

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Pirate Roundup: Pirates split games with Camden, 6

"News from Next Door"

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MURDER SUSPECT NOW BEHIND BARS

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

After nearly four years on the run, a 24-year-old man has been arrested for a 2012 murder in Perquimans County.

Ramel Samuel has been charged with the shooting death of Tre Brothers by the Perquimans County

Sheriff's Office. Brothers, who was 19 at the time, was killed by a 12-gauge shotgun blast to the face at a home on Albemarle Road. Samuel is being held in Albemarle District Jail without bond.

Perquimans Sheriff Eric Tilley said the dispute started over stolen property.

"Instead of calling law enforcement to handle the

issue, they took it into their own hands," Tilley said Monday.

Until last week Samuel had eluded local law enforcement. Tilley said Samuel was ar-



SAMUEL

rested several months ago in Albany, N.Y. after a traffic stop involving a stolen car. New York lawmen held Samuel because he was being sought by Perquimans officials but Samuel fought extradition.

When he was arrested Samuel's address was listed as Townsend Avenue in New York City. The address

is a six-story building in the Bronx.

A second suspect in the murder case, Yanaula Stratikis, 27, had been charged with murder in the same case, but was released from jail. Tilley said those charges will be reinstated but when it is up to the District Attorney.

draw Womble could not be reached for comment.

Tilley said Stratikis is still living in the area.

The next regular session of Superior Court isn't until April, but Tilley said an administrative court date is planned for Feb. 25. It's possible that Samuel will make

District Attorney An-

See MURDER, 3

Food stamp changes coming

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Dozens of Perquimans County residents stand to lose their food stamp benefits after July unless they work 20 hours a week or spend an equal amount volunteering or going to school.

Susan Chaney, the director of Social Services for the county is in the process of narrowing down and notifying the specific people affected.

Perquimans has been operating under a waiver of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The county was originally granted a waiver because of the lack of jobs available. When the Recession hit in 2008, every North Carolina county got a waiver.

But last year the General Assembly passed a law that lifted the waivers for the 23 urban counties as of Jan. 1. The remaining 77 counties, including Perquimans, will lose the waiver after July 1.

The July 1 change for 77 counties was included in unrelated legislation that passed the legislature in September.

"We have a potential of 214 that could be effected, and 166 of those are currently employed - they are earning money," Chaney said. "We know 166 are working, we just don't know how many hours. We've got a lot of work to do."

If the 166 are working an average of 20 hours a week or 80 hours a month, they will continue to be eligible for SNAP benefits. Chaney's office is in the process now of finding out the details of who may or may not be impacted.

For the other 48 people, they will have to find work, enroll in school or volunteer to keep their benefits. Chaney said it could be a mix of all three provided

See FOOD STAMPS, 3

A LITTLE GLANCE



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Sgt. First Class Anthony Kent addresses students this week during training at Perquimans County High School.

Students get taste of military life

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

(This is the first of two stories on new programs at Perquimans County High School.)

Perquimans County High School now has something to offer students who want the Junior-ROTC experience without being part of a sanctioned Reserve Officer Training Corps program.

The Perquimans County School Board has considered the idea of starting a J-ROTC program, but there are costs involved. Also students would have to express an interest in

sufficient numbers, and the military branch, like the Army or Air Force, has to sign off on helping fund it.

Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Kent is bypassing some of that with his Structured Self Development (SSD) program. He's volunteering during his off hours as a recruiter for the Army National Guard in Elizabeth City.

"First let me say there is no connection to the National Guard, the Army or the ROTC program," Kent said. "It's in all sense built like a J-ROTC, but it's not a sanctioned J-ROTC."

Kent is an 18-year veteran of the Guard.

"Part of my job as a NCO

(non-commissioned officer) is to guide and mentor my soldiers. This is what I'm doing here, without the aggression skills. It's all about leadership."

At a training session this week, Kent could be seen to wince when he watched a student try to perform the footwork involved in a close order drill. But then he was quick to point out the program is brand new.

"This kid," he said pointing to one student, "he's been with us one week. This one two weeks, that one three weeks," Kent said. The program meets weekly, not daily.

See TRAINING, 3

Voting advocate to speak Friday

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A voter education advocate for the N.C. State Board of Elections will be in Hertford Feb. 19-20 to spread a message about changes in voting laws.

Having a photo ID streamlines the process, but not having one doesn't mean a person can't vote.

Voters will have to be registered, but the lack of a photo ID alone won't stop them from voting, said Lee Cooley.

"Nobody is going to be turned away," Cooley said. "No one can be turned away. Our goal is they can use a provisional ballot and that ballot is validated if somebody is eligible to vote."

There have been changes in the state's voting laws. The new rules aren't quite as strict as the first changes which required only a photo ID to confirm a voter is who they say they are.

Cooley has been crisscrossing the state to spread news about what the new state law does and doesn't do. On Feb. 16 she'll be speaking in Mecklenburg County, and the following day she will be in Wake County.

Cooley will be speaking Feb. 19 from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the Perquimans County Board of Elections office on Edenton Road Street. On Feb. 20, there will be a screening of the movie "Selma" starting at 10 a.m. in the Perquimans County High School auditorium and Cooley will be speaking after the movie, about noon.

Voters can claim a declaration of reasonable impediment if they are unable to get an acceptable photo ID and be able to vote a provisional

See SPEAKER, 3

Work completed on new home for tornado victim

BY REGGIE PONDER
Chowan Herald

Volunteers, families and friends came together Saturday afternoon to give thanks for David and Mamie Parker's new home and ask God's blessings on it.

"Isn't this a beautiful house, y'all?" the Rev. Cliff Harvell asked those who

had gathered inside the new house on Chapanoke Road for the house blessing ceremony.

"Yes it is," the group responded.

The Parkers' previous house was destroyed by a tornado that swept through Chapanoke on April 25, 2014. Volunteers from the United Methodist Church, AME Zion Church, Society of Friends and other Christian churches came together to build the Parkers a new house.

The work was coordinated through the Disaster Re-

sponse Office of the United Methodist Church's N.C. Conference. Harvell heads that effort, and the group's tornado response in Chowan, Perquimans and Pasquotank counties has been led by Stephanie Hunt.

When Hunt left to take a position with Habitat for Humanity in another location, the Rev. Frederick Hunter, pastor of Mary Holy Grove AME Zion Church, took over the task of leading volunteers in finishing the Parkers' house.

The Disaster Response Office last year finished

building a new home for Leonidas Parker, who is David Parker's uncle.

Leonidas Parker told the crowd Saturday he was blessed to have gotten help from the volunteers.

"I never have had so many friends," he said.

Hunt said she was grateful for the "privilege" of "being able to assist some of my favorite people in getting back home."

Hunter led a prayer to open the ceremony.

Harvell said the new

See HOME, 3



REGGIE PONDER/ CHOWAN HERALD

Mamie Parker speaks to the crowd at the house blessing ceremony as her husband, David, stands by her side on Saturday.



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