

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Pirates focused on finishing strong, 8

"News from Next Door"

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COUNTY ROLLS OUT TEXT-2-911 SERVICE

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Cellular phone users who are hard of hearing, can't reach a voice line because an outage or don't feel comfortable talking because they are in danger can now send a text message to 911 to get help in Perquimans County.

The new service was rolled out in the last few days but it's

been in the works for some time, said Jonathan Nixon, Perquimans County's emergency management services director.

The real life value of the Text-to-911 service was driven home this summer for perhaps hundreds of Perquimans County Verizon customers when they found they couldn't make or receive voice phone calls on their cell phones. Lightning knocked out the voice

transmission service on a tower near Albemarle Plantation.

While the voice service didn't work for nearly a week, Verizon said customers did have the ability to send text messages for most of that outage. Nixon said the county tested the Text-to-911 system during the Verizon outage with a Verizon customer. The phone wouldn't work in voice mode but it could send text messages.

"In the event of an emergency, this is another form of communication that can be used to request assistance from our first responders," Nixon said.

"It's also a big advantage for the deaf and hard of hearing community," Nixon said. He said TTY landlines might work, but they only work at a physical location, not in a car.

Nixon said there are times when

somebody doesn't want to or can't talk to a 911 operator, Nixon said.

"If somebody was hiding in a closet because an assailant is in the house or there was a shooting somewhere or somebody has difficulty breathing and can't talk the service will play a vital role," Nixon said.

Nixon offers this advice.

See TEXT-2-911, 3

New post office coming

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Winfall will be getting a new post office.

The old one, located in a leased building, was closed in August 2015 because the 125-year-old structure was no longer safe. The old building has since been torn down.

It will be replaced with a 500-square foot pre-constructed unit that will be located on the same site on Main Street.

Mayor Fred Yates described himself as "peacock happy" with the decision to bring a post office back to town.

Richard Hancock, a real estate specialist for the U.S. Postal Service, could not give a firm date on when they new post office would be open.

"My folks are looking at what site improvements need to be completed and I don't have a firm construction date," Hancock said. "We're working on it."

He said he'd know more in 60 days.

"We look forward to getting it taken care of and moving forward. We do this all over the country and there is a process and we have to just let the process work."

The new Winfall post office will be constructed at some other site and shipped to Perquimans County.

The new post office will have a counter where people can buy stamps and drop off or pick up packages. It will also have space for post office boxes.

For the past year, Winfall customers have had to drive to Hertford to get their mail. Yates described that as a hardship.

"Besides, the Hertford Post Office isn't the best in the world," Yates said. He referred to the fact that

See POST OFFICE, 2



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Robin Trueblood gets on his knees to paint the lower trim on one hallway at Perquimans County Middle School last week.

Schools prepare for new year

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

When Perquimans County students return to school on Aug. 29, James Davison wants their first impression to be a good one.

Davison took over the job as head of maintenance for the school system on Feb. 15.

"This all goes back to first impressions, they are everlasting," Davison said. "We're making every effort to spruce up the entrances of all our schools."

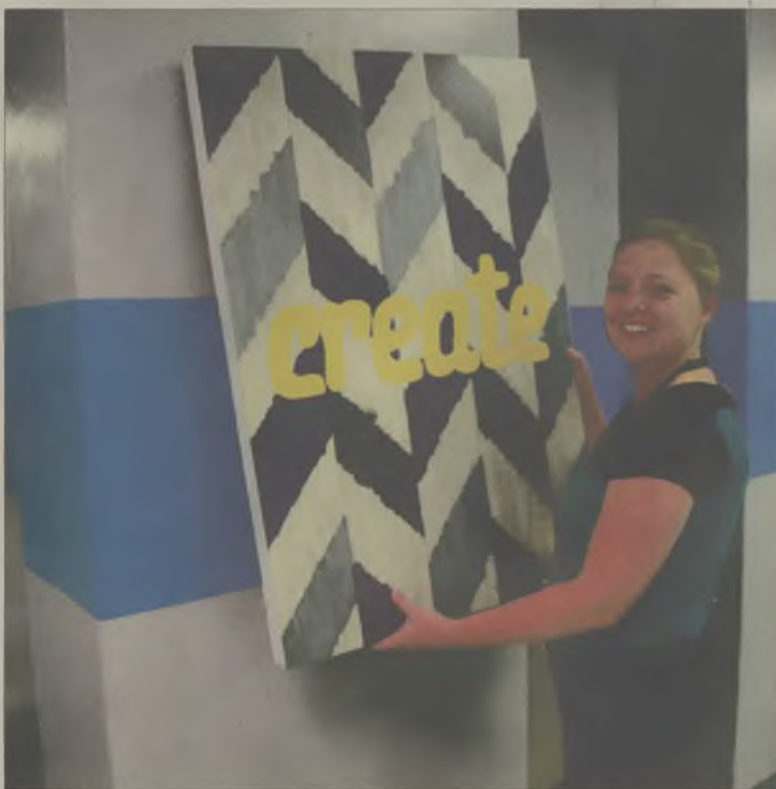


DAVISON

He expects the process may take some time, but they're working on it.

"I have a small group of good hardworking guys, but you can't eat an elephant in one bite."

The halls of Perquimans County Middle School and the lockers all got a fresh coat of paint this summer and crews will work as they can on landscaping. In the grassy area behind the school system's central office, a 28x32 foot shelter has been built. It can be used by the band or athletic teams who practice there to get out of the sun



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Perquimans County Middle School principal Laura Moreland holds up one of the pieces of art that will hang on the seventh grade hall at the school last week.

on hot days.

The roof over the auditorium at the high school is also getting replaced. That wing of the school as built in 1924, and the warranty on

the last roof had expired. That's expected to cost \$90,000 and should be finished by Aug. 22, Davison

See MAINTENANCE, 2

Wind hearings set for next week

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A year-old debate over a new wind farm project will come down to two days of hearings next week.

The Perquimans County Board of County Commissioners is scheduled to hold quasi-judicial hearings to consider the Apex Clean Energy project on Aug. 24 and Aug. 25. Both meetings start at 5:30 p.m. and will be held in the second floor courtroom at the Perquimans Courthouse Annex.

The meetings cap a process that started last summer when crowds started to pack county commission meetings to voice their concerns about the project.

Apex's Timbermill Wind project would span 16,000 acres of Perquimans and Chowan counties, and include 105 wind turbines more than 500-feet tall. The project is expected to cost between \$300 million and \$400 million. The project is expected to generate millions of dollars in local tax revenue over the 25-year life of the project.

The Perquimans commission has approved a similar wind project in the past — what is now called Amazon Wind Farms East. However residents in the Bear Swamp community and elsewhere argued the zoning laws dealing with wind weren't tough enough or they didn't want to see the new project at all.

In October, the six-member county commission agreed to put a four-month moratorium on new wind projects to give the county planning board a chance to review the rules.

The planning board is made up of people appointed by the commission to make recommendations when it comes to interpreting the zoning code. The board members are paid \$50 each time they meet.

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See HEARINGS, 3

Group seeