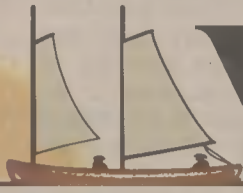


# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

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## County talks cash incentives for wind farm

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

County commissioners are considering paying Atlantic Wind LLC (AW) annual cash grants as economic development incentives to locate part of the state's first commercial-scale wind farm in the

county. The proposed economic development incentive package calls for the county to pay a percentage of the company's real estate and personal property taxes back to the company up to 30 years respectively provided AW invests \$240 million in the county by

the end of 2015 and provides at least eight new full-time jobs.

The proposal calls for AW to first pay its tax bill each year with the county then cutting AW a check for a percentage of the taxes paid. The amount paid back to AW will decrease percentage-wise each year.

The schedule calls for the county to pay AW nearly 71 percent of its personal property tax bill the first year, followed by decreasing percentages each year for 14 years. By the 15th year, the county will be able to keep the entire amount paid for taxes by AW for the initial invest-

ment. County Manager Bobby Darden said if the Desert Wind Project is built, the county should see about \$300,000-400,000 in net revenues from the project each year. County officials say AW, even after the incentives, will by far be the largest taxpayer in

the county-equal to the six current largest taxpayers combined.

Officials believe additional economic benefits to the area would come during construction of the project which could create about 300 temporary jobs

See INCENTIVES, 2

## LESSON FOR PROM NIGHT



STAFF PHOTOS BY CATHY WILSON

A mock fatal-wreck scene was created for juniors and seniors at Perquimans County High School last week to stress the dangers of driving drunk.

## Juniors, seniors watch mock fatality

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Just in time for prom night, Perquimans County High School students gathered in the school parking lot Thursday afternoon and watched as several of their fellow students lay crumpled in a simulated wrecked vehicle.

Wearing prom dresses and formal attire, one student appeared to be "dead" while the others appeared to suffer a variety of make-shift injuries. Another student, kneeling beside yet another body lying on the ground, screamed for someone to help her "father" who had been ejected from a second vehicle involved in the make-shift crash.

Firefighters, rescuers, law enforcement, a medical helicopter, EMT students, even the



local funeral home responded to a simulated fatal wreck scene at the high school to show area juniors and seniors what can happen when driving drunk. The event was held just two days before prom night.

"It kinda hit home," said Senior Jackie Witherell. "The students in the car are some of my best friends. It was shocking to see them like that. It will definitely make a difference for me."

PCHS students Elizabeth Phelps, Jennifer Shriver and Sarah Stevenson watch the staged accident Thursday.

Sponsored by the Farm Bureau Women's Committee, the reenactment began with a talk in the school's auditorium on the dangers of drinking and driving. As the talk came to an end, students heard sirens blowing outside and watched as firefighters and emergency services arrived at the school. The East Care medical helicopter flew overhead.

Several students took part in the reenactment including Mikel Harvey who portrayed a student killed in the crash. Students watched as Harvey was strapped to a gurney, covered by blankets, and transported away from the scene in the

See MOCK, 2

## RIF OK'd; 30 may lose jobs in schools

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

The Perquimans County Board of Education approved their Reduction in Force policy Monday night paving the way to cut up to 30 school employees due to an expected reduction in state and federal funding.

Facing a state funding shortfall of about 8-10 percent, (which could go as high as 13 percent depending on what action the legislature takes), Superintendent Dwayne Stallings said up to nine licensed positions (teachers, counselors) and 21 classified positions (teacher assistants, custodians/maintenance, office staff) may face losing their jobs.

The 30 positions expected to be cut are based on a 10 percent funding cut from the state. A larger or smaller percentage funding cut from the state could mean more or less positions may be eliminated.

The local school system is bracing for a state funding shortfall of at least \$1.04 million for the 2011-2012 school year.

"This is hard," said Stallings. "We've had a lot of input and discussions with the principals. It's not easy for anyone...A lot of thought has gone into this, and there have been a lot of sleepless nights."

In addition to cutting positions, teacher assistants will have working hours reduced from 40 to 35 in an effort to keep more jobs. Employees working over 30 hours each week will continue to receive benefits.

Teacher assistants who drive buses may work 40 hours as an incentive to keep bus drivers.

Overtime hours will be reduced, and the number of school-based Education Office Personnel is expected to be reduced as well.

The projected number of jobs cut takes into account known resignations and retirements for the

See REDUCTION, 2

## Schools see more 'homeless' students

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

House fires, domestic violence, and the tough economy have led to an increase in the number of local school students classified as "homeless".

Latonia Johnson, social worker/homeless coordinator for Perquimans County Schools, says the system has 60 school students classified as homeless and/or unaccompanied youth this year, up from 18 the previous year.

"Most of them are fami-

lies who are doubled up with other families in the same house," said Johnson whose job is to make sure homeless and unaccompanied youth have equal access to the same free public education as is provided to other children and youth.

While the word "homeless" conjures up images of people living in cardboard boxes underneath a bridge or on a sidewalk, federal law enacted in 2002 actually defines homeless and protects students who don't have a fixed, regular, and adequate residence. Such residences falling under those guidelines could include students in families doubled up with other families or friends due to

See STUDENTS, 2

## Police cruiser hits car on U.S. 17

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Two people were injured Sunday night when a Hertford police cruiser struck a vehicle crossing the intersection of Highway 17 and Wynne Fork Road.

North Carolina Highway Patrolman T.F. Langley, Jr. said Hertford Police Officer Pryce Hohenstein was driving a 2006 Ford Crown Victoria police cruiser around 7 p.m. when Hohenstein attempted to cross the northbound lanes of Highway 17 from the Edenton Road Street side of Wynne Fork Road, striking a white Nissan traveling northbound in the outside lane.

The Nissan, driven by Deborah Clagon, age 43 of Perquimans County, came to rest on Highway 17. The police cruiser spun around



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Hertford Police Officer Pryce Hohenstein suffered a minor knee injury Sunday night when the police car he was driving hit a vehicle while crossing the intersection of U.S. Highway 17 and Wynne Fork Road. Chief Joe Amos said Hohenstein was treated and later released from Albemarle Hospital.

and ended up in the intersection facing southeast, police said.

Hertford Police Chief Joe Amos said Hohenstein was on routine patrol and not responding to an emergency call when the accident occurred. Trooper Langley said the police cruiser did not display emergency lights or siren at the time of the crash.

Trooper Langley said Clagon was transported by

members of Perquimans EMS to Chowan Hospital. Officer Hohenstein was taken by family members to Albemarle Hospital for a leg injury where he was treated and later released.

Trooper Langley said neither alcohol nor speed were contributing factors in the accident that closed the northbound lane of the highway for about an hour.

The accident is under

investigation by the North Carolina Highway Patrol. As of Monday, no charges had been filed. The trooper's completed report must first be turned into the district highway patrol office before charges can be filed.

Other agencies responding included Hertford Fire Department, Hertford Police Department, and the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department.



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