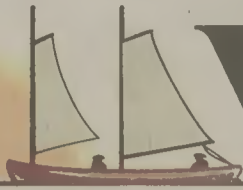


# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2015



"National Register of Historic Places" sign dedicated, 2

OCT 07 REC'D

50 cents

## Storm drenches county, delays events

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Hurricane Joaquin largely left Perquimans County alone, but a slow-moving low-pressure system over the southeast dumped more than three inches on the county over a four-day period.

The rain canceled some things, and delayed others.

A member-guest golf tournament at Albemarle Plantation went on despite the weather last week. A football game between

Perquimans County High School and Gates County was pushed back one time, from Friday to Monday and then a second time from Monday to Tuesday.

The SAT exams scheduled for Oct. 3 at Perquimans County High School were rescheduled for Oct. 17.

The annual Jim "Catfish" Hunter ALS Walk did go on as scheduled Sept. 26. Despite the rain for the ALS walk, organizers had collected \$22,000 for the local charity as of last weekend.

However the three-day ALS softball tournament was first delayed from Sept. 25-27 to Oct. 2-4 and now is set for this Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The tournament is held at the Hunter ball fields in Winfall on Wiggins Road.

Between Oct. 1 and Oct. 5, Hertford reported three inches of rain, according to Town Manager Brandon Shoaf.

"I'm very thankful the

See STORM, 4



PHOTO BY CHUCK PAGELS

A truck runs through standing water just north of the S-Bridge in Hertford last week.

OCT 07 REC'D



AMES BRUNSON

## Teens being held for murder

From Staff Reports

Two Perquimans County teens are being held without bond for the murder of a 17-year-old Elizabeth City resident.

Nahcier Brunson, 18, and Kamani Ames, 17, made separate first appearances before District Judge Meader Harriss III in Camden District Court on Friday.

Harriss ordered both Brunson and Ames to return to court on Oct. 9 for a probable cause hearing.

Neither of the suspects apparently were or had been enrolled in the Perquimans County School system.

The two are being held in the death of Unique Graham whose body was found lying face down in shallow water at a Camden County park. The medical examiner's office concluded he died from a gunshot wound to the head.

According to arrest warrants, Graham is believed to have been killed on Sept. 27. Brunson, of the 900 block of Chapanoke Road, and Ames, 17, of the 100 block of Red Banks Road, were arrested on Sept. 29.

Brunson and Ames, both in shackles and in jail jumpsuits, told Harriss they couldn't afford attorneys. Harriss appointed the Public Defender's Office to represent them. Assistant Public Defender Evan Ausband represented both Brunson and Ames at Friday morning's hearing.

District Attorney Andrew Womble, in an email following Friday's hearing, said he anticipates his office will present formal murder charges against Brunson

See TEENS, 2



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Tommy Harrell speaks out against wind energy Monday night at a Perquimans County Commission meeting.

## Wind moratorium approved

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

The Perquimans County Commission voted Monday night to impose a moratorium on new industrial-sized wind turbine projects until Feb. 2.

In a way, the 6-0 vote was symbolic since Apex Clean Energy — the only new potential developer — has not submitted a request for a conditional use permit for its project. Even one Apex spokesman promised commissioners the company would not submit a request for at

least 60 days.

Don Giecek said Apex has been working on the project based on the 2010 Perquimans ordinance. He said the company has invested \$1.5 million in research and development thus far. He and at least one other speaker Monday talked about the "chilling effect" a moratorium would have on any new industry looking to build in Perquimans.

But more than a dozen speakers clearly wanted the county to do more to stop construction of wind turbine projects because

of their threat to property values, health and natural beauty of the land.

The moratorium is designed to give the Perquimans County Planning Board a chance to review the current ordinance and recommend any changes. A three-member subcommittee of that board has already met once.

When the moratorium was first proposed in September, the county commission directed County Attorney H. Hackney High to look into what's involved.

"What you have to be

careful about is you have to follow the statutes," High said Monday.

