

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

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50 cents

Council stands behind support for Eley

Board favors swing-span option

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Hertford leaders now say they want the N.C. Department of Transportation to give priority to plans for a new swing span to replace the S-Bridge.

The action Monday night rescinded a resolution from October that

threw town board's support behind what is known as Alternative D-Mod, a fixed high-rise bridge similar to the U.S. Bypass bridge.

Now the town board is backing a group known as Citizens For Preservation And Growth of Hertford (CFGH). It's calling for DOT to take a more

serious look at the option known as Alternative B.

Alternative B is another swing span that would follow the path of the current S-Bridge and the causeway. While it made the final list of three options, public opinion and the higher cost were cited by

See SWING-SPAN, 2

PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The Hertford Town Board swore in former mayor Sid Eley to fill a vacant seat on the board Monday night despite a packed crowd that urged them not to.

Gilbert Vaughn, the president of the Perquimans County NAACP, tried to steer the debate to an issue of qualifications — not race — but the race issue did come up. By appointing Eley, the only black member

of the board is Mayor Horace Reid.

More than 50 people packed the small meeting room at Hertford Town Hall for the meeting.

Vaughn tried unsuccessfully to make the point that another contender for the seat — political newcomer Archie Aples — only narrowly lost out in an election in November. Despite 20 years on the town board, Eley lost by a much larger margin when he last ran in a race against Reid.

"It appears like we've got the old gang back," Vaughn said. "With this vote, we're going back 20 years."

Vaughn pressed the three board members who favored Eley to give a reason for their vote. He said he reached out to Ed Lane, Carlton Davenport and Lillian Holman by phone, e-mail and went to their homes to try and get an answer.

Vaughn said only Davenport responded and told him

See ELEY, 3

Survey: Some changes needed

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A majority of Perquimans County residents seemed to agree that change will be needed in the next 20 years, but protecting the natural beauty of the area is a top priority.

The findings were a result of a traffic survey conducted by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization. It is part of an overall effort by state and local traffic officials to find out what problem areas exist and what people want.

Angela Welch, the traffic planner who worked with the study, said the results were in line with what the steering committee thought would happen.

"It's the community wants a balance between protecting the environment and our rural character with new roads and bike paths," Welch said.

The survey drew 220 responses. Both Perquimans County and the Town of Hertford posted a link to the on-line version. The Town of Hertford also included a written copy of

See SURVEY, 4



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Classic cars parade down Church Street at the start of the Indian Summer Festival Saturday in Hertford.

Thousands attend festival

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A year of planning came down to a whirlwind of activity last weekend for the 33rd annual Indian Summer Festival.

While fewer people might have attended than in previous years, the effort to pull off a two-day event was just as intense.

In the span of just a few hours Friday, a mobile stage made the trip from Greensboro, portable toilets were brought in, tents were erected and food trucks were ready for business.

And within hours Saturday, the process was placed in reverse and the town went back to normal.

That doesn't mean activity stopped. Susan Cox, who heads the entertainment for the

See ISF, 2



PHOTO BY PAM HADDEN

Steve Ambrose points to the crowd during a performance by The Original Rhondels Friday night in downtown Hertford.

Agency gets new leader in Davison

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Cathy Davison is back in North Carolina, this time as the new executive director of the 10-county Albemarle Commission.

The agency oversees state and federal programs based out of a headquarters in Hertford.

DAVISON

Davison's first day at the job was Sept. 2.

She replaces Bert Banks who retired in July after seven years with the agency. The agency handles about \$6 million a year and administers programs dealing with seniors and job training. The Area Agency on Aging gets about 46 percent of the total and another 38 percent goes toward workforce development. Economic development efforts and general government makes up the rest.

Davison comes to the commission from a job as fiscal officer for a non-profit social service agency in Steubenville, Ohio. Pri-

See DAVISON, 4

New PCHS AD brings different outlook to job

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Laura Moreland brings a somewhat unique perspective to her new job at Perquimans County High School.

At 32, she's among the youngest to take the role of assistant principal and athletic director.

She also brings her experience in supporting the recovery just after the terrorist's attacks on the World Trade Center in New York on Sept. 11.

Moreland spent six years serving in the Army National Guard, including deployments in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Noble Eagle. Noble Eagle began with the mobilization of thousands of National Guard and reserve personnel to perform security missions on military installations, airports and other potential targets such as bridges, power plants, and port facilities after 9/11.

The New Jersey National Guard got to the site of the World Trade Center just a

couple of hours after the second tower fell.

"A lot of what we did was putting up a perimeter and looking for survivors," Moreland said.

When it became clear that few could have survived, the troops did other duties.

"At some point there were so many people coming in to help, we were no longer needed."

Moreland spent two years in the New Jersey

See MORELAND, 2



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Laura Moreland, (left) then a member of the New Jersey National Guard, patrols the waters of New York Harbor in the wake of the attacks of Sept. 11th. She is now the assistant principal and athletic director at Perquimans County High School.

Local unemployment rate remains high at 8.4 percent

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Despite some gains over the past year, the rate of un-

employment in Perquimans County remains among the highest in the state, according to recent data.

Perquimans County's rate in July was 8.4 percent, a full point lower than the 9.4 percent rate in the same month the year before.

The statewide rate was 6.9 percent in July, down from 8.4 percent last year.

But on a month-to-month

comparison between June and July, the Perquimans rate was up from 7.7 percent to 8.4 percent.

That was a statewide trend. The N.C. Department of Commerce reported unemployment was up in 95 counties in July compared with June. It decreased in four counties and remained unchanged in one.

Despite the year-to-year improvement, Perquimans County's statewide ranking didn't budge. Perquimans ranked 83rd out of 100 counties in June and was still 83rd in July. The only area county that was worse off was Pasquotank, which ranked 86th with an unemployment rate of 8.9 percent.

Not all of northeastern

North Carolina was suffering. Currituck County had the lowest rate of any county in July — 3.9 percent. Dare County ranked as third lowest at 4.9 percent. Camden fared better than many with a jobless rate of 7.0 percent and a ranking of 42nd.

But Perquimans, Pasquotank and Chowan all fell in the area between 81st and 86th. One potentially posi-

tive sign is the Perquimans labor force increased slightly, from 5,200 to 5,229. A declining labor force can be a sign that some people have just given up looking for a job and are no longer considered in the labor force.

On the negative side, the number of people listed as unemployed also increased between June and July from 401 to 438.

