

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

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## Support for D-Mod may be shifting

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Opposition to a highrise bridge and concerns about the high cost of a lower swing-span option has some residents now throwing their support behind a third alternative to replace Hertford's S-Bridge.

Alternative E moves traf-

fic away from downtown and onto Edenton Road Street. As with any of the final options, it had both support and opposition after a DOT hearing in 2013. Downtown merchants worried moving traffic away from Church Street would hurt business. School officials and Edenton Road Street residents expressed con-

cerns about the increased traffic on Edenton Road Street. Many residents of the historic district supported E because it protect that neighborhood.

Allen Miles, a Holiday Island resident, now just thinks E makes the most sense. He wrote a letter this week to both DOT and the Perquimans Weekly sup-

porting "E."

"Alternative E when teamed with the low bridge causeway replacement designed for Alternative B offers some real possibilities and rectifies many of the bad points of the other alternatives," Miles said.

The ultimate decision lies with the N.C. Department of Transportation and the state

and federal agencies that must sign off on the deal.

At \$27 million, Alternative E is the middle option of the three final choices. The cheapest option, Alternative D-Mod, would cost about \$19 million and involves a bridge just as high as the U.S. 17 Bypass bridge but extending off of Church Street.

The most expensive option, Alternative B, involves building another swing span near where the S-Bridge is. It's expected to cost \$36 million and require \$100,000 a year in operations and maintenance costs.

Critics of DOT's preference — D-Mod — claim

See BRIDGE, 9

## Wind critics voice concerns

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Chowan Herald

EDENTON — County commissioners from Chowan and Perquimans counties who attended a session on wind energy Saturday said they would consider both their own research and public opinion when making decisions about the proposed Timbermill wind energy facility on the Chowan-Perquimans county line.

Although Saturday's event at First Presbyterian Church was billed as an objective presentation on wind energy, principal local organizers were self-avowed opponents of wind energy. In addition, the main presenter, John Droz Jr. of Morehead City, is a wind energy skeptic who also is well known for his skepticism toward — and opposition to — the state's renewable energy portfolio standards.

Dennis Robison, a member of the host church and one of the leaders of the Chowan Edenton Environmental Group, explained as he welcomed people to the session Saturday that the church previously had hosted a wind energy presentation by representatives of the company working on the proposed Timbermill project, so when Peter Lolkema asked about having a session featuring information from the other side of the issue, that seemed like the right thing to do.

During a discussion following Droz's presentation and the screening of the movie "Windfall," Perquimans County Commissioner Matt Peeler said the voice of local citizens would be important as county officials make decisions regarding the proposed Timbermill project. Peeler encouraged citizens to come out and

See CRITICS, 8

## FOOD BANK GIVES OUT FOOD



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Volunteers load up a truck with food on Monday at the Open Door Food Pantry in Winfall. The pantry was able to provide a Thanksgiving holiday meal to more than 300 families this year.

## COA board size questioned

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editors

Charles Lacefield isn't sure if 19 is the magic number, but he does believe Perquimans County should have a seat at the table on the College of the Albemarle board of trustees.

Lacefield was named to one of the 19 seats on the board shortly after long-time trustee and former Perquimans County Commissioner Charles Ward died in September.

The large size of the COA board was questioned by one outgoing member of Pasquotank County Commission this month. Gary White said the board is simply too big and suggested that some counties don't deserve a representative because they don't contribute much financially to the college.

Specifically White questioned if Gates County should have a voice at the table. Gates contributes \$6,000 to COA compared to the \$1.4 million provided by Pasquotank County. Perquimans County provided \$32,500.

"I don't know what

See BOARD, 9

## School experiences electrical problem

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Hundreds of students at Perquimans Central School were sent home early last week because of a failure in an electrical circuit breaker.

The repairs were made, but the problem sapped a dwindling reserve fund to cover such problems.

School officials say the problem was no threat to students but on Wednesday students were shuttled to one side of the building that

had heat from a side that didn't. On Thursday students were let out early at 12:30 p.m. so crews would have time to repair the problem. There are 438 students enrolled at the school.

The failure was in a 1,600-amp circuit breaker.

Jonathan Nixon, the school system's director of maintenance and safety, oversaw the repair.

"My understanding is they had issues many years ago and it had been problematic," Nixon said. Central was built in 1999.

What was also problematic was that brand of circuit breaker, is no longer made.

The quick solution Wednesday was to heat areas with the youngest students and when the temperature of rooms with the second graders dropped below 70 degrees, those students were moved to the warmer side of the building.

The school system was able to buy a similar circuit breaker at the cost of \$31,000. Nixon estimates

the unit measured about 24x24 inches and came via a truck.

The new breaker was installed by about 10 p.m. Thursday night.

Nixon said an electrical fire was not a concern. He said if anything the circuit breaker was doing its job too well and shutting off prematurely.

Nixon praised Dominion Power for their help in the problem.

The circuit breaker problem is the second major equipment problem this

year for the school system.

In August, a major air conditioning unit that covers the cafeteria at Perquimans County High School failed.

A replacement was available, but there was a six-week lead-time before the unit would arrive. With temperatures in the 90s some days, the school system opted to install window units to service the effected area until the new unit could be installed.

The actual repair was \$5,894.

## Educator returns to his roots in Perquimans County

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Author Thomas Wolfe may have had it wrong.

Perhaps you can go home again.

At least that's what Guy Webb is experiencing so far.

In 1995 he graduated from Perquimans County High School and left to go off to college at University of North Carolina-Charlotte. He went on to earn a mas-



WEBB

School system.

But when school started in August, Webb, 37, was back where it all started. He assumed a job as an assistant principal at his old high school. And he also heard from a voice from the past.

"I was staying with my Mom when I first moved back and she got a message. It was a woman looking for

ter's degree from Appalachian State University. For years he taught in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg

School system.

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"I was staying with my Mom when I first moved back and she got a message. It was a woman looking for

Guy Webb," he recalls.

The woman was Lenna Mansfield, his first grade teacher. Mansfield had seen a picture of Webb in the newspaper.

Webb said the voice instantly brought back memories.

"You know how sometimes you get those voices stuck in your head? We had such a nice chat. She said she was so proud of me, and how exciting it was that I was back."

Mansfield taught for more than 30 years, most of it in Perquimans County and most of it with



SUBMITTED PHOTO

New Perquimans County High School assistant principal Guy Webb has returned to where he started. Webb is pictured with Lenna Mansfield's first grade class. Webb is in the front row, fifth from the left.

See WEBB, 9

