

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



View artwork from local students
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DEC 16 2009

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"News from Next Door"

DECEMBER 16, 2009 - DECEMBER 23, 2009

Two charged for 'magic' mushroom plot

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

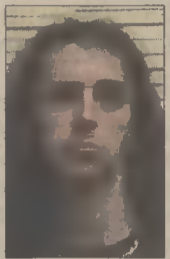
Two men face felony charges after law enforcement officers conducted an early morning raid on a Woodville home, finding what may be the largest amount of psychedelic or "magic" mushrooms seized in the state.

Sheriff Eric Tilley said a search warrant was executed at 414 Body Road Dec. 10 around 6:30 a.m. by law enforcement officers representing four agencies.

Stacey Colson, 37, and Joseph Sawyer, 35, were arrested during the raid and charged in connection with the seizure of 188 bags of Psilocybin mushrooms and a small amount of marijuana plants growing inside the home. Police believe the mushrooms were capable of producing approximately 30 grams of Schedule I mushrooms valued on the street at \$25,000.



Colson



Sawyer

"This is an unusual find," said Sheriff Tilley. "Some of the State Bureau of Investigation officials can't recall finding this size growth of mushrooms in the state before. This is something you don't see every day."

Both men face charges of manufacturing psilocybin mushrooms, manufacturing marijuana, possession with intent to manufacture, sell or distribute both Schedule VI and I drugs, and maintaining a dwelling for the storage or selling of a controlled substance. They were taken to Albemarle District Jail where they were released after posting an \$8,000 secured bond.

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County approves zoning change

Second convenience store set for New Hope

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

County commissioners recently approved a zoning change and conditional use permit that would allow a second convenience store to open in New Hope.

Katherine Bunch requested that the .67-acre property located at 2152 New Hope Road be rezoned from rural agricultural to rural commercial conditional use district. The rezoning and conditional use approval will allow the existing business there to revert back to its original use as a convenience store without gas pumps.

The building once housed a woodworking shop.

Commissioners, following the earlier recommendation of the county's planning board, approved Bunch's request even though several county residents spoke in opposition to it.

Most of the county residents who spoke supported the current store located there, New Hope Country Store, and voiced concerns over the small area being financially able to support two stores.

However, county commissioners pointed out that whether or not the economic conditions of the area would

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Students on parade



PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTOS BY CATHY WILSON

Perquimans County Central School displayed school pride for recent academic accomplishments while wishing everyone a merry Christmas during the recent Christmas parade held in Hertford. Top: Students from the school dressed as turtles and sat in desks on their float.



Aleah Bailey Sawyer

Sawyer baby is fighting brain tumor

Infant will be celebrating first Christmas near the hospital

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

Her small purple Christmas tree was supposed to coordinate with her nursery colors in her New Hope home where parents Faron and Sarah Sawyer were planning to celebrate their baby's first Christmas.

Instead, the tiny tree now decorates a small furnished apartment adjacent to a Raleigh hospital where the young family is fighting a malignant brain tumor found recently in their nine-week-old daughter.

Little Aleah Sawyer, daughter of Faron and Sarah Sawyer, started chemotherapy last week at Duke University Hospital after first having an internal shunt inserted that will drain fluid from her brain into her abdomen.

In addition, doctors also surgically implanted a port in the baby's body through which the chemotherapy will be administered.

"We don't know how long she will have to have the chemo," said Sarah. "We have to wait and see what it does to the tumor. It could be anywhere from one to six months of treatment. Hopefully, she will have the chemo for the next couple of months, and then they can go in and remove the tumor."

The last four weeks have been a blur of emotions and activity for the young couple that is coping with facing the wrath of cancer and possible brain surgery rather than adjusting

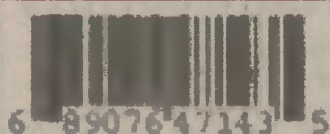
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WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY
HIGH: 49 LOW: 37
MOSTLY SUNNY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 53 LOW: 35
PARTLY CLOUDY

SUNDAY
HIGH: 52 LOW: 37
SUNNY



Perquimans students learn DNA fingerprinting

High school gets visit from the Destiny Bus

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

It was the case of the stolen iPod, and members of Lynette Baker's biology class were hot on the trail tracking down a suspect.

Three suspects, actually. Two had already been ruled out, so the Perquimans County High School students, aka wannabe forensic scientists, turned to DNA fingerprinting to find the culprit.

The crime scene scenario was part of the hand-on learning process students enjoyed

last week when the Destiny Traveling Science Learning Program from the UNC Morehead Planetarium and Science Center stopped at the local high school.

Students donned protective eye-wear, aprons, and gloves while Nick Hoffman, science education specialist, showed them how to analyze evidence found at crime scenes to help determine who's guilty and who's innocent.

Students were given three DNA samples to test in order to determine "who done it".

Student Quanta Daniels learned how to do DNA fingerprinting as well as actually seeing the same process that she's seen performed on tele-

vision during such shows as CSI.

Students said they now have a better understanding of DNA technology after seeing the process performed in an actual lab setting.

"I got to do it instead of just hearing about it in the smart board," added Samantha Kotel.

Hoffman said the bus travels throughout the state to provide the actual lab experience for seventh graders to high school seniors.

"We provide the opportunity for students to learn about this material," said Hoffman. The mobile science lab was able to visit 85 counties in North Carolina last school year.



PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Quinten Felton and Calvin Rowland examine DNA samples during a visit by the Destiny Traveling Science Learning Program. The bus from UNC Morehead Planetarium and Science Center stopped at Perquimans County High School where local biology students learned about DNA fingerprinting.

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