

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



MAR 06 REC'D



Pets of the Week, 3

Ex-Perquimans manager Keaton to retire, 7

"News from Next Door"

MARCH 6, 2013 - MARCH 12, 2013

50 cents

Deputy responds to gun threat at school

By PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

When the call went out last week that a 13-year-old student at Perquimans County Middle School had a gun, it didn't take long for a deputy to respond.

The gun turned out to be a toy, but the response from Perquimans County Depu-

ty David Murray was real. Murray was just a mile away — at Perquimans Central School — when the call came. That probably wouldn't have happened if the incident happened just a week before.

Murray was a Central because the Perquimans County School Board agreed last month to spend

up to \$30,000 from its reserve fund to hire the second school resource officer. Murray works fulltime for the sheriff's department. But since last week he and other deputies have been moonlighting in their off hours covering both of the schools on the Winfall side of the river.

The sheriff's department

already has a full-time SRO stationed at Perquimans County High School — a 10-minute drive from the middle school. The new deputy splits his time between Central and the middle school. The high school SRO serves that school and Hertford Grammar School.

Murray, who has worked for the sheriff's department

since July 2009, expressed an interest in the school resource officer position, according to Sheriff Eric Tilley. Murray is going to be



Pictured is an example of the type of airsoft toy pistol that was confiscated from a student at Perquimans Middle School last week.

See GUN THREAT, 2

GIVE SO OTHERS MY LIVE



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Red Cross worker Laura Wynne tends to Quinton Brickhouse while he donates blood at the Perquimans County Recreation Center on Thursday. Twenty-five units of blood were collected, which was shy of the Red Cross' goal. Some donors couldn't give because their iron levels were low. Another drive is set for Monday in the fellowship hall of New Hope United Methodist Church. The event is from 2 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Schools may be forced to trim teachers

Sequester will cost district 2 teachers, more cuts loom

By PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The federal sequester will cost the Perquimans County Schools two teachers and the fate of four more positions also hinge on funding to pay for them.

Because of the automatic federal spending cuts imposed last week, Superintendent Dwayne Stallings expects to lose one Title I reading teacher and one teacher that deals with the handicapped. The sequester doesn't immediately cut funding for the jobs. Money is available for the remainder of this school year, but unless a deal is reached those positions won't be available when school resumes in August.



Stallings

To put it in perspective, since the economic downturn started, the local school system has lost 17 positions. It still has about 330 employees and 170 of those are teachers.

The school system is already using reserve funds to pay for four other positions. Two teachers and two teacher assistants are being paid this year with about \$150,000 out of the fund balance.

But that may not be sustainable if the schools expect to keep three months worth of local cash on hand for emergencies.

The school system is already using \$244,000 of the \$1 million it had in reserve as of the start of this school year. The teaching salaries made up a bulk of the \$244,000, but it also includes

See SEQUESTER, 2

Program that feeds elderly needs volunteers

By PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A weaker economy and higher gas prices are putting a pinch on the agency that provides meals to homebound elderly residents in Perquimans County.

Audrey Holland, volunteer administration for the Albemarle Commission's senior nutrition program, said the issue is putting a strain on volunteers.

The federal government provides the meals, but volunteers are needed to deliver them. In Perquimans County there are 19 people who get fed Monday through Friday through the program.

But in the last year, the number of volunteers has



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Nellie Sawyer delivers a meal to Odessa Harrell, who herself delivered meals for 20 years in Winfall and Hertford. More volunteers are needed.

dedicated volunteers out.

A typical volunteer is an older adult who has retired and has the time and desire to help.

"The problem is some people who would have normally retired by now are still working because they've lost their retirement and savings," Holland said. "And some of the younger people don't feel as compelled to give back to the community."

Rising gasoline prices

See VOLUNTEERS, 2

Gardening help is now one phone call away

By PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Blotch on your buckeye? Fire ants in your fescue? Heather Gillespie and other Master Gardeners are there to help starting this week. They will be manning a helpline for residents of Chowan, Gates and Perquimans County every Tuesday and Thursday from



PHOTO COURTESY NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Controlling fire ants is just one of the questions posed to Master Gardeners using the hot line.

she's manned the phones in the past. She got involved in the Master Gardeners program in 2001 when she lived in Virginia and continued on when she moved to Perquimans County in 2004.

Extension Master Gardener volunteers work with NC State University's Cooperative Extension office. They are trained

to provide unbiased, research-based educational assistance and programs in horticulture and environmental issues to the gardening public.

One common question in early spring deals with how to control fire ants. One popular — but ineffective and dangerous solution — is to pour gasoline on the mound and set it on fire.

Gillespie says don't do it. "The number one thing is don't disturb the mound," she said last week. "If you do that

See GARDENING, 4

READING HOUR



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Superintendent Dwayne Stallings prepares to read the Dr. Seuss book "One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish" to kindergarten students at Perquimans Central on Thursday. The schools were celebrating Read Across America week. About 75 volunteers work with reading in the school district.



10 a.m. until noon. The number is 482-6585. Gillespie has heard a lot of landscaping lament when

<p>Forbes Realty & Auctions, LLC 252-426-1380 • www.forbesuc.com</p>	<p>Albemarle Plantation 205 Randolph Loop S., Hertford</p>	<p>Lot is Over 1 Acre 2 Floors of Windows</p>	<p>3 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths Kitchen w/Granite Countertops</p>	<p>Formal Dining Room Large FROG w/Wet Bar</p>	<p>Large Walk-In Shower Listed at \$375,000</p>	<p>Featured Property of the Week www.forbesuc.com 252-426-1380</p>
--	--	---	--	--	---	--