

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Haven Acres Farms is just peachy, P. 2

Yates elected chairperson of Board of Education, P. 7

"News from Next Door"

JULY 27, 2011 - AUGUST 2, 2011

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50 cents

County to seek OK to buy ex-AEMC building

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

County commissioners have started the ball rolling on two major building projects.

Monday night, commissioners agreed to apply to the Local Government Commission, an agency of the state treasurer's office,

for approval to borrow up to \$1.4 million to buy the former Albemarle Electric building on Creek Drive in Winfall.

The actual purchase price is \$840,000 for the large office building, additional storage buildings, and four acres of land.

Commissioners plan to renovate the build-

ing to house the county's emergency services and emergency management agencies, and 911 communications center.

Local governments are required to seek LGC approval when borrowing to purchase real estate or engage in loans with terms over 60 months.

County Manager Bobby

Darden said some renovations would be needed to transform the large garage area into bays for EMS ambulances.

"We are hopeful we can borrow \$1.1 million, depending on the renovation cost estimates that come in," he said. Renovation bids are due Aug. 3 and county bank proposals

will be in by Aug. 5. The county plans to submit its application to the LGC in September.

Darden pointed out that the property has lots of storage space along with a fenced-in yard.

"This is a very good deal," he said.

Chairman Ben Hobbs said one cent of the coun-

ty's recent two-cent tax increase would fund repayment for the loan.

Darden said EMS officials have measured the distance that might affect response time for ambulances moving to Winfall from the current location just off South Edenton

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Animals seized from local kennels

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Joyful Blessings Kennels may not have been such a blessing for the animals that lived there.

Last week, officials raided a suspected puppy mill at the kennels located at 1260 Chapanoke Road and removed about 90 dogs, cats, and rabbits from what they termed deplorable conditions.

The kennel, which advertised grooming and cleaning services for dogs in addition to selling select small breeds, was operated by Robin Hardesty who lives at the residence.

The Humane Society of the United States' Animal Rescue Team was called in by District Attorney Frank Parrish to assist in the rescue of approximately 80 dogs, five cats and four rabbits from the property Thursday around 10 a.m. in near 100-degree temperatures. Many of the dogs were housed in unsanitary conditions and lacked proper socialization and medical care, said officials.

According to the HSUS, the dogs, mostly poodles, Yorkies and Maltese, were found packed in small wire feces-encrusted cages, many with severely matted fur and suffering from open wounds, flea/tick and parasite infestations. Ages ranged from two weeks to eight years.

Mother dogs and several litters of puppies, some as young as two weeks, were found overheated in under or un-airconditioned sheds or dehydrated in outdoor cages, officials said.

Local mobile veterinarian Robin Stamey, who is also president of Perquimans Animal Welfare Society, first alerted Parrish of the suspected puppy mill back in June after she received photos



Dogs were found living in dirty cages inside of one of the unairconditioned buildings found at 1260 Chapanoke Road.

PHOTO COURTESY NORFOLK CHAPTER OF THE SPCA



HSUS/KIMALBOUM PHOTO

The Humane Society of the United States' Animal Rescue Team was called in by District Attorney Frank Parrish to assist in the rescue of approximately 90 dogs, five cats and four rabbits from 1260 Chapanoke Road last week. This dog suffered a serious eye infection.

torney to investigate and he did," she said. "As a result, the sheriff's department obtained a search warrant for Thursday."

Sheriff Eric Tilley said he was notified by Parrish about a week before the raid that Parrish's investigator had determined that the property was indeed the site of a puppy mill. A puppy mill is defined as a kennel used to breed dogs continuously to sell for profit. Tilley obtained

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sent to her anonymously. On Thursday, she volunteered along with her assistants, members of the Norfolk SPCA and USHS in triaging the animals found at the scene. After about six hours, the animals were transported to

the Norfolk SPCA where they were cleaned, medically treated, and will be offered for adoption.

"I had suspicions about that place for some time," said Stamey. "I have cared for some of the animals that have been

purchased from there by other people, and saw questionable health conditions in those dogs."

When she received the anonymous tip along with photos, her suspicions were confirmed.

"I asked the district at-

S-bridge to close Monday

From staff reports

Beginning Monday, the historic S-bridge and Causeway will close for nearly four weeks for maintenance.

Randy Williams, with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, said the bridge and roadway would close Aug. 1-26.

Approximately 130 repair orders have to be completed before the bridge can be reopened for traffic, he said.

"We're trying to get it done before school begins," he added.

Perquimans County Schools are set to open Aug. 25.

Williams said much of the repair work is due to damage caused by rust.

Work crews will also make repairs to the Causeway while the road is closed to traffic, he pointed out.

While the road will be closed to vehicle traffic, the bridge will remain open to boat traffic. Williams said Coast Guard regulations prohibit closing the bridge to boat traffic without 30 days notice.

County tax collections fall slightly

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Even with a tough economy affected by mortgage foreclosures and job losses, tax collections in the county only fell slightly during the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

County Tax Administrator Frank Heath told county commissioners last week that his department collected \$6.5 million in real estate taxes and nearly \$363,000 in vehicle taxes since last July 1. The combined figures present a 95.46 percent tax collection rate for the fiscal year that ended June 30.

"Basically, it's about the same as last year," he added.

Last year, the county collected 95.65 percent in combined taxes, just .19 percent more than the amount collected for 2010-2011.

"We're trying to tread water and hold our heads above water," Heath told commissioners. "We have been very fortunate in the past, but the trend around the state is seeing tax collection rates going down for the past two years."

Collection rates for areas with less than 25,000 in population is averaging 94.79, he said. While the Perquimans tax collection rate is less than the year before, it is still above the state average in areas with comparative populations.

He expects collections to become ever tougher next year, he cautioned.

"When taxpayers have no job, no bank account, it is tougher to

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1930 first-graders enjoy 80-year reunion

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

For the first time since sharing school lunches together 80 years ago, the 1930 first grade class at Whiteston School enjoyed a meal together during a reunion last Wednesday.

Sitting around a table decorated by flowers and a balloon that declared "It's not the age - it's the attitude", the octogenarian classmates laughed, joked, reminisced, and enjoyed seeing photos that brought back memories of long ago. They also enjoyed seeing new photos of today's family members.

Seven out of the original 12 class members made the trip. Two others were not able to travel,



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Seven out of 12 members of the first-grade class at Whiteston School gathered for their first reunion and enjoyed eating at the same table, a first since eating lunch together in school 80 years ago.

el, and three have died.

Only two girls in the class with 10 boys made things interesting. Esther Maie White Klaphaak and Adalia Winslow Harrell, both 86, travelled from Louisville and West Point respectively to see the classmates once again.

"This has been just super," said Klaphaak who eventually became a librarian and teacher. "I am so glad we got together."

It was a special time of sharing memories from the school once located in the Nicanor community.

"Do you remember the day I ran away from school?" asked Ernest Winslow of Elizabeth City, the oldest of the class at 87 who eventually became a contractor. "It was the first day of school and

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