care of a house-sitter who apparently threw a party during which several pieces of jewelry and other items were alleg-

edly stolen. Five people were arrested and charged in connection with the incident.

The theft reportedly occurred May 2. Police weren't notified until Harmon returned home on Thursday, May 7. By Friday afternoon, warrants were issued for the arrests of five people in connection with the larceny.

Harmon told members of Hertford

Town Council she and her husband were "in limbo" the following Saturday and Sunday, waiting to hear from police as well as offer additional information to police. But, she said, the police department was closed. Officers were on duty, but the office was not open. She didn't call 9-1-1 because she felt 9-1-1 was only for emergencies.

"We went all weekend without any

information," Harmon said. "The follow-up system is horrible. An investigator would have been most helpful."

Harmon said residents should have access to police over the weekend, not just Monday through Friday.

The police department's office, manned by an administrative assistant, is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.

See POLICE on Page 2

## Honoring the ordinary for the extraordinary



NEVER FORGET

By Cathy Wilson  
Staff Writer

The call to defend this country's freedom is being answered by ordinary Americans making extraordinary physical sacrifices. In fact, patriotism over the years has born many such heroes who were honored Monday during the Memorial Day ceremony held on the courthouse lawn.

Sponsored by Hertford American Legion Post 126, the 45-minute ceremony drew approximately 150 people ranging in age from infant to the county's oldest living veteran, Jay Dillon, age 98.

"We do not pay tribute to war, rather, a tribute to peace makers whose physical and moral courage makes heroes out of farm and city boys and girls, that inspired Americans of every generation to lay down their lives for people they'll never meet," said Ken Rominger, commander of Post 126.

Members of Boy Scout Troop 150 presented flags representing each branch of military service. Veterans who served in each individual branch stood and saluted during the playing of their service song as each flag was presented.

Wreaths were laid at the base of the veterans monument. A poignant ceremony was held remembering the missing in action and prisoners of war. The names of veterans who have died in the past year were read.

"We call them comrades," said



PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTOS BY CATHY WILSON

Clockwise from top left, the county's oldest living veteran, 98-year-old Jay Dillon, sporting a red poppy in support of veterans, smiles after leading the Memorial Day crowd in the pledge of allegiance. Mack Nixon and Shirley Wiggins place a wreath at the base of the veterans memorial during the Memorial Day ceremony held on the courthouse square on Monday. About 150 people attended, ranging in age from infant to 98. Minnis Copeland, age 85, snaps a salute as his service song played during the Memorial Day ceremony held Monday on the courthouse lawn. Copeland served in both the Coast Guard and as a Mercant Marine.

Rominger. "They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued absence."

Guest speaker was James Ervin, membership chairman for the North Carolina Department of American Legion.

"Memorial Day reminds us that without patriotism, we would have no heroes to honor today," he said. "Oliver Wendell Holmes called this 'our most sacred holiday', and he urged that 'we not ponder with sad thoughts the passing of our heroes, but rather ponder their legacy—the life they made possible for us by their commitment and pain'."

Ervin said the age-old struggle to be free was seen in conflicts throughout the years and continues today in, what he termed, a post 9-11 world.

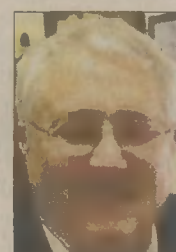
"Gone are the days when we'd sit back and believe that our oceans would

protect us from those who wish us harm," he said. "We acknowledge that in order to continue to protect the freedoms we hold close to our hearts, we have to take the battles to the terrorists and promote freedom throughout the world. Our brave men and women are doing that right now, and we salute them, support them, and honor them."

"Yet as these brave American men and women find themselves far from America's shores, in lands foreign to them, they face situations their parents hoped, and prayed, their children would never have to experience," he added. "The call to defend freedom came, and they answered. They are all heroes-facing enemies every day and yet they stand resolved to carry out their mission to keep America safe. Many will return home with the pride of having served their country honor-

See MEMORIAL on Page 2

## Hertford-Winfall sewer stink not flushed out yet



Eley

By Cathy Wilson  
Staff Writer

Despite mediation by the funding agency, Hertford and Winfall still disagree over payment for wastewater treatment.

While Hertford officials termed last month's mediation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development as "fruitful," they have not signed off on the mediated settlement amount, saying they want more information from Winfall before they sign on the dotted line.

Winfall officials abided by the result of the mediation, and sent Hertford a check last week for \$9,972.74, saying the settlement is finalized.

Hertford, however, says they can't accept Winfall's check if it represents a final settlement. While the amount of the check represents cost agreed upon during mediation, there are still issues to be resolved before the matter is settled, said Hertford Town Manager John Christensen.

Brian Noll, with Rural Development, met with Christensen and a delegation from Winfall that included Mayor Fred Yates, engineer Bill Diehl, and town accountant Terry Chappell on April 22 to mediate an on-going dispute over payment for Winfall's wastewater treatment by Hertford dating to March 2008.

Following broad discussions by both towns, a settlement amount was supposedly reached, with that amount not being legally binding until agreed upon by both town councils.

"After considerable negotiation by both towns, Rural Development understands that the final negotiated price agreed to by both parties was for Winfall to pay Hertford a total of \$9,872.74," wrote Noll to Doug Causey, Rural Development area director.

"This cost would resolve all outstanding issues brought up at the meeting and allow both parties to move forward with an agreeable relationship."

Winfall sent Hertford a check for that amount May 12 with a letter from Yates saying the check finalizes the settlement of the wastewater treatment dispute between the two towns.

However, Hertford Mayor Sid Eley sent Winfall a letter May 6 agreeing that Winfall owes Hertford a total of \$9,872.94 for wastewater treatment in December 2008, January 2009, and for engineering services and, sales tax previously credited to Winfall er-

"... We cannot accept Winfall's allegations that Hertford should credit Winfall in any way ..."

— Hertford Mayor Eley to Winfall Mayor Yates



Yates

ronously.

But, Eley also wrote that the mediation left one significant issue outstanding.

The dispute centers on past wastewater treatment charges billed by Hertford that Winfall contends are skewed because of temporary meters measuring the amount of wastewater passing through them.

Both towns agree that the amount due from Winfall for wastewater treatment through November 30, 2008 is \$34,867.28.

Winfall paid \$16,286.82 of that earlier this year, but contends that the balance should be credited to them to offset the cost of engineering fees and equipment costs the town incurred to install Mermaid equipment and software to accurately measure the town's wastewater volume since Hertford didn't.

"Hertford, however, says show them the detailed invoices for such costs first."

"Because of the very limited information previously provided by Winfall, we cannot accept Winfall's allegations that Hertford should credit Winfall in any way for the costs of Winfall's metering equipment and labor," Eley wrote to Yates.

"We certainly cannot credit Winfall for engineering services and equipment when we cannot be certain that those items even related to wastewater treatment. In order for Hertford to continue discussing this issue, Winfall must provide Hertford with detailed invoices showing each and every piece of equipment and hour of labor for which Winfall contends Hertford should be responsible."

Without such information, Hertford cannot determine if there are actually items for which it may legitimately be held accountable and Hertford will be left with no option other than taking legal action.

"Once the sole remaining issue is finally resolved, both towns will be able to move forward to address the numerous other crises and problems they are facing," Eley continued.

"This is a mutual project for wastewater treatment and Hertford will continue to strive to develop and follow a process acceptable to both the citizens of Hertford and Winfall. To do that, we must keep the best interests of our citizens in mind and do the very best we can to do what is right."

According to Yates, the invoices have already been sent to Christensen.

See STINK on Page 2

## Hertford Police Department hire two officers

Johnson's departure leaves one opening

By Cathy Wilson  
Staff Writer

The recent hiring of a sergeant and patrol officer and the departure of one officer leaves the Hertford Police De-

partment just one officer shy of the seven for which the department is budgeted.

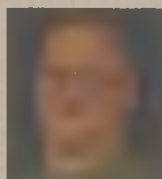
Shawn Swindell and Pryce Hohenstein signed on with the department, Swindell as a sergeant and Hohenstein as a patrol officer. Clifton Johnson has separated from the department as of May 15.

Swindell, 34, comes to Hertford from Maryland where he worked in private investigations regarding workman's compensation and insurance fraud. Prior to that, he served five years in law enforcement: three years with the Youngsville Police Department and two years with the Franklinton Police Department, both in North Carolina. He worked with Hertford Police Chief Joe Amos in both Youngsville and Franklinton.

"I was looking to return to law enforcement and get closer to the beach," said Swindell in explaining why he accepted the sergeant's position with Hertford.

His interest in law enforcement started while serving with emergency medical services in Maryland.

Swindell recently graduated from the College of The Albemarle's Basic Law Enforcement Training where he earned the "Top Gun" award



Hohenstein



Swindell

for being the best shooter overall in the firearm's class. Married over five years, he enjoys surf fishing.

As sergeant, Swindell's biggest challenge is to clean up and reorganize the department's property evidence room which holds property confiscated during investigations dating back to 1978. In addition, Swindell handles supplies for the department.

Swindell joins the department's other sergeant, Kevin Worster, in pulling rotating shifts that overlap regular shifts worked by the patrol officers.

Swindell is originally from Montgomery County, Maryland. Hohenstein, 40, is new to the department, but not new to Hertford. He and his family have lived in the area for almost three years.

Originally from upstate New York, Hohenstein comes to HPD from the Washington County Sheriff's Department where he served for two years as a deputy. He graduated

from Beaufort County Community College Basic Law Enforcement Training in 2008.

He served in the U.S. Marines until he was bitten in the leg by a copperhead snake after stepping into a nest while performing field training exercises at Camp Lejeune.

"They told me I'd never walk again, but I'm a pretty stubborn fella," he said.

He waited to seek medical attention for the snake bite for 18 hours, or until the training exercise was over. By that time, he had a fever of 105 degrees, and his leg was badly swollen.

When he finally reached the hospital, medical personnel gave him horse serum to combat the venom. Unfortunately, he was allergic to the serum, and went into anaphylactic shock which stopped his breathing. Doctors shocked the young Marine back to life.

Now married with three sons, Hohenstein says he went into law enforcement out of an obligation to serve, to help make the community where his family lives safer, and to hopefully make their lives better.

Hohenstein serves as a patrol officer.

### WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY  
HIGH: 82 LOW: 65  
SCATTERED T-STORMS

FRIDAY  
HIGH: 80 LOW: 63  
CLOUDY

SATURDAY  
HIGH: 78 LOW: 63  
SCATTERED T-STORMS



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