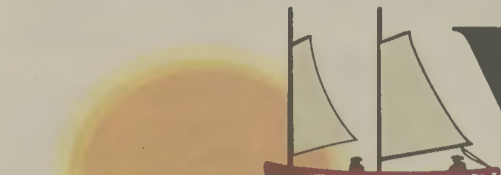


# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

JUNE 25, 2014 - JULY 1, 2014

50 cents

**SPORTS** Wade Betts: Region abounds with colorful language 7

**SCHOOLS** See latest students named to school honor rolls 7

## Perquimans to see flurry of bridge work

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
Staff Writer

For a few days last week Perquimans County had two bridges out of service and residents can expect even more in the next two years.

The S-Bridge in Hertford was closed for six days for emergency repairs and scheduled repaving. In Bethel area, the bridge on Burnt Mill Road was closed June 16 so it can be replaced. The project should take about 105 days.

The Burnt Mill Road bridge is the first of eight smaller bridges in a two-county area that will be replaced between now and October 2016. The Burnt Mill Road bridge was built in 1958 and is classified as structurally deficient and functionally obsolete.

Jennifer Garifo, a communications officer with the N.C. Department of Transportation, said McLean Contracting from Maryland has a \$5.8 million contract to do the eight bridges.

Garifo said McLean will

be using one crane for all the projects. When the crane is no longer needed on Burnt Mill, it will be moved to the next project — a bridge on Beech Springs Road. Construction there is scheduled to start July 31 and take 135 days. At any given point she said two area bridges would be out of service.

Next in line is a bridge on Nixonton Road in Pasquotank County followed by Turnpike Road in Perquimans County and Dances Bay in Pasquotank.

Muddy Creek Road, Beech Springs Road and Perry's Bridge Road are the last three on the list. Specific timetables on when the bridges will be closed largely depend on weather and how fast the work takes.

NCDOT is investing about \$800 million over four years to not only replace, but also strategically preserve or rehabilitate existing bridges to extend their lifespan. It is the largest bridge program in the state's history, according to DOT.

The state's contract with McLean includes the amount of time each bridge can be closed and sets a penalty for each day that it takes longer than that. It ranges from \$350 a day to \$800 a day.

The closing of the S-bridge was an emergency measure after a piece of steel from an expansion joint came loose and wedged the swing-span shut. The bridge was reopened to boat traffic later that day, however, repairs needed to be made before the road could reopen to vehicular traffic.

Garifo said while the bridge was closed crews made some other repairs. DOT typically times routine repairs so they happen when school is out for holidays or the summer. The last day of school was the day the bridge was first closed.

The long-term replacement for the S-Bridge is still several years away and some downtown Hertford residents are asking DOT to hold another hearing on that plan.

## Pro golf tourney kicks off Thursday

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

The NGA Pro Golf Tour's Biggs Cadillac-Buick-GMC Classic at Albemarle Plantation will kick off Thursday at 7:30 a.m. and run through Sunday.

Amateurs and professionals are scheduled to take to the course today in a pro/am at The Sound Links. The event benefits the Food Bank of the Albemarle.

The field isn't expected to be as large as some NGA tournaments in years past — 19 — but what it lacks in numbers it makes up with quality, according to Kenny Saunders, the golf pro at The Sound Links.

The NGA has served as a springboard for young golfers looking to make the PGA. Fourteen former NGA golfers have gone on to win major PGA tournaments including Bubba Watson, a two-time Master's champion in 2012 and 2014.

The field Albemarle Plantation includes Dominic Bozzili who is number one on the money list for the NGA. Bozzili, a 23-year-old rookie from Pittsford, NY, has won \$62,075 including between \$16,000 and \$19,000 for three back-to-back first place finishes. That puts him in an exclusive club according to Saunders.

"That hasn't been done since Zach Johnson did it and he went on to win the Master's," Saunders said. "Johnson is the only other

See PRO GOLF, 4

## WRECK IN HOLIDAY ISLAND



PHOTO COURTESY PAM HADDEN

Two men were seriously injured Friday night when the vehicle they were in crashed into trees in Holiday Island. Matt Herba, 21, and Skip Bohren, 22, were airlifted to Norfolk Sentura Hospital in serious condition according to N.C. Highway Patrol Trooper L.M. Hill. Hill estimates Herba was going 80 to 85 miles per hour in a 35 mile per hour zone when he lost control. Bohren was thrown from the vehicle. The vehicle caught fire but was extinguished by a local resident on Holiday Lane, according to Hill. The Bethel Fire Department, Hertford Fire Department and the Perquimans County Sheriff's Office also responded to the accident.

## Man, 34, facing sex charges

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Deputies arrested a 34-year-old former Perquimans County resident this month on 10 charges he viewed videos showing minors engaged in sexual activity.

Myron Pelech is being held on \$100,000 bond at Albemarle District Jail. His occupation was listed as a heating and air conditioning technician and his current address is listed as Kitty Hawk.

