

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Inside Today:  
**WEDDING  
SHOWCASE**

"News from Next Door"

JANUARY 30, 2013 - FEBRUARY 5, 2013

50 cents

## Charges against ex-Hertford cops dismissed

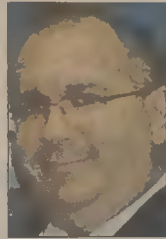
From staff reports

HERTFORD — Charges of misdemeanor assault against two former top Hertford police officials have been dismissed, apparently as the result of a settlement agreement between the town of Hertford and the family of the man the former officers were convicted in District Court of assaulting.

The charges of misdemeanor

assault inflicting serious injury against Joe Amos and Shawn Swindell were dismissed in Perquimans Superior Court on Monday, officials told The Perquimans Weekly.

Both Amos, a former chief of the Hertford Police Department,



Amos



Swindell

But an agreement struck by the town of Hertford's insurance carrier and the family of Ken-

eth Ferebee apparently prompted prosecutors to dismiss the charges. Ferebee is the Perquimans County man both former officers are accused of assaulting in May 2010.

According to a copy of a letter from Ferebee's sister, Collette Ferebee Lawrence, to District Attorney Frank Parrish dated Jan. 10, all civil claims arising from the incident that led to the charges against Amos and Swin-

dell have been "satisfactorily resolved." As a result, Ferebee's family "takes no position" on how the case against the former officers is resolved, Lawrence said.

"Further, we will not oppose or object to a dismissal with prejudice of the pending criminal charges," Lawrence's letter states.

See **CHARGES**, 2



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Hertford Grammar School's local Science Fair winners are John Masterson, Colby Brown, Jackson Russell, Jewel Benton, Hunter Scott, Jaden Sawyer, Sarah Jordan, Emma Nixon, Madison Byrd, Tiffany Mathis, Carly Elliot, Kaylin Russell, Selena Shuey, Nash Heath and Kaysie Mire. Jason Griffin, instructional facilitator, and school principal Linda White are standing in back.

## Grant helps love of science grow

By **PETER WILLIAMS**  
News Editor

Local farmers have been planting seeds at Hertford Grammar School this year, but not the soybeans and corn many are used to.

They planted the seeds that may grow into the next generation of scientists.

Through a grant program provided by Monsanto, the school system got \$10,000 to provide more support for science fairs at the grammar school, middle school and high school.

Perquimans County got the money because local farmers gave their support and voted for the Hertford-based school district in the contest sponsored by the seed company. More than 1,000 applications were made and just 176 school systems won. Perquimans County was one of just four in the state.

The first sprouts were visible last week when Hertford Grammar School held its annual science fair. Teachers say \$10,000 helped students take their projects to the next level.

About \$4,000 of the money went to pay for teachers to work extra hours to tutor students on science. Another \$4,000 was used on technology, like iPads. The rest went to supplies and overhead.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Hertford Grammar School's top three fifth-grade science fair winners are Kaysie Mire (first place), Nash Heath (second) and Selena Shuey (third). The three are will advance to a regional fair at East Carolina University and are pictured with instructional facilitator Jason Griffin and principal Linda White.

See **SCIENCE**, 7

## School looks at scaled-back sports complex

By **PETER WILLIAMS**  
News Editor

Eliminating showers in the locker rooms may be one of the steps needed in order to bring down the cost of a new athletic complex at Perquimans County High School.

School leaders debated a scaled-back plan for an athletic complex Monday and hope to take the plan to the Perquimans County Commission in February to consider it.

The original \$6.2 million proposal included a football field, track, tennis courts, field house and a soccer field.

But county leaders asked the school board to go back and come up with a plan that would phase in the improvements instead of doing them all at once.

In 2010 the board of education agreed to a five-year option on 33 acres of farmland across from the high school owned by Dr. William Nixon of Wilmington, a PCHS graduate.

The revised plan would cost \$2.9 million and includes just the football field, track and a smaller field house. The original 8,700-square-foot field house would be pared down to 4,800 square feet. The same building would also house bathrooms for the spectators and the concession stand. The original plan had stand-alone bathrooms totalling 3,500 square feet and a separate concession stand.

The new plan was unveiled by John Thomas Jr., of MBAJ Architecture in Raleigh and Jay Overton, president of Albemarle Associates.

"We're going to need much more, but we had to get us started," Thomas said.

But it was the design of the new field house that considered Susan Cox. She's a school board member and former athletic director. She said the school has to provide a place for referees to change clothes that is isolated from the players. Under the new plan submitted Monday, referees would have to use the coach's office and the only way to get there would be by walking through the locker room where players would gather.

The architects said if they could eliminate the showers they could use that space and redesign the building around the new footprint and address that problem.

"Are your students going to shower?" asked Thomas.

"From my experience, they don't take showers," Cox said.

Thomas said in his survey of 11 schools in the state the showers are typically locked or used for storage.

Cox also questioned mixing athletes

See **COMPLEX**, 7

## Towns narrow gap on electric rates

By **PETER WILLIAMS**  
News Editor

The gap between the electricity sold by small towns like Hertford and those of the big for-profit state utilities is narrowing.

That's the good news. But the gap isn't narrowing because Hertford power is cheaper so much as it is that power from Progress Energy and Duke Power is getting more expensive, said Brandon Shoaf, the town manager in Hertford.

"There used to be a big disparity, I can't lie to you, but it's getting smaller."

In 2011, the gap between average wholesale power

cost for municipal utilities and the amount spent by for-profit utilities was about 3.8 cents per kilowatt-hour. Today it's about 3.1 cents.

Hertford is among a group of 32 utilities that form the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency. The group was formed in 1965 at a time when for-profit utilities,

See **ELECTRIC**, 7

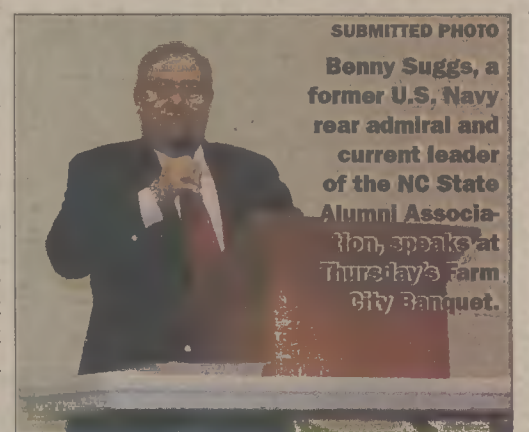
## Banquet honors local farmers

By **PETER WILLIAMS**  
News Editor

More than 150 Perquimans County residents gathered last week to celebrate a good harvest in 2012 and look forward to the future.

The annual Farm-City Banquet has been held in the county for decades. Among the goals is to honor the top producers in three categories — corn, wheat and soybeans. Combined they represent about 65,000 acres of the crops planted

See **BANQUET**, 7



SUBMITTED PHOTO  
Benny Suggs, a former U.S. Navy rear admiral and current leader of the NC State Alumni Association, speaks at Thursday's Farm-City Banquet.

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