

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Perquimans volleyball advances, 4

"News from Next Door"

OCTOBER 22, 2014 - OCTOBER 28, 2014

50 cents

Town to cap utility deposits at \$350

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The Town of Hertford will cap the amount it charges for residential utility deposits at \$350.

For people that rent, that's the good news.

The bad news is that all customers who pay their bills late or get the power disconnected will pay more based on a new town policy adopted last week.

Most Hertford customers don't pay a deposit at all. Those that can prove a good credit history with a previous utility are exempt. Homeowners also don't have to pay money up front.

Any renter without good credit moving into a house that has a history of high utility bills will see some significant relief based on the new policy. The old policy required the new tenant to come up with a deposit equal to two

months worth of the average bill at that address.

With a house that had an average monthly bill of \$300, that meant a deposit of \$600. Under the new formula, the new tenant would pay \$350.

Anne White, a former member of the town board, has been pressing the town to reduce utility deposits. She said they unfairly punish "the working poor" and last week she proposed capping

the deposit at \$250. She also opposed increasing the fees charged for connecting, disconnecting and reconnecting electrical service.

Under the new policy customers who get their power turned off for non-payment and want it turned back on will also pay \$25 more. The old fee was \$10 to disconnect service and \$15 to reconnect. Both fees are now \$25.

Town Manager Brandon Shoaf crafted the new policy at the re-

quest of the town board. He said he was reluctant to recommend going any lower on the residential deposits because even with the current policy the town gets stuck when customers leave owing money.

As of July, the town had \$53,962 in bad debt and wrote off \$19,697 of it as uncollectible.

White argued that some of the

See DEPOSITS, 2

County receives \$600K donation

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The Perquimans County Commission agreed Monday night to keep their options open on how to spend an unexpected \$600,000 gift from the late Charles Ward.

Ward, a member of the board for 20 years, died on Sept. 1. In his will he left \$600,000 to the county with instructions that he wanted the board to spend it on a new public library or a new athletic complex. He left it to the county commission to decide.

Both projects have been in the works for years, but the clock is ticking on the athletic complex.

Dr. William Nixon, a

See GIFT, 3

WATER TEST



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

A Hertford Fire Department fire truck pumps water from the Perquimans River during an equipment test at the town docks behind town hall, Thursday. The department conducts the tests every year.

Student facing drug charge

BY PETER WILLIAMS
The Perquimans Weekly

One of two students dismissed last month from the Perquimans County High School football team following their convictions for assault, is again in trouble with the law.

Raheim Kee, 18, of Camelot Drive, was arrested at the high school Friday on charges of possession with intent to sell or deliver marijuana.

According to Sheriff Eric Tilley, Kee was arrested about 2:30 p.m. after school officials found in his possession a plastic pill bottle containing four small bags of marijuana.

See CHARGES, 2

Haste wins another governor's praise, award

STAFF PHOTO
BY PETER
WILLIAMS

Erie Haste stands in front a wall in his office that is filled with certificates and awards he's earned over decades of community service.



BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Erie Haste may need a bigger wall in his office.

The long-time owner of Hertford Hardware Store recently was awarded The Old North State Award by Gov. Pat McCrory for his years of service to the community.

Just two years ago, Haste was given the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the state's highest honor by Gov. Bev Perdue.

Perdue is a Democrat, McCrory a Republican, but Haste has a history of working with whatever po-

litical party is in power to get something done.

"I could care less who was in there (in Raleigh)," Haste said last week. "I've worked with both parties."

The wall in his modest office bears that out. He has certificates signed by governors Jim Holshouser, James Hunt, Jim Martin and Perdue.

The Long Leaf Pine award is for people with service of 30 years or more. The Old North State is for 20 years and was created by Gov. Mike Easley.

In some ways, Haste, 80, has been serving since he was a teenager. Back in

1949 at the age of 15 he was a tour guide on the first historical house tour in Edenton. He grew up in a town on West Church Street in Edenton.

In 1959 after attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill he returned with his wife Pat to eastern North Carolina. Along with his father, he purchased the Hertford Hardware and Supply Company in 1958. It is Hertford's longest continuously operating business and opened in 1903.

Along the way Haste

See HASTE, 3

Council looks to name bridge for Hunter

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The Hertford Town Council agreed last week to ask the N.C. Department of Transportation to name the U.S. 17 Bypass bridge in honor of the late Jim "Catfish" Hunter.

Allan Asbell, a retired banker, presented the issue Oct. 14 at a town council meeting.

Perquimans County already has a bridge named

for the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame player. About four years ago, a small bridge near Hunter's home in Bear Swamp was given the honor.

But Asbell said Hunter deserves far, far more. Asbell is the driving force behind the effort, but he has the family's support.

Helen Hunter, Hunter's widow was at the meeting Tuesday as were children Kim and Todd Hunter. Todd Hunter said the

family did not object to the bridge request. Helen Hunter said it could raise more awareness for ALS, a disease that helped cut short her husband's life at the age of 53. Other supporters included downtown businessmen Erie Haste and Charles Woodard.

Asbell, 65, said the idea of renaming the bridge is something he's been working on for about two years.

The small bridge on Center Hill Highway was named in honor of the baseball great because someone who thought it appropriate because it was near Hunter's home.

"I just don't think this does him (Hunter) justice," Asbell said. "This has got to change. Fifty people of day see that (sign on the Center Hill bridge) and thousands

See BRIDGE, 2

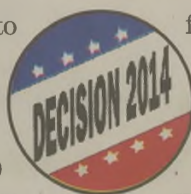
Polls open for start of early voting Thursday

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Perquimans County resi-

dents who want to vote early can start going to the polls on Thursday.

Early voting is scaled back to 10 days this year from the previous 12 days. The number of hours remains the same. Some days the elections office will be open



for 12 hours but on the two Saturdays it will be open for between three and four hours.

The decision on when to allow early voting is a local one made by the local board of elections. The state only requires that counties hold the same

number of hours available as it did in 2010.

The only contested major local race is for the Perquimans County Commission. Wallace Nelson, Stanley Nixon, Fondella Leigh and Ed Muzzulini are seeking one of the three spots.

See VOTING, 3

HOMECOMING QUEEN, KING



PHOTO BY CHUCK PAGELS

Jordan Chappell (left) and Tarik Hurdle were named queen and king of the senior class during homecoming at Perquimans County High School Friday night. For more photographs of the homecoming court, see page 4.

