

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

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Fire damaged apartments will be repaired

STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS
Plywood covers a window and blue tarps still cover holes in the roof of a four-unit apartment that was damaged by fire in February. The interior of the unit off Wynne Fork Road will be gutted and restored in the coming months.



BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A four-unit apartment complex heavily damaged by fire in February will be repaired and the 18 people who were displaced have been or soon will be resettled elsewhere.

The actual cause of the blaze was never determined. Repairs are expected to cost upwards of \$200,000 and will be covered by insurance.

At least 30 firefighters from departments in Hertford, Winfall and Bethel responded to the blaze at the Hertford Housing Authority complex on Wynne Fork Road.

Barry Overman, the fire marshal for Elizabeth

IN A RELATED STORY

■ Cause of King Street fires unknown — Page 2

City and Camden County was called in to investigate.

"We had people go in and do some work," Overman said last week.

They were able to determine that the fire started in a bedroom of a unit at 222 Wynne Fork Drive.

"Unfortunately we didn't have enough left in

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County: Slow, steady growth

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The Albemarle region as a whole grew in population between 2010 and 2013 despite losses in two of the five counties.

Perquimans County added 148 more people during the period, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. While that amounts to a jump of 1.1 percent — a third of the statewide average — the growth along with more people in Camden and Currituck counties more than made up for the 747 people that were no longer counted in Pasquotank and Chowan counties.

Slow and steady growth is a good thing according to Perquimans County Manger Frank Heath.

"I think good, steady growth is the kind we like to see. Explosive growth can overwhelm you," Heath said.

The county manager said new homes are being built in Albemarle Plantation as well as elsewhere in the county.

"We're not to where we need to be for residential, but growth has been starting to trickle in," he said.

Too much growth too quickly can overwhelm the infrastructure. The growth Perquimans County has been seeing can easily be accommodated with the existing water utility.

The agency used a base figure from the April 1, 2010 Census to start with. Population was then estimated every July 1 for the 2010, 2011,

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KICKIN' AND SCREAMIN'



STAFF PHOTOS BY PETER WILLIAMS

Morgan Lilly (above) of Elizabeth City performs a kick during her routine at the Northeast North Carolina regional AAU Taekwondo competition at the Perquimans Recreation Center, Saturday. It was the third annual event and drew participants from a multi-state area.

Patrick Stapel of Rock Hill, S.C. performs his routine during Saturday's Taekwondo competition.

Schools pitch traffic solution

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Officials propose spending \$81,000 to ease a traffic problem that is impacting Perquimans Central School and anybody who is passing through on the road that connects downtown Winfall with Hertford at the wrong time of day.

The plan is in two phases and calls for asking the Perquimans County Commission for \$31,000 in capital money in the 2014-15 budget to pay for the second phase.

"We want parents to know we really are trying," said Brenda Lassiter, a spokesperson for the school system.

Traffic snarls in the early morning and mid-afternoon are typical on Winfall Boulevard — a link between Creek Road and Winfall's Main Street.

The school is home to 488 students, and typically 315 ride a bus. The rest — more than 170 of them — are picked up by family members in cars. When the weather is bad — as it's been a lot this winter — car ridership increases.

The current traffic pattern routes the cars through a traffic circle in front of the school. The new pattern will take the cars around to the back of the school and move the school buses from the back to the north side of the site.

The school system has been working on the

See SOLUTION, 4

Some road projects threatened

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The failure to pass a federal highway funding bill would impact 108 road and bridge projects in North Carolina, but replacement of the S-Bridge in Hertford is not one of them.

Last week Gov. Pat McCrory and his transportation secretary told members of the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce that

the state is at risk of stalling \$1.1 billion worth of highway and bridge projects next fiscal year.

McCrory called on Congress to renew a 2012 law that provides federal money to transportation projects across the country.

The \$20 million to replace the S-Bridge with a fixed-span bridge will require federal money. On federal projects, the state pays 20 percent of the cost and the rest is covered by the federal budget.

The Hertford project falls beyond the scope of the 2014-15 federal budget. At this point,



MCCRORY

right-of-way acquisition is scheduled to happen in the 2015-16 fiscal year that starts October 2015. Construction is expected to start in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Nicole Meister, a spokeswoman for the N.C. DOT, said that

means the S-Bridge project falls after the 2014-15 federal highway bill. Projects that are scheduled to start in 2014-15 will be impacted, but those that are already underway — like the bridge replacement project in downtown Elizabeth City, would

See PROJECTS, 4

Program urges more grads to attend college

From staff reports

College of The Albemarle's Edenton campus will host a program on Sunday aimed at getting local teens in Perquimans and Chowan counties to start thinking about pursuing an education after high school.

More importantly, the event will get local seventh-, eighth- and 12th grade students, and their parents, thinking about how to pay for college.

"It's a program about college savings and ways to pay for it," said Lynn Hurdle-Winslow, dean of COA's Edenton-Chowan cam-

pus, referring to the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, or GEAR UP event, set for 6 p.m. April 10 in COA's Culinary Arts building.

The GEAR UP event is supported by the GEAR UP North Carolina initiative and is funded by a \$28.6 million grant from the Department of Education. Perquimans and Chowan County public schools are part of the 46 middle and high schools included as part of the GEAR UP North Carolina initiative and they are two of 11 school districts served

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ALBEMARLE MASTER GARDENERS

Spring Garden Show

April 5th, 2014 9 am - 3 pm

Perquimans County Recreation Center, Granby St., Hertford, NC
Free Show Admission . Fun & Educational Children's Programs . Gardening Demos & Lectures

Vendors, Plant Sale, Bake Sale . Ask a Master Gardener Booth.

Call 252-482-6585 for more information Raffles-50/50 Breakfast/Lunch available