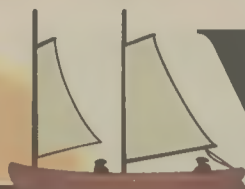


THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



See PCMS sports awards photos, 10

"News from Next Door"

JUNE 6, 2012 - JUNE 12, 2012

JUN 06 2012

50 cents

No tax increase in county budget

Employees would get 2-percent pay hike

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Perquimans County commissioners will consider a proposed budget for the next fiscal year

that includes no tax hike, gives the school district slightly more money than last year, holds the line on utility fees, and awards county employees a 2-percent pay raise.

Monday night, County Manager Frank Heath presented a proposed \$12.7 million general fund budget for 2012-13 that

spends less than 1 percent more than the current year's amended budget. Because of slow growth in revenues, funding for county departments basically remains the same as last year.

"Fiscal Year 2012 was a challenging budget year for Perquimans County and Fiscal Year 2013 promises more of the same,"

Heath told commissioners in his written budget message. "Perquimans' economic growth, like (that in) many counties in our region, is still in a weakened state. Although we have seen some improvement in sales tax revenues, ad valorem property tax growth remains at below one percent. Despite the continued stagnation of economic conditions that leads to little revenue growth, the budget proposes no tax increase, keeping the ad-valorem property tax rate at 44 cents per \$100 (of property) value."

Revenues from property taxes are expected to increase by less

See BUDGET, 8

Civil War footstone returns home

From staff reports

A Confederate soldier who has been dead more than 100 years was remembered in a ceremony Saturday, in which his missing footstone was dedicated after being returned to his gravesite by the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Uriah Winslow Speight, who was a sergeant in Co. I, Regiment 17 of the North Carolina Infantry for the Confederate States Army, was taken prisoner of war at the Battle of Roanoke Island in 1862. He was eventually released and returned to his native Perquimans County. He died on Jan. 5, 1912.

While the government created footstones for Confederate veterans back then, the stone was not given to the family if the grave already had a marker. To this day, no one knows the whereabouts of the Speight's footstone from the time it was created by the government until it showed up last autumn when the Magruder-Ewell Camp of the SCV in Newport News learned the marker still existed.

The footstone was in the hands of a thrift store owner who wanted to see the marker returned to Speight's family. Harry Winslow of Hertford said the footstone apparently was bought at a flea market and later traced to the Perquimans County veteran.

The Magruder-Ewell Camp contacted the William F. Martin Camp and plans to return it began.

On Saturday, approxi-



STAFF PHOTOS BY CATHY WILSON

Mary Beth Merrell sings "Amazing Grace" during Saturday's ceremony marking the return of a footstone to the gravesite of a Confederate soldier from Perquimans.



Dressed in Confederate attire, an honor guard fires a 21-gun salute at Saturday's ceremony.

mately 35 people watched the unveiling of the footstone, with gunfire salutes from gray-clad SCV members and the singing of "Amazing Grace" and

"Dixie." Members of the WFM and ME camps participated in colonial dress as well as members of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

One of the Speight family members, Oscar Elbert White Jr. of Edenton, gave a brief, but emotional speech expressing appreciation.



An unidentified man portraying a Confederate general stands at attention during Saturday's ceremony at Cedar Wood Cemetery. The service marked the return of a footstone to the gravesite of Uriah Winslow Speight, a Confederate soldier from Perquimans.

"Both of my parents died in 2007 and I thought that you lose a lot of your family history when somebody like that passes away," White said. "And it's good to know that there's still ways to remember members of your

family." Before he died, Speight served as a register of deeds for the county. William West of The Daily Advance and Cathy Wilson of The Perquimans Weekly contributed to this story.

Stevenson, Copeland lead Class of '12

From staff reports

Sarah Stevenson and Katie Copeland will graduate as valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, Friday night at Perquimans County High School.

The duo will lead the Class of 2012 during commencement exercises at 7 p.m. on the Perquimans County Schools Veterans' Memorial Field. Approximately 102 seniors are expected to receive diplomas during the ceremony.

This year's Top 10 honor students

include Jennifer Shriver, Shannon Johnson, Katie Copeland, Sarah Stevenson, Dakota Givens, Molly Newbern, Shoniqua Powell, Allen Kishpaugh, Desember Mears and Brittany Chappell.

Stevenson, daughter of Henry and Mary Ann Norman of Belvidere and Keith and Lynette Stevenson of Elizabeth City, plans to at-



Copeland



Stevenson

tend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to major in pharmacy. Her main goal after leaving high school is to stay focused and to do her best in college. She will also strive to have herself in her next

fun and enjoy stage in life.

Stevenson says her most

See CLASS, 8

One Hertford officer fired, another resigns

DA: Officers no longer effective witnesses

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

A Hertford police sergeant and patrolman are no longer employed by the town after town officials were notified by the district attorney that the two law enforcement officers may not be effective witnesses in future court cases.

Hertford Town Manager Brandon Shoaf said Sgt. Shawn Swindell and Officer Glenn Needham ended their employment with the Hertford Police Department May 9. Swindell was terminated by Shoaf and Needham resigned, said Shoaf.

The change in employment occurred five days after "the district attorney decided he wouldn't accept testimony" from the two officers, explained Shoaf.

According to a May 4 letter from District Attorney Frank Parrish to former interim Police Chief Mike Carver, the district attorney's office is obligated to disclose any impeaching

evidence pertaining to a key witness in court cases. Failing to do so could result in constitutional error.

"In the case of both Officer Needham and Sgt. Swindell, the state would be obliged to disclose such impeaching evidence to defense counsel," the letter states. "This impeaching evidence, with respect to each of these officers would, in my opinion, severely undermine and impair their effectiveness as state's witnesses," Parrish wrote.

Shoaf said he believed the fact that Swindell was convicted of misdemeanor assault in July 2011 in connection with an altercation involving former police chief Joe Amos and Kenneth Ferebee is the impeaching evidence Parrish was alluding to Swindell. Swindell has been administrative duty every since the conviction, Shoaf pointed out.

Regarding Needham,

See POLICE, 4

Summer Breeze concert is Sunday

By CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

The season's first Summer Breeze Concert set for Sunday evening will feature the talents of local musician Travis Walsh.

The free concert gets underway at 6 p.m. on the grounds of the Newbold-White House. The grounds will open one hour before the concert. Bring a lawn chair, a blanket, or a picnic basket for the



FILE PHOTO

Travis Walsh and Cosmos kick off the Summer Breeze Concert Series Sunday on the grounds of the Newbold-White House.

Center.

Walsh and acoustic group Cosmos perform jazz, blues, bluegrass, gypsy and rock music. Walsh is a singer-songwriter who relocated from New York to the Albemarle area in 2003. He plays guitar, performs as a solo artist, and as a part of several musical groups, including the House Blend Band, TMG, Riddle, and most recently Cosmos. His broad musical interests and songs reflect largely on his life and family.

whole family.

In the event of inclement weather, the concert moves indoors to the Perquimans County Recreation



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