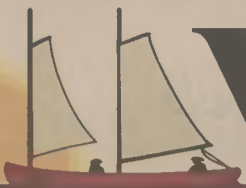


THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

JANUARY 16, 2013 - JANUARY 22, 2013

50 cents

Public embracing new traffic ticket system

PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A new system that allows drivers to pay traffic tickets on-line is gaining traction in Perquimans County, according to county officials.

Perquimans County Clerk of Superior Court Todd Tilley said his office had 1,023 tickets processed using the new system last year. That compares to 479 in Pasquotank County and 69 in Chowan.

The Perquimans total represents less than half of the total number of tickets processed in the county last year, but Tilley said the acceptance of the new program is a positive sign. The county handled a total of 2,644 tickets, including those using the

new system. The system was rolled out last year. In the first year, Perquimans County collected \$248,000 using it. "Citizens conveniently may make their payment from anywhere Internet connectivity is available,"

Tilley said last week. "I encourage citizens not wanting to appear in court regarding their traffic citation to save gas and time and go online to pay." Tilley said going to the courthouse to pay a traffic ticket could take as little as

five minutes plus the time it takes to drive there. If the office is busy, the wait could be longer. Paying the ticket on-line takes seconds.

The system accepts

See TICKET, 3

Spare dirt becomes gun range for retiring gas station owner

By PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

W.D. Allen didn't start out with plans to build the only public rifle and pistol range in the Albemarle.

He was simply trying to make a living selling gas.

But when the state widened U.S. 17 outside of Hertford in the 1990s, it meant losing his old gas station and building a new one back away from the new road. And in the process, came the new sideline of selling ammunition and running a gun range.

Allen and his wife Della sold gasoline in the Hertford area since the late 1960s until they closed the doors for the last time on Dec. 29.

MORE ON THIS STORY

Gun range may still have a future — 4

The gun range started with some leftover dirt.

"The man building the road said he had some dirt he needed to get rid of and asked if he could put it on my land," Allen recalled last week. "It started off with one pile across the back."

Allen figured he could use the dirt as a backstop for when he might want to zero in a hunting rifle.

"Then he showed up and he had more dirt."

Both the rifle and pistol ranges are fully enclosed inside a dirt berm 12-feet-tall.

"From there it took off far more than I ever expected it to," Allen said. "I just expected a few local fellas would use it when they needed to zero in their rifles to go hunting."

In the end, he said between 25 and 30 percent of his customers were women who'd just gotten a concealed weapons license and wanted to practice.

"Most of the time when the weather was nice you'd have a few people



SUBMITTED PHOTO

W.D. Allen works on a bow for a customer at his gas station on U.S. Highway 17 between Hertford and Edenton. Allen closed the doors Dec. 29 and sold the business to Duck Thru. The future of the gun range is being debated.



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

A sign indicates that the gun range is now closed, Monday.

"I was drawing people from Virginia and from the beach, all around. And I never advertised it. I didn't want a bunch of anti-gun nuts creating trouble."

But in December, Allen called it quits.

"Working six days a week gets to you," said Allen, who will turn 75 years old on Feb. 3. His knees are worn out, probably a byproduct from years of running around working on cars and pumping gas.

"Both my knees are wore out. I've been doing this for 43 years. Remember back when gas stations had a rubber cord running across each driveway?"

When cars rode over the cord, a bell would ring letting the gas attendant

know that a customer was there.

"I was doing mechanic work back then and when I heard that bell, I'd stop what I was doing, run out and pump \$2 worth of gas, check the oil, wash the windshield and when I was finished go back to the car I was working on until the bell rang again."

When Allen started, there were four gas stations in downtown Hertford. Today there is only one.

The brand names of the gas changed. First it was Sinclair, then Mobil then Chevron. Finally Allen got tired of changing the sign out in front of the building and named the station Allen's Archery.

"When you're running a small business in a small community, every nickel counts. You have to do what you do to survive."

Official: Alcohol permits bad idea

Kelly: Drinking on county land risky

By PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The easiest way to protect Perquimans County from a lawsuit stemming from the sale of alcoholic beverages at a county building would be to never allow the sale to take place in the first place.

That's one argument County Manager Frank Heath has heard.

It comes in a paper written by the director of risk management for a state group that represents county commissions.



Heath

Perquimans County was asked this month to relax the rules dealing with alcohol sales at the county's recreation center. The board took no action, but agreed to consider it.

The request came from a local Ducks Unlimited Chapter as well as the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Michael Kelly, the risk management director for the N.C. Association of County Commissioners, said many small rural counties don't allow alcohol sales in county-owned buildings because of the liability and because it opens up a door that may take them to a place they don't want to go.

"The county manager is charged with the responsibility to look at the worst case scenario in which the county got involved in a lawsuit that exceeded the amount of insurance they had," Kelly said Monday.

"If the person using the property doesn't have enough (insurance) the party that owns the building would come into play. The safest decision is just to not do it. That has nothing to do with Ducks Unlimited."

"I can't remember small counties getting into this (alcohol sales). When you're talking Perquimans, Chowan and Pasquotank and all around the sound, let's face it, they have a conservative posture. They see it as assuming a risk that they don't feel good about."

Also saying yes to a

See ALCOHOL, 4

Retired admiral to speak at Farm-City Banquet

From staff reports

A retired rear admiral will be the guest speaker at the annual Perquimans Farm-City Banquet at the Perquimans Recreation Center later this month.

Benny Suggs is now

the executive director of the N.C. State University Alumni Association. In addition to his naval service, Suggs served as general manager of the Harley Owners Group (HOG) and Rider Services at Harley-Davidson Motor Co.,

Farm-City Week and associated events are held to promote understanding between rural and non-rural citizens across North Carolina.

The banquet will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 24 with a meal sponsored by agribusinesses in the county. County corn, soybean and wheat yield awards will be presented along with a special awards. Tickets are distributed on a first



Suggs

come-first served basis. To receive your complimentary tickets, visit the Perquimans County Extension Center.

Suggs served 30 years in the U.S. Navy and retired in 2000 as deputy commander in chief, U.S. Special Operations Command. He also served as commander of Carrier Group Six/John C. Stennis Battle Group and was director for Operations,

Plans and Policy for the U.S. Atlantic Fleet where he was responsible for the training and deployment preparations of more than 175,000 personnel.

A Naval aviator, Suggs earned his Naval Aviation Wings in 1971. He has received the Defense Meritorious and Distinguished Service medals, five Legion of Merit medals and two Navy Commendation medals.



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