

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



See children's letters to Santa, 1B

Student Christmas artwork, 12A

"News from Next Door"

DECEMBER 21, 2011 - DECEMBER 27, 2011

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## Officials: Abandoned Dobbs house a problem

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

For the third time in 19 months, local police and firefighters have responded to an incident at a Dobbs Street home that is supposed to be vacant.

The house located at 413 Dobbs Street is becoming all too familiar to Hertford police officers and volun-

teer firefighters.

Both agencies responded to the house adjacent to 413 Dobbs Street for a reported gas leak in May 2010, to a reported fire in May 2011, and again last week when neighbors complained about a strong smell of kerosene coming from the house.

In each incident, officials reportedly found Kenneth

Ferebee living inside the abandoned house.

On Friday, interim Hertford Police Chief Mike Carver said police responded after neighbors complained of a strong smell of kerosene coming from the abandoned house. Hertford Fire Chief Todd Tilley and Emergency Management Coordinator Jarvis Winslow inspected the house

and found an old kerosene heater with a gas can stuck in it. They also found kerosene spilled on the floor and walls, Carver said.

Officials called the owner of the house, Johnny Anderson of New York, and were asked to make the house safe. Carver said the house was boarded up so no one can enter it.

"I spoke with several of

the neighbors and they are generally concerned about their safety," said Carver. "We had to do something."

Within one hour after boarding up the house Friday afternoon, Hertford Police Sgt. Kevin J. Worster, while on patrol, received word that Ferebee was at the Dobbs Street house. According to police reports, the boarded-up door to the

house had been kicked in and plywood had been torn off the house.

Worster found Ferebee at the back of the house. When police approached, Ferebee ran from the scene and Worster pursued him.

According to a police report, officers used a Taser to try and gain control of

See HOUSE, 8A

## CAROLING AT THE COURTHOUSE



STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Kindergartners at Perquimans Central School wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year as they sing Christmas carols in front of the county courthouse.



PERQUIMANS COUNTY SCHOOLS PHOTO

Students break into broad smiles as they carol on the courthouse lawn.

## INTERIM POLICE CHIEF TAKES OVER

STAFF PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Perquimans Clerk of Court Todd Tilley (left) swears in interim Hertford Police Chief Michael Carver at the Hertford police station.



## Hertford ends fiscal year on sound note

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

Hertford's general fund balance increased during the fiscal year that ended June 30 despite a sluggish economy.

According to the audit report presented to Hertford Council recently by Jeff Best of the accounting firm Pittard, Perry and Crone, the town's unassigned general funds grew to \$784,399, or about 53 percent of the general fund's expenses — well above the state Local Government Commission's requirement of 8 percent.

The fund increased by about \$28,000 from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

"That means the town could operate for half a year without additional revenue, which shows a fairly significant fund balance," Best said.

He attributed much of the fund increase to higher tax collections. The town's tax collection rate rose to 93.57 percent from 90.84 percent the previous year.

Unfortunately, the town's electricity and water budgets were not

See AUDIT, 8A

## Residents voice support for sanitary district

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

It appears, at least in the courtroom, that the two opposing Holiday Island groups are working together to create a sanitary district so a non-profit association formed by utility customers may buy and operate the problem-plagued wastewater treatment plant that serves the camping areas.

Just 10 days before Christmas, utility customers told Commissioner Bill Culpeper of the North Carolina Utilities Commission that they support forming a sanitary district by Minzies Creek Village, an unincorporated nonprofit association of utility customers in the Camp Holiday area of

Holiday Island. Residents also pledged to financially support the cause.

Attorney Steve Levitas, representing the Holiday Island Property Owners Association, said his clients are working with residents to find a solution.

William Grantmyre, staff attorney for the commission, said a sanitary district would be eligible for grants and loans where the homeowners group would not.

"It is my understanding that everyone's desire is to get a sanitary district," he said. However, he reminded residents attending the hearing that the application before the Commission is still about closure

See DISTRICT, 8A

## Council approves \$100K in projects

By CATHY WILSON  
Staff Writer

After 15 months of hard work, local volunteers working to improve Hertford through the North Carolina Small Towns Economic Prosperity program now begin to implement their projects.

Members of Hertford Council recently approved the group's list of projects which will total more than \$100,000 paid from NCSTEP grant funds. The projects affect town growth, development in various aspects and planning for the fu-

ture. They also will boost the economy and affect economic development.

"The folks who have worked on this committee throughout the past 15 months truly love the town of Hertford and want to make sure that the wonderful assets that drew us here and keep us here are able to shine to their fullest potential for visitors and residents alike," said Connie Jaklic one of the volunteers who has worked on NCSTEP since its inception. "Countless man

See PROJECTS, 8A

## Fire damages home

From staff reports

A fire Saturday afternoon caused considerable damage to a home on Artie Street in Hertford.

The home of E.T. and Faye Myers was damaged when fire broke out around 2 p.m. No one was home at the time of the fire.

The home is a one-story brick structure just off South Edenton Road Street.

Perquimans County Emergency Management Coordinator Jarvis Win-

slow said the cause of the fire remains under investigation, but there is no evidence of foul play.

Winslow said the fire appeared to have started in a back bedroom before spreading into the attic.

"And that's where she really took off," he said.

The roof did not collapse, but started sagging, he said.

Volunteer firefighters from Hertford, Bethel and Winfall responded.

Firefighters remained on the scene until about 3:45 p.m.

## PW HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Perquimans Weekly office will be closed for the Christmas holiday on Friday and Monday.

The office will also close at noon on Dec. 28, 29, and 30.

The office will be closed for the New Year's holiday on Monday, Jan. 2.

