

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

DECEMBER 15, 2010 - DECEMBER 21, 2010

50 cents



Luna's Market opens in Beechtree, 8

Lady Pirates get 3rd victory, 7

Hertford ends year in good fiscal shape

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Folks usually flinch when they hear the word audit, but it was good news that came from Hertford's auditor Monday night.

The town ended the fiscal year that ended June 30 with a general fund balance of unreserved funds totaling \$774,491, or about 55 percent of the general fund's expenses—well above the state's local government commission requirement of 8 percent.

That figure increased over \$16,000 from last year, a healthy fiscal sign during trying economic times, pointed out Mayor Sid Eley.

Auditor Jeff Best, with Pittard, Perry and Crone, said that strong fund balance equals about nine months of operational costs.

The news was also good for the town's water and sewer fund as well as its electric fund.

The water and sewer fund ended with an increase of over \$1 million,

but Best attributed that to receiving over \$900,000 in grant money to pay for the town's wastewater and water improvement projects.

The electric fund ended the fiscal year with an increase of almost \$110,000.

Because the town ended the fiscal year in such healthy financial shape, council members agreed to give a longevity bonus to employees who have not enjoyed a pay raise in two years. Employees have also been asked to pay a portion of their health insurance,

causing their take home pay to be reduced.

Town Manager John Christensen asked council to give the bonus since the town's healthy fiscal shape is a direct result of town employees exercising stringent budget restraints over the past fiscal year.

"They have had to keep delivering the services with less people and less funds," Christensen pointed out. "It is employees' efforts that made this a good audit, which is why I am proposing to reward the employ-

ees for those efforts."

Councilwoman Anne White said while she feels the town employees deserve the bonuses, she is concerned about town citizens who don't have jobs, and who have trouble paying their water and sewer and electric bills.

"If we end up with extra money at the end of the year, I think we need to reconsider how much we charge our citizens," she noted.

Mayor Eley agreed, saying council expects to ad-

dress the issue soon.

In other matters Monday night, council agreed to ask their attorney to draft a resolution giving two lots on Dobbs Street to Habitat for Humanity (HH) as a site for the organization's newest home. The donation will be considered the town's contribution to HH. The town will stipulate that HH can not sell the lots if the house is not built, and the house must be completed within 12 months.

See AUDIT, 4

Missing cocaine results in trial delay

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A pound and a half of cocaine is missing from the Hertford police evidence room causing a drug trafficking case to be continued in court.

District Attorney Frank Parrish said Tuesday morning that Carlton Simpson's drug trafficking case was continued in Perquimans Superior Court Monday after prosecutors discovered the evidence missing.

The evidence was seized four years ago when Simpson was arrested in December 2006 on three counts of trafficking cocaine.

"I can understand when an ounce or two show up missing," said Parrish, "but this amount of cocaine is as big as a box of chocolates!"

Parrish said his assistant DAs discovered the evidence was missing late last week.

The case has been continued while law enforcement tries to locate the evidence.

"There probably will be an inquiry into its whereabouts because I am not happy," Parrish added.

Hertford Police Chief Joe Amos said he's known all along that the evidence was not in the department's secured evidence room.

"It (cocaine) is not there. It's never been there since I've been here. When I was hired in October 2008, I did an audit of the evidence room and it was not in there then," said Amos.

See COCAINE, 4

Musi-cool Celebration



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Kindergarten students from Perquimans Central braved the cold temperatures Tuesday morning to sing Christmas songs on the courthouse square.

Holiday celebrations continue this weekend

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

The town continues its holiday celebration this weekend with a giant stocking give-away, the Christmas Open House at the Newbold-White House, the holiday tour of homes, and Hometown Holiday Christmas activities downtown.

The giant stocking, filled with gifts totaling nearly \$200, will be given away Friday afternoon. You have until Friday at noon to register by making a purchase at any participating merchant in town. Among the gifts found in the stocking are t-shirts, gift certificates, cookbooks, green fees, and much, much more.

Just look for the green stocking sign placed in the windows of participating merchants.

Friday evening, the Newbold-White House hosts its annual Colonial Christmas Open House at 6:30 p.m. featuring refreshments, entertainment, fun and a drawing for \$1,000. Entertainment will be provided by The Albemarle Chorale, Julie Phelps, and students from Perquimans Middle School band.

There is no cost for admission to the event, though donations are appreciated and the Gift Shop will feature select Christmas and gift items.

If you want to see a variety

See HOLIDAYS, 2



STAFF PHOTO BY BRETT A. CLARK

The Perquimans County Senior Citizens Bell Choir will play holiday tunes in front of the historic courthouse during Hometown Holiday Christmas this Saturday at 2:30 p.m.

WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY
HIGH: 45 LOW: 29
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 46 LOW: 29
FEW SHOWERS

SUNDAY
HIGH: 43 LOW: 28
FEW SHOWERS



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Reed steps down as fire chief

Tilley next to lead fire department

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Bob Reed hung up his white helmet for the last time over the weekend after serving as Hertford fire chief for the past 11 years.

The 34-year veteran firefighter will continue to fight fires, but chose to hand over leadership of the department to new Chief Todd Tilley who has served as assistant chief for 10 years.

Tilley was appointed to the position Monday night by members of Hertford Town Council.

"It's just time for a change," said Reed who was honored by his fellow firefighters Saturday night. In addition to giving Reed a standing ovation and handsome plaque in recognition of his years as chief, they also selected Reed as Fireman of the Year.

Tilley saluted Reed for his service and hard work for the department during his years as chief. Reed,

See REED, 8



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Sid Eley (left) presents the Fireman of the Year award to retiring Chief Bob Reed.

Company agrees to settlement

From staff reports

A local pest control company has agreed to pay a settlement after representing an infestation of bed bugs without supporting visible evidence.

According to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS), Michael J. Corprew, Jr., of Albemarle Termite and

See SETTLEMENT, 3