

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

JANUARY 26, 2011 - FEBRUARY 1, 2011

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50 cents

## New principals named for two schools

Meiggs resigns to go with DPI

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

The resignation of an elementary school principal has caused a shift in school leadership in three of the four county schools.

Dianne Meiggs, principal of Hertford Elementary School (HES), has resigned to accept a position

with the state Department of Public Instruction.

Linda Layden White, principal of Perquimans Central School (PCS), will transfer to HGS to replace Meiggs as principal.

Melissa Fields, assistant principal at Perquimans Middle School (PCMS), will transfer to PCS to become principal.

Teachers Bonita Booze Jones and Tracy Gregory will both serve internships alternately as assistant



Fields Gregory Jones Meiggs White

principal at PCMS.

The change in school leadership is effective February 7. Members of the Perquimans Board of

Education approved the changes Friday.

These latest principal changes complete new leadership in all of the

county's four schools since June.

Chante' Lassiter was named principal of Perquimans

High in July following the appointment of former principal James Bunch as assistant superintendent. Norris Parker was named

principal at PCMS in August following the resignation of former principal Jamie Liverman.

Dr. Dwayne Stallings, superintendent, noted the words of a famous missionary when reflecting on the change in school leadership district-wide: "I'll go anywhere as long as it's forward."

"These leaders have a vision for the school

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## Events set for marine park

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco is one of three keynote speakers scheduled during groundbreaking ceremonies Thursday for the Perquimans Marine Industrial Park.

Located in the Perquimans Commerce Centre adjacent to the Perquimans River, the 72-acre park will eventually offer a 10 ft. deep water basin that officials believe will lead to future boat building and marine trade industrial opportunities. Thursday's groundbreaking ceremony is the kick-off to marketing the park to prospective clients.

"This groundbreaking is a milestone in getting the marine park implemented," said Dave Goss, the county's industrial development consultant. "It's one step closer to getting the basin dug."

Other speakers lined up for the four-hour event include William Greuling, operations manager for the North Carolina Military Business Center, Michael Peck, head of external relations for Gamesa Technology Corporation (wind energy), Mike Bradley, program director for marine trades with the North Carolina Small Business and Technology Development Center, and Bob Peele, executive director of the North Carolina Seafood Park Authority (NCSPA) which is developing the park.

An excited Peele said the

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## BELL REMEMBERED



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Principal Dianne Meiggs lays flowers on the makeshift memorial created at Hertford Grammar School in memory of teacher Lesley Bell who died Friday.

## School mourns beloved teacher

Hertford Grammar's Bell loses fight with cancer

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Friday was a tough day for students and staff at Hertford Grammar School (HGS).

A beloved teacher, Lesley Allgood Bell, died earlier that morning after being diagnosed with cancer just a few months ago, and members of the school system's central staff had the sad task of delivering the news to the HGS family.

"We organized other principals from other schools and central staff members to go to the school that morning to support the teachers and students, to give them time to be together to grieve," said Superintendent Dwayne Stallings. "We implemented our crisis plan. Grief counselors were on hand as well as members of our Ministers' Council and community to help



Bell

them through their grieving process."

Bell, 34, taught fifth grade and had 25 students this year, said Public Information Officer Brenda Lassiter. She had taught

in the school system for over 12 years. She was a former Teacher of the Year, and received her National Board certification.

In fact, school officials say Bell had been promoted to instructional specialist when she developed health problems.

"Lesley could have worked in any school district she desired," said Lassiter. "She chose Perquimans and we are a better place (school district) because of it. Her influence will be felt for generations to come."

As usual, Bell began her school year enthusiastically and was attending a work session last fall when she began to feel badly.

*"She chose Perquimans and we are a better place (school district) because of it."*

Brenda Lassiter

Public Information Officer at Perquimans County Schools

"She left school and drove to the hospital," remembered Stallings. "That was her last day at school."

Bell suffered several health issues and was eventually diagnosed with cancer in the fall.

