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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

JULY 28, 2010 - AUGUST 3, 2010



Surgery to remove tumor successful, 2
Parkers win East Division points, 6

35 cents

Tanner wants Yates' suit dismissed

Mayor: Citizen defamed him

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Fred Tanner has asked the Perquimans Superior Court to dismiss the defamation lawsuit filed against him by Winfall Mayor Fred Yates.

In a response filed Monday

by his attorney, John G. Trimpi, Tanner said the lawsuit should be dismissed for a number of reasons. For one, Tanner's opinions about Yates are protected free speech, the response states. For another, Tanner's allegations were made against Yates in his capacity as a public official.

In addition, Tanner has a "truthful and good faith

belief in the factual basis for ... the statements made about Yates," Tanner's response states. Finally, Tanner has apologized and retracted his statements about Yates and the one-year statute of limitations on some of the lawsuit's claims has expired.

Yates filed the lawsuit last month against Tanner, a Winfall resident who alerted state authorities five

years ago that Yates was being reimbursed twice for travel expenses. The lawsuit claims Tanner allegedly defamed Yates in two letters to Erskine Bowles, president of the University of North Carolina.

Tanner's response admits that he did write the letters and that the contents of the letters speak for themselves.

According to Tanner's

response, Tanner, a former member of the Winfall Planning Board, "... has been and remains concerned about corrupt politicians. Notwithstanding threats to his person and intimidation by Yates, Tanner investigated the financial relationship Yates had with the Town of Winfall and uncovered what Tanner and others believed were examples of embez-

zement and perjury."

Tanner alleges that he obtained town records showing that Yates received travel expenses for the same trip from Winfall as well as from two state agencies whose boards Yates served on at the time. Tanner also alleges Yates was reimbursed for travel expenses even for trips "for

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Power outage; food lost

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A power outage on July 9 apparently caused the school system to lose nearly \$24,000 in food stored in coolers located in the maintenance shop.

Perquimans Schools Superintendent Dwayne Stallings told board of education members Monday night that a "brown-out" occurred, causing electricity



Stallings

to be off to the school buildings.

"In an effort to be energy efficient, we had moved the food from all four school coolers to the maintenance shop when the electricity went out," Stallings explained.

The total amount of food that can't be used now is \$23,608.

The school system will seek reimbursement from insurance, he added.

Director of Maintenance Jonathan Nixon said electricity went out that Friday afternoon and was back on Saturday.

"During that 24-hour period, however, the food got too hot," he added.

A web-based monitoring system through which school officials can track problems with the coolers was also knocked offline when computer servers lost electricity as well.

Chris Wharton, the town's director of public utilities, said he was notified of the outage by Nixon that Saturday afternoon around 3 p.m. and power was restored within an hour and a half.

Lightning apparently caused a fuse to "cut out" on the pole in front of the high school, he explained.

Taking a stand



STAFF PHOTOS BY CATHY WILSON

Robin Foreman (above) of Elizabeth City performs an interpretive dance to the song "Walk Around Heaven" during Saturday's Stop the Violence event on King Street. Children (below) enjoy a variety of activities during the Community Field Day.

Residents support 'stop the violence'

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

The T-shirts said it all.

Designed with a theme uniting Stokes Drive, King Street, and Wynne Fork Court, the shirts spoke the words "Stop the Violence" quietly on the back. The words were punctuated with pictures of Shakim Warren and Jamar Fletcher, two young men who died from violence on King Street over the last five years.

The shirts made their way on the backs of youngsters and adults who attended the Community Field Day held in the scorching heat Saturday. Youngsters competed in 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, played badminton, ran relay races, and passed footballs while the older adults threw horseshoes, tossed corn-hole bags, and cooked barbecue chicken on steaming hot grills.

For Barbara Warren, it was a day of mixed emotions. She lost her 17-year-old son, Shakim, to violence over five years ago when he was shot and killed during an apparent drive-by shooting in front of his King Street home.



"It means a lot to me to see everyone gathered here today," she said. "But, it brings back happy and sad memories for me. A lot of things have

See COMMUNITY, 7

BATMOBILE assists at DWI checkpoint

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Ken Rhodes bent over slightly at the waist as he gave final words of instruction Saturday night before law enforcement officers hit the street in a concerted effort to prevent crashes by pulling impaired drivers off the roads.

"Safety is paramount, but get in there, bend down and engage the driver in conversation," he said. "Smell the alcohol, look at their faces. Drunks like to tell you they are messed up. We've been seeing a lot of impaired drivers due to prescription drugs right now. They're mixing Valium with beer, and they are more messed up than a cricket in a hub-cap."

Rhodes drove the state-owned BATMOBILE to

Hertford Saturday to assist local law enforcement agencies conduct a six-hour traffic checkpoint to find drunk or drugged drivers. Before heading out to begin the checkpoint in the high heat and humidity, officers listened as Sgt. Shawn Swindell with the Hertford Police Department briefed them on the checkpoint's plan of action.

With that, eight officers with the Hertford Police Department, six state highway patrolmen, and two officers with the Edenton Police Department left the Hertford Fire Department and travelled to U.S. Highway 17 southbound just south of the high rise bridge where they staged a six-hour traffic checkpoint to find drunken or drugged drivers. Accompanying them was Rhodes and the



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Officer Bruce Miller stops a vehicle during the Booze-It and Lose It traffic check conducted Saturday evening by area law enforcement agencies.

BATMOBILE, a large colorful mobile breath-alcohol testing forensic lab.

Parked in the medium between the north and south-bound lanes of U.S. 17, the

BATMOBILE provided air conditioning and a brief respite from the heat when officers brought in suspects to magistrates who waited inside to do the legal paper-

work.

In all, 31 charges were written for the evening including two driving while

See BATMOBILE

WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY
HIGH: 89 LOW: 71
ISOLATED T-STORMS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 89 LOW: 73
ISOLATED T-STORMS

SUNDAY
HIGH: 91 LOW: 75
PARTLY SUNNY



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