Perquimans County deputies arrested Pelech on June 16.

The video material was

See CHARGES, 8

## Community support sought for library

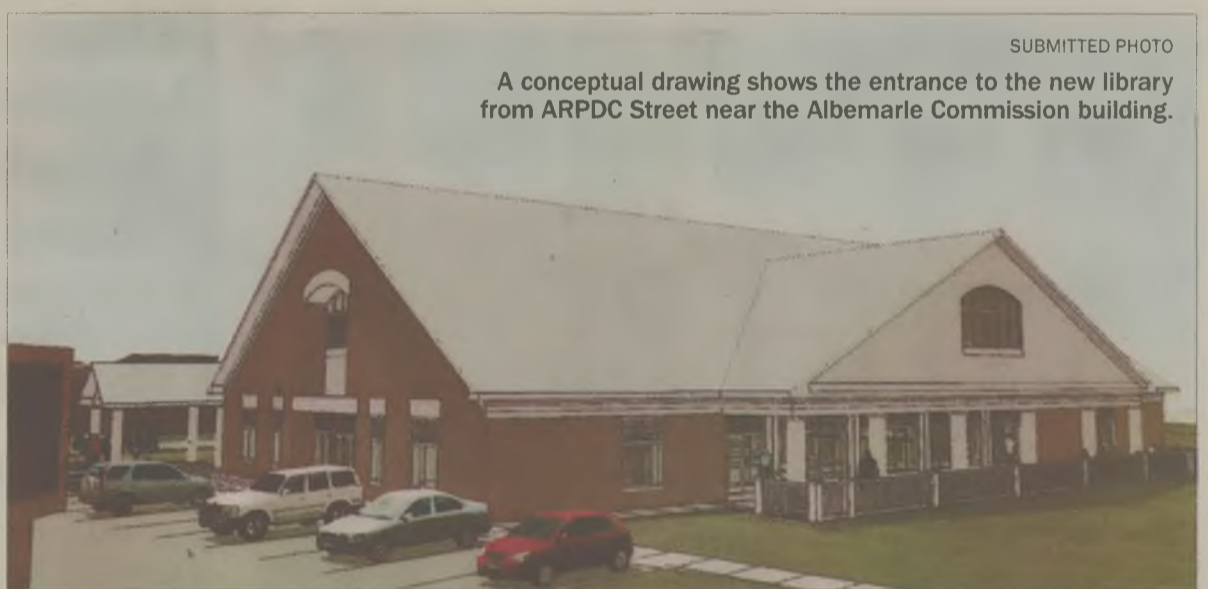
BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Library supporters are ready to turn the page and start a new chapter in the plan to build a new \$2.5 million facility in Hertford.

A library building fund has been established specifically for contributions, fundraising, and donations for the new library, according to Bill Ross, the chairman of the library board. Grants and other forms of support are being pursued, he said.

In 2009-10 a group of county residents started the drive for a new library. The current library is

See LIBRARY, 8



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A conceptual drawing shows the entrance to the new library from ARPDC Street near the Albemarle Commission building.

## County to absorb water rate hike

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Buying water from its neighbor to the east will end up costing Perquimans County about \$36,000 more next year but the county isn't passing along the increase to customers.

Earlier this month Pasquotank County commissioners approved raising the bulk water rate from its reverse-osmosis plant from \$5.34 per 1,000 gallons to \$6. Pasquotank County customers and those in Elizabeth City will also feel the

increase.

The hike is because the cost to treat the water was more than what Pasquotank was charging. The \$6 figure was a compromise. Pasquotank County staff initially proposed a bulk water rate of \$6.50 last month.

Elizabeth City City Manager Rich Olson and Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath had protested the \$6.50 rate increase earlier this month. Heath said last week the county would accept the compromise increase of \$6 as a "negotiated" figure.

Olson argued Elizabeth City shouldn't have to pay more than an eighth of the county's annual debt

See WATER RATE, 8

## First batch of firefighters graduates

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Five Perquimans County seniors graduated this month with not only a high school diploma but the ability to get certified as a firefighter.

The five have completed a program the high school started last fall. The firefighter course, led by Michael Cartwright, is designed to give high school the training they need to pass the Firefighter I, II and III exams. The school does not offer the fourth class on hazardous materials, that can be taken through College of The Albemarle. So far four of the five seniors have passed that course.

Cartwright said it's not that firefighting courses weren't offered in the area



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Perquimans County High School seniors Paul Cestaro (l-r), Grant Walker, Ryan Onley, Sam Phthistic and Zack Underwood with a fire hose last week. The five graduated high recently with not only a diploma but also certifications needed to become full-time firefighters.

before Perquimans High started its program. They just aren't offered on a regular basis.

To complete the first

three levels of training requires taking some 20 moduals.

COA does not offer them on a regular basis,

so typically a local fire department will schedule the training if they need it and

See FIREFIGHTERS, 8

