

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Pirates taking lessons into Coastal play, 8

"News from Next Door"

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STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Two vacant homes were destroyed and a third was damaged early Friday by a fire in the 800 block of King Street in Hertford. The Hertford Fire Department received the alarm around 2:50 a.m. and by the time they got there the two homes were fully engulfed in flame. Neither was occupied at the time, but one was undergoing repairs according to Hertford Fire Chief Robert Reed. No cause of the blaze was known Friday and there was no estimate as to the total damage.

## Fire destroys two homes

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

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was disrupted on Edenton Road Street.

The Hertford Fire Department got help from departments in Winfall and Bethel as well as Elizabeth City.

"Elizabeth City came with their ladder truck which was a big help," Reed said Friday.

The added height helped firefighters spray water down into the fire. Still both of the homes were totally destroyed Reed said.

Another home in the 800 block of King Street did suffer heat damage.

"That's the one we concentrated on when we got there,"

Reed said. The siding was melted and buckled from the heat but the building wasn't destroyed. The family that lived there was given temporary housing help from the American Red Cross. An electrical inspection was planned and if the wiring checks out, the home can be reoccupied, Reed said. Friday afternoon crews were working to repair the outside damage.

The fire chief had no cause for the fire and no estimate of the total damage. The Hertford Police Department was called in to secure the scene. Police Chief Douglas Freeman could not be reached for comment.

## Teachers surveyed on work conditions

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Teachers across North Carolina are being asked again to rate the working conditions at their schools.

The survey runs through April 4.

Local school officials say the survey helps them determine where improvements need to be made. It's valued enough that in the off years when the state doesn't do a survey, Superintendent Dwayne Stallings has the school system do one on their own, said Brenda Lassiter, a spokesman for the school system.

"It is a tool," Lassiter said of the survey. "It lets you know where there are weaknesses."

In the 2012 survey, two of the four schools saw their rating drop when it came to the question of "overall, my school is a good place to work and learn." That survey compared 2010 with 2012.

At Perquimans Central School, the percentage of teachers answering yes fell from 94.3 percent to 89.2 percent. At Hertford Grammar School the numbers improved 80.6 to 83.9. Perquimans County Middle School also showed a gain from 80.6 percent to 83.9 percent.

Perquimans County High School saw a dip from 90 percent to 87.8 percent.

Comparing the data from 2012 to what is happening today might be misleading. It also takes time

See CONDITIONS, 2

## AMBASSADORS VISIT



SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Perquimans Sheriff Eric Tilley (above, right) dances with a Harlem Ambassadors player Monday during a charity basketball game at Perquimans County High School. The Perquimans Schools Foundation and The Rotary of Hertford hosted the event. The Foundation will use their proceeds for scholarships and Rotary will use their proceeds for community related projects. All 800 tickets were sold and some had to be turned away at the door.

Debie Owens (left photo) of Hertford gets encouraged to do a little dance by Harlem Ambassadors player Lade Majic Monday night.

## Hertford agrees to more talks

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Hertford officials want to continue discussions with Duke Power on a deal that would allow municipalities a chance to sell their share of Duke-owned power plants.

Hertford is one of 32 members of the N.C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency. The agency owns shares in the plants.

Because of issues in the 1980s, the debt owned by the agency and the municipalities can make up about a third of a customer's electric bill. The municipal group has sought financial relief.

A closed-door meeting with power agency officials was held April 6 at Albemarle Plantation. It included members of the Edenton town council. The following Monday in an open meeting, the Hertford town board unanimously adopted a resolution to move forward with talks.

Town Manager Brandon Shoaf said he can't say much about the discussions with Duke. He signed a confidentiality agreement and the town board is bound by it as well.

He did say that the town's action doesn't bind it to a final decision to approve a deal, it simply says the town supports more discussion.

The power agency says the process could take 12 to 24 months. It would require regulatory approval and perhaps even the support or approval of the legislature. In the end all 32 members of NCEMPA would have to agree to it. If even one failed to do so, the deal would be off.

The municipalities own a share in the two nuclear power plants at the Brunswick facility in Southport as well as a share in the Harris nuclear plant near Raleigh. It also owns shares in two coal-

See MORE TALKS, 2

## Pierce named YMCA vice president for healthy living

From staff reports

Wendy Pierce has been named to a new position as vice president of healthy living for the YMCA of South Hampton Roads — an organization that serves 250,000 children and families throughout a two-state region.

Pierce lives in Hertford with her husband Wade, three daughters and four dogs.

The YMCA of South Hampton Roads serves coastal Virginia and northeastern North Carolina. One of the centers is in Elizabeth City. The group has a \$45.6 million budget and is the ninth largest YMCA in the country.

Pierce works in the main YMCA office in Virginia.

Pierce's position will



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oversee the implementation of the YMCA's diabetes prevention program. It's a community-based lifestyle improvement effort for adults with pre-diabetes.

The purpose is to empower adults with lasting lifestyle changes that will improve their overall health and reduce their chance of developing type

2 diabetes.

"Providing a supportive environment to promote chronic disease prevention is a priority to the Y," Pierce said. "I'm looking forward to the opportunity to develop community collaborations and partnerships that maximize available resources to promote health and wellness initiatives. I've had the opportunity to be both a member as well as a former community

partner of the YMCA and it is an honor to join the team."

She brings to the Y her expertise in planning and implementing lifestyle modification programs and managing project teams to implement community-based programs and regional partnerships.

Pierce holds a Master's Degree from Walden University in Public Health with a concentration in

community health. Her previous work has been with Albemarle Health, Port Discover and Albemarle Regional Health Services.

Pierce has worked as a health educator and has served non-profit organizations to promote community health for nearly 10 years.

She also enjoys boating as well as volunteering and coaching for the local youth sports leagues.

## Solar projects face more review

From staff reports

Two boards agreed last week they wanted more time to consider two new solar power projects in Perquimans County.

The Town of Winfall planning

board reviewed the proposal for an 83-acre solar farm on March 10. That board recommended the town follow the county's lead on how to regulate the facility. About half of the project is in Winfall and the rest of it is north of Winfall in unincorporated Perquimans County.

The next night the Perquimans County Planning Board agreed to postpone a decision until April so staff could work

out details with the same developer of another farm. It is on a 92-acre site near the Chowan County line and Drinking Hole Road.

Solar Green Development LLC is proposing both projects. Industrial-sized solar farms are considered as conditional uses under the county's zoning rules. As such they are subject to cer-



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

A sign identifies the site of one of two new solar projects in Perquimans County on Two Mile Desert Road. A Dominion Power substation is pictured in the upper right.

See PROJECTS, 2