He said the moratorium couldn't be "open ended" and it has to have an expiration date. He cautioned against making it too long.

"The longer the duration, the closer scrutiny it will get," High said.

Alan Lennon, one of the speakers against the Apex project, wanted a longer ban, but he took solace in a ban until Feb. 2.

"I feel safer," Lennon said. He said he asked for

See MORATORIUM, 8

## Couple challenges Iberdrola project

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

A Perquimans County couple is asking a state agency to determine if a wind power project in Perquimans and Pasquotank counties was properly permitted.

Jillanne Gigi Badawi and her husband Stephen Owens are asking the Office of Administrative Hearings in Raleigh to force state regulators to conduct a new review of the Amazon Wind

Farm U.S East project.

Through their attorney, Elliot Engstrom of the Raleigh-based Civitas Institute, the couple claims they are being harmed by actions by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"We (Civitas) didn't go out to Perquimans County to see who wanted to sue, but they said they are concerned," Engstrom said of the couple. "They were disturbed and they wanted to do something."

He claims the project has changed since Iberdrola Renewables first pitched it. He also questions how DNER dealt with the project.

"We maintain the changes are material and it makes it a very different project," Engstrom said.

The couple is worried about property values, aesthetics, noise and potential dangers for birds, according to the papers filed with the hearings office.

Perquimans County

property records show the couple bought the house in the 1000 block of Swamp Road in April 2012. The 21-year-old three bedroom, two-bath house sits on 12 acres, including eight acres of private forest.

On Friday Paul Copleman, a spokesman for Iberdrola, said the project was properly permitted.

"We are evaluating the new petition but it appears similar to the previous

See LAWSUIT, 8

## Layden selected for state board

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

A Belvidere woman has been named to a state board that is charged with fighting human trafficking in North Carolina.

Dianne Layden was named to the position by Phil Berger, president pro tem of the Senate. The term is from Oct. 1, 2015 through Sept. 30, 2017.

"I appreciate your willingness to represent the Senate in this capacity," Berger said in a letter to Layden. "I am confident that you will contribute much to the Human Trafficking Commission."

Layden, 64, said she asked to be named to the board. The body is made up of 12 members. The president pro tem of the Senate appoints four of those. One has to be from Legal Aid of North

See LAYDEN, 4

## Combs named an ACC legend

From Staff Reports

Former All-American cornerback Freddie Combs (1965-67) was named to the 2015 Atlantic Coast Conference Class of Football Legends announced by the conference.

Combs, from Hertford, was an All-America defensive back and record-breaking return specialist for the Wolfpack teams of the mid-1960s. Combs joined twin brother Francis at NC State after stellar high school careers in Hertford. There they

See COMBS, 4

## Area school systems adopt new bus safety regulations

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

If it seems like school buses are taking longer when they drop off and pick

up children this year, you're right.

The N.C. Department of Public Instruction has rolled out a new bus safety program. It's mandated after Jan. 1.

However Jeffrey Miller, who heads transportation for the Perquimans School System, told school board members that they've started to implement the new when

school started in August. All of virtually all of Albemarle-area schools did the same. Currituck County, the Edenton-Chowan school system and the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools also rolled out the policy when school started. Camden officials could not be reached for comment.

"When we started school, it was just easier," said Sandy

Kinzel, the assistant superintendent in Currituck. "We had the opportunity to train our bus drivers then."

The new process might add 30 seconds to a minute when the bus picks up or drops off a student who has to cross the street to get to the vehicle. It may add 15 minutes to the length of the total bus trip for students.

"When drivers get stopped

behind a school bus they get impatient anyway," Miller said. "But it only takes a few extra moments for the process. The general public will have to have patience as well."

Motorists who ignore stopped school buses with their lights and signs are the main way students get injured at bus stops.

"North Carolina has been

one of the worst states when it's come to students being injured getting on and off the bus," Miller said.

Statewide about 800,000 students ride a bus and in Perquimans County, about 1,000 do that each school day.

The problem is students are often hurt by drivers

See SAFETY RULES, 2

