



Area youngsters enjoyed the Children's Festival Saturday. Page 9.

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

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35 cents

County Commissioner Wiggins dies

Services will be held this weekend

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

County Commissioner Shirley Wiggins died Sunday afternoon in Albenmarle Hospital after being hospitalized since last Wednesday suffering from dehydration.

The veteran politician, 77, had served as county commissioner for 18 years. She previously served on the Winfall Town Council.

She was known for her strong support of senior citizens, children and veterans.

"She is going to be missed," said Winfall Mayor Fred Yates and Wiggins' former husband. "She was a very wise person, a good counselor. She was just a joy for our senior citizens."

A wake will be held at Melton Grove Missionary Baptist Church Friday, 6-8 p.m., followed by funeral services Saturday at noon at the Fine Arts Center at Elizabeth City State Uni-



Wiggins

versity. Yates said Wiggins was surrounded by family members when she died at 3:10 p.m. Sunday afternoon after being placed on life support some 12 hours earlier.

An autopsy has been ordered to determine the exact cause of death, he said. Wiggins had experienced several weeks of

health problems including undergoing shoulder surgery and having a heart pacemaker implanted.

For her fellow commissioners, news of her death was difficult.

"Shirley was a long-time county commissioner and has been an integral part of the decision-making of our board," said Commissioner Chairman Mack Nixon. "She has especially been an advocate and voice for our county's children, senior citizens, and veterans. Her spirit and dedication has led to

many improvements for all Perquimans County citizens, and her influence will continue for years to come. She has been a model for character, leadership, and unselfishness for us all. On behalf of the board of commissioners, we feel honored to have served beside her, and privileged to have called Shirley Wiggins a friend."

Wiggins began serving as commissioner in 1992, and served as chairman of the board in 2000. She also served as vice-chairman in 1999 and 2005. She was

the first African-American and first woman to chair the county commissioners.

She was also the first woman to serve as a county commissioner.

Her goals while serving as commissioner included erecting a Veterans memorial in the county, building a new center for the county's seniors, and to create a new track for the county's athletes.

A new Veterans memorial has been built on the

See WIGGINS, 2

Grant sought to rehab building

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

The town of Hertford has applied for a \$250,000 grant through its Main Street Program to help a property owner rehabilitate a vacant downtown building into a new business.

Town Planner Brandon Shoaf said the grant money, if awarded, would help turn the old Walker Edwards law firm building, located at 133 North Church Street, into a small business that would include a cafe, bakery, wine shop, and place to hold special events.

Shoaf said the application was submitted by its deadline of April 15.

While the town technically has to apply for the funds, it has no financial interest in the project, he pointed out.

The funds are being sought from the Main Street Solutions fund, a pilot program through the state Department of Commerce, Division of Community Assistance.

The property is owned by Stefan Smith and Teresa Goerss who have been working to renovate the building for the past three years, Shoaf said. They hope to complete the renovations by January, he added.

Properties eligible for the grant must meet

See GRANT, 4

Final moments



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

The former Perquimans Weekly building on Grubb Street was burned by local firefighters during a training exercise Sunday afternoon. For more photos, see the slideshow at www.dailyadvance.com

Old PW office burns in training exercise

Final chapter for old house built in 1918

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

If only walls could talk.

The tiny seven-room house located at 119 West Grubb Street could probably tell a few stories: a baby taking her first steps, a mother starting out on her own with three children, or the overworked newspaper editor working late into the night putting out the latest edition.

The former Elisha B. Goodwin house was built in 1918 and served as home to several fami-

lies, and in its last days, housed the offices for The Perquimans Weekly. After the local paper office moved to a different location in 2008, the Grubb Street house was sold to the adjacent Hertford Baptist Church. The house was burned to the ground Sunday during a training exercise conducted by three local fire departments. Providing one last story for all to see, the house ignited in a controlled blazing inferno, sending dark clouds of smoke over the quite little town.

"The live burn went very well," said Chief Bob Reed with Hertford Fire Department. "It gave us a chance to practice our mutual aid with Winfall and Bethel fire

departments. We burned the house, kept the post office and other residences safe, and the fiber optics on the lines above didn't melt. It went perfectly."

Around 40 firefighters from the three departments trained inside the house that is located about 10 feet from the town's post office, and even closer to fiber optics strung above on telephone poles. Firefighters used two water sources during the exercise to insure protection for the nearby structures.

"Water was drafted from the river, and from the town's hydrants," Reed said. "That way,

See BURN, 9

Revenue shortfall tightens spending

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A projected shortfall in budgeted revenues will cause the town of Hertford to tighten its spending from now until the end of June.

Town Manager John Christensen told members of Hertford Council recently that overall, the general fund revenues for fiscal year 2009-2010 are projected to come in nearly \$74,000 less than expected.

"The department heads are well aware of this and have been told to cut back on spending," he added.

Property tax collections are currently \$33,000 under budget and local option sales taxes are running about \$55,000 short. Powell Bill funds also came in less than budgeted, he added.

"Currently revenues are \$49,500 over expenses, but despite that, we will have to cut spending between now and the end of the year," Christensen said.

Not everything is gloomy in the this month's snapshot look at the condition of the town's current budget.

Solid waste revenues from the state, funds paid by the town's housing authority, and revenues from the local ABC store are up by about \$14,000.

Revenues are up so far in the water and sewer fund, but the town still have to make its debt service pay-

See BUDGET, 4

WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY
HIGH: 77 LOW: 59
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 77 LOW: 54
SCATTERED SHOWERS

SUNDAY
HIGH: 72 LOW: 54
SHOWERS



House tour to include churches this year

From staff reports

Among the stops this year on the Perquimans Tour of Historic Homes will be four churches, the county courthouse and the 1730 Quaker homestead, Newbold-White House.

This year's historic homes tour takes visitors out into the county as well as strolling along the streets of downtown Hertford April 23 and 24, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. each day.

The tour is sponsored by the Perquimans County Restoration Association

and Historic Hertford, Inc. Tickets are \$25 each (\$20 for groups of 20 plus) for the self-guided tour, and are available now and on the days of the tour at the Newbold White House Visitors' Center (NWH) as well as the Perquimans Chamber of Commerce.

Artwork and a quilt will be raffled off at the NWH. The Methodist Women's Circle will sponsor a luncheon on April 24 at Hertford United Methodist Church for \$8 a plate consisting of country ham, cheddar croissant sand-

wich, potato salad, fruit cup, brownie, and drink. Eat in or take out.

In addition to the historic churches, courthouse, and Newbold-White House, the tour also includes five historic private homes and three bed and breakfast inns that were featured in last week's edition of The Perquimans Weekly.

Bethel Baptist Church, ca. 1837, grew from a brethren first assembled in 1806.

The church "hosted"



PHOTO BY KENT SAUNDERS

See TOUR, 6 Hertford United Methodist Church, ca. 1901, is on the tour.

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