She was team captain for the HGS Relay for Life team and had worked tirelessly to help raise thousands of dollars for cancer research.

"We are proud of how the staff

See BELL, 2

## Crews painting high rise bridge

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

One lane of the southbound high rise bridge over U.S. Highway 17 is closed while crews paint the steel underneath the bridge.

Jerry Jennings, division engineer, said a Florida firm, Astron General Contractors, is performing the routine maintenance at a cost of \$234,000.

"It's progressing well at this point," Jennings said. "We're trying to do more maintenance like this than we have in the past in an effort to extend the life of the bridge."

Steel beams and steel bearing plates are first sandblasted and then repainted in what Jennings described as "a fairly cumbersome process". The contractor has until June 1 to complete the project. Jennings also said small cores of asphalt have been taken from the recently resurfaced portion of Highway 17 between the high rise bridge and the intersection with Church Street in an effort to find out why the road is "rumbling" in the southbound lane.

"There appears to be a problem in some locations," Jennings said. "The cores (of asphalt) have been sent to the lab for analysis. We have not come to any resolution yet as to what caused the rumbling and what can be done to correct it."

Jennings said cores of asphalt are typically taken after a road resurfacing, but more than normal were taken from the southbound lane this time to determine the root of the problem.

"We haven't found the cause yet," he added. "At this time, the investigation is ongoing."

## WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY  
HIGH: 46 LOW: 33  
MOSTLY SUNNY

SATURDAY  
HIGH: 52 LOW: 33  
SUNNY

SUNDAY  
HIGH: 46 LOW: 29  
SUNNY

## Perquimans County Schools could face staff cuts

A \$2M budget shortfall possible

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

School officials have notified staff that a reduction in personnel is almost a certainty unless the economic climate changes.

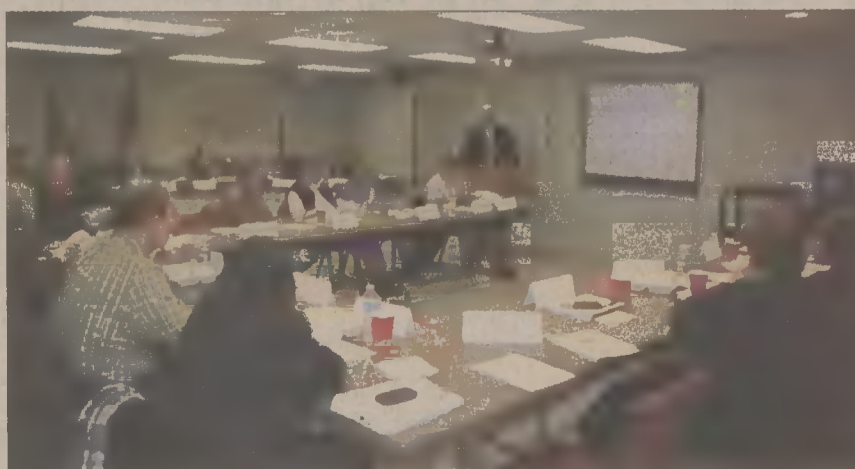
In a letter sent out to staff on Monday, Superintendent Dwayne Stallings said he doesn't want to panic or alarm staff members, but is trying to be open and honest regarding the financial shape the school system may find itself during the upcoming 2011-2012 school year.

"All told, Perquimans County Schools could be looking at a \$2 million shortfall in funding for 2011-2012," he added.

Stallings said the school system has been somewhat sheltered from the funding decreases for the past two years thanks to proactive planning and decisions not to fill positions when employees retired or resigned. The system has also strategically utilized federal stimulus money to "back-fill" funding streams that were cut-off by the state.

"This additional funding has allowed the system to continue to appropriate monies for

See BUDGET, 8



PCS PHOTO

There were few smiles Monday as Superintendent Dwayne Stallings spoke of a possible \$2 million budget shortfall for the county schools next year during a joint work session between board of education members and the county commissioners.

