

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Zentz to perform at final Summer Breeze concert, PAGE 4

35 cents

"News from Next Door"

AUGUST 4, 2010 - AUGUST 10, 2010

AUG 04 2010

## Council to consider bill proposal

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Next week, Town Council members will consider a proposal detailing the town of Hertford's plan of action concerning the high school's electric bills.

Town Manager John Christensen said council,

in a Monday night work session, discussed the framework for a proposal on how to work with the school system regarding the high school's \$258,889 electric bill created by 26 months of underbilling, and current higher monthly electric bills.

Christensen said he

doesn't expect council to forgive the electric bill debt. However, council may allow the school to start repayment of the debt in September rather than now. In addition, council may consider offering the schools a match credit savings for 14 months to help lower their current electric bill each

month.

Council took no action on the proposal during a work session that followed a meeting earlier in the afternoon with school and county officials. Christensen said the proposal will be presented to council for consideration and action Monday night.

"Keep in mind it could change then," he cautioned.

Town and school officials discovered back in April that an incorrect billing multiplier was entered by the town when the school's new gym was constructed, causing the high school's electric bill to be incorrect

for 26 months. After correcting the mistake, the town realized the school had been underbilled over \$250,000 during that time.

In addition, since the correction, the school's current monthly electric bill has increased drastically.

See PROPOSAL, 4

## S-bridge openings won't change

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

The U.S. Coast Guard has withdrawn its proposed change that would have allowed the S-bridge to operate without a tender during specific times of the year.

As a result, town officials say the bridge will remain in operation as it is now.

"This is good," said Hertford Mayor Sid Eley.

Back in March 2009, the Coast Guard proposed operating the S-bridge with no tender during specific times of the year on an advance-notice basis.

Town officials and residents opposed the proposed change, noting that not keeping a tender during peak boating times would have an adverse impact on public safety.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation requested the rule change, noting the infrequency of drawbridge openings for vessels.

"We definitely are pleased," Town Manager John Christensen said. "Had it changed, it would have affected the town's future plans for downtown waterfront development."

Several comments opposing the change were sent to Coast Guard officials over the past year, and the agency conducted a lengthy and thorough investigation, including a site visit and a meeting with town officials that also included NCDOT officials. The Coast Guard also met separately with a marina owner and the leader of the rescue squad's water rescue team.

"Our investigation,

See BRIDGE, 2

## Mission of mercy



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dr. Neil DeNunzio, who practices medicine in Winfall, was part of a medical team that helped more 1,100 people in Ecuador during a recent mission trip sponsored by an Elizabeth City church.

## DeNunzio back from missions trip

Doctor's team treated 1,100-plus in Ecuador

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Winfall physician Dr. Neil DeNunzio never eats a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch.

That is, except when he's helping poor people in Ecuador receive free medical care during a yearly missions trip.

DeNunzio and the rest of the missions team feasted for a week on PB&J sandwiches at lunchtime while seeing hundreds of patients each day in a poorly lighted clinic

with no air-conditioning. They decided they'd rather spend the money on helping the poor than pay for a better lunch.

It was a small sacrifice considering what the people they helped go through, he pointed out.

Back in his Winfall office recently after returning from the seven-day trip to Ecuador, DeNunzio reflected on his volunteer service with that nation's poor.

"It makes you realize just how lucky we are here," he said, sitting in his comfortable air-conditioned, well-lit office surrounded by well-stocked medical supplies. "How blessed we are. I'm very moved by seeing just how thankful people are there to receive just basic

care."

For the fourth year in a row, DeNunzio joined 91 other volunteers on a missions trip sponsored by Forest Park Church in Elizabeth City. He and three other primary medical doctors joined other Ecuadorian physicians as part of a 24-member medical team that treated 1,100 people in one week. Crowds, made up of patients ranging in age from infants to someone 104, filled the streets, hoping to be seen in the church that was turned into a makeshift clinic, both inside and outside.

"Some of the patients were just so needy," DeNunzio said. "Most

See DENUNZIO, 4

## Harrell is new PCHS assistant principal

From staff reports

Tammy Harrell, an English teacher from Gates County, is the new assistant principal at Perquimans County High School.

Members of the Perquimans Board of Education appointed Harrell last Monday night. She will begin her duties the middle of this month.

Harrell joins new Principal Chante Lassiter as part of the leadership team at PCHS. Lassiter began her position at the school July 1.

Prior to her being appointed as principal, Lassiter served as assistant principal at the school for almost two years. Lassiter is also from Gates County.

In other personnel changes approved recently, Perquimans County High School Band Director Chris Whitehurst will leave the school system Aug. 19 to accept the same position at his alma mater, Camden County High School. Whitehurst has served as director of the Marching Pirates since spring 1999 and has been the percussion instructor since 1995.

Also, Jolene Craiglow was appointed as the front desk receptionist/NC Wise data manager at Perquimans County Middle School.

Jenna L. Caldwell was appointed to a K-2 grade teaching position at Perquimans Central School.

Brenda Simpson and

See HARRELL, 4

## Family struggles to start over after fire

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Nine-year-old Javaughn Butts misses his Wii game. His sister Alaijha, 12, lost a collector's item — a full-size prized Barbie doll.

Both of the children's favorite toys were destroyed July 23 when fire ravaged their bedrooms, destroying one end of the family's home located at 248 Muddy Creek Road.

For the Martin Butts family of New Hope, it's been hard to see just how quickly a normal life can change.

In the last 12 days, they have seen their house and all of their belongings destroyed, been forced to stay

for a while in hotel rooms while basically living out of suitcases, and are now residing in a neighbor's recreational vehicle.

Martin and Grycel Butts carried no insurance on the one-story four-bedroom frame home that they own debt free.

They dropped the insurance policy when their budget tightened due to the economy.

Despite the efforts of area firefighters, two bedrooms of the home were completely destroyed, and water, smoke and heat damaged the rest of the home, Grycel Butts said.

The fire apparently



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Grycel and Martin Butts stand in front of the charred remains of their home at 248 Muddy Creek Road. For now, the Buttses and their children plan to live in a neighbor's recreational vehicle.

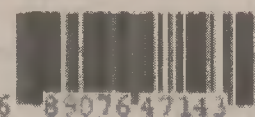
See FIRE, 2

### WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY  
HIGH: 92 LOW: 76  
SCATTERED T-STORMS

SATURDAY  
HIGH: 92 LOW: 75  
SCATTERED T-STORMS

SUNDAY  
HIGH: 92 LOW: 76  
SCATTERED T-STORMS



Antique Tractors & Farm Equipment  
Gymkhana Games  
(Fun Games on horseback)



1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL NORTHEAST NC EQUINE AND TRACTOR EXPO  
SATURDAY, AUGUST 7<sup>TH</sup>  
9 AM GATES OPEN - BBQ PLATE SALES - 11 AM TO 7 PM



American Legion Fairgrounds  
Edenton  
For info. go to www.chowanfair.com  
or call 482-4057