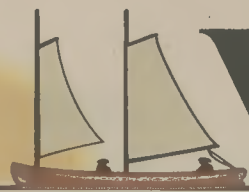


THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Pitching could be key for Pirates in upcoming season, Page 7

ROTARY NAMES STUDENTS OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY, PAGE 3

"News from Next Door"

FEBRUARY 29, 2012 - MARCH 6, 2012

50 cents

Board advised on industrial park drainage

By PETER WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

The trees are cut and the clock is ticking.

Now what? That's the situation presented to the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners Monday night by consultants working on Phase III of an industrial park off Harvey Point Road.

Dwane Hinson and others laid out plans to the board during the

work session but no decisions were requested and none were made.

The county owns the 118-acre site and timber has been cleared from 72 acres of it. The rest forms a buffer zone around the perimeter of the project. What Hinson asked the board to consider is taking the next step — digging small drainage ditches on-site to allow the land to dry out.

The county is working under a permit by U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers to develop the land, but the permits typically are good for five years. Perquimans has had theirs for about two. Digging the ditches would be a good-faith effort at showing the county is working on the project.

For about \$14,200, Hinson suggested digging 1,500-feet of V-shaped ditching about three feet deep. That would cost about \$7,500. Another \$6,700 would be needed for erosion control.

"I think all of us want to dry

it (the site) out," board Chairman Ben Hobbs said.

How much the board wants to spend to improve the site was debated. More intensive ditching and retention ponds could be built, as well as roads. But each comes with a dollar cost.

The clock isn't only ticking on



Hobbs

the Army Corps permit. Mother nature has her own clock. Hinson cautioned that some discussion should be done about how to control the vegetation.

"In three years, it's going to start growing back up. Clearing the land for more intensive development will require several thousand dollars per acre ranging in cost from \$70,000 to \$140,000 dollars, plus the cost for the es-

See DRAINAGE, 5

NEED MORE ROOM TO JUMP AROUND



PETER WILLIAMS/THE DAILY ADVANCE

Pre-K teacher Angela Burke claps in rhythm as two students in her class jump in time to a song at Perquimans Central School, Friday. Higher kindergarten enrollment could mean the school district would have to limit pre-K to just one class in 2012-13, even though Gov. Beverly Perdue has provided more money for programs across the state.

Lack of space confining pre-K programs

By PETER WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

More money won't necessarily mean more kids in pre-kindergarten programs in Perquimans County because there isn't enough space to take the students that have already applied.

The public school system has gone from three pre-k classrooms in 2010-11 down to two this year and may only have enough space for one next year.

Last week Gov. Bev Perdue's released a plan to provide another \$9.3 million for pre-k and add 2,000 more slots statewide for at-risk 4-year-olds. The other

four counties in the Albemarle area can expect to get money to accommodate 57 more kids. Perquimans won't get any because it hasn't been able to use its existing allocation.

The issue boils down to space. School systems must by law accept children in grades k-12 but they don't have to provide facili-

ties for the 4-year-olds.

Perquimans Central School had a flood of kindergarten students apply for this school year, which squeezed out the space that could have been used for pre-k classes. Next year this year's kindergarten students will

See SPACE, 4

Colson murder suspect arrested

By PETER WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

Perquimans County Sheriff Eric Tilley says luck played a role in the quick arrest of a suspect in the murder of a Hertford man last week.

Michael Helms, 19, was arrested Feb. 22 for the death of 28-year-old Chad Austin Colson the day



Helms

before. Colson's body was found Feb. 21 in a shallow ditch on Holiday Island Road. Results of an autopsy have not been released, but Tilley said he believes Colson was stabbed.

Helms worked for a company doing construction work in Chowan County, but Tilley would not release the name of the company.

"He (Helms) was working in Edenton and the company bent over backwards to cooperate with us," Tilley said. "The man who owns the company didn't want the name of the company released and since he bent over backwards to help, I said OK."

Tilley said Helms' father told the sheriff's department that his son had been arrested in the past in South Carolina for break-

See ARREST, 4

S-bridge closing for repairs

From staff reports

The "S-bridge" on Church Street in downtown Hertford will be closed to vehicle traffic for up to a week starting March 5 while repairs are done to the bridge tender's office.

On Jan. 7, the driver of a F-250 pickup truck lost control and struck street signs, tree limbs and a pump station before hitting a piling that supports the office. The truck in turn went into the Perquimans River. The driver, John Rodney Griffin III of Williamston, escaped serious injury. He was charged with driving while impaired in connection with an accident.

Randy Williams, a bridge engineer with the N.C. Department of Transportation, said he hopes the repairs to the 1928-era swing bridge



FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY ADVANCE

The S-Bridge in Hertford is seen in this photo taken May 20, 2010. The bridge will close briefly starting March 5 while repairs are made to the bridge tender's office.

won't take long, but he's allotted five days for the job.

"Not only did he hit it, it broke off the piling," Williams said. "There is no danger of the bridge house falling in, but if we got a heavy storm come in, it's not as stable as it was."

The old wood piling will be replaced with one made of concrete.

Boat traffic will be able to pass through the span during the repairs, but few boats do in the winter, Williams said.

"This time a year we'll have a few openings a month."

Three more file for commissioner seats

By PETER WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

Decision 2012

Four people had filed for seats on the Perquimans County Commission as of Monday.

Kyle Jones, 26, and Julie Stamper Phelps, 50, filed the necessary paperwork Monday to become candidates for the county board. Matthew Peeler, 51, filed on Friday and incumbent Janice Cole turned in her paperwork on Feb. 13. The deadline to file is Wednesday.

Also filing for office Monday was Steven Magaro who is seeking a seat on the Perquimans County School Board. He is now one of three seeking one of three seats on that board. Others are Arlene Yates and Susan Cox. Register of

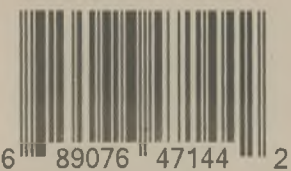
Deeds Deborah Reed filed on Feb. 13 and was unopposed as of Monday.

Jones, a Republican, recently received his law degree from Liberty University School of Law in Lynchburg, VA, and will sit for the North Carolina Bar Exam this week. He also attended East Carolina University, where he earned a B.S. in Political Science and Public Administration.

He wants to make Perquimans his home again.

"I went through a phase where I wasn't sure I wanted to come back, weighing

See THREE FILE, 4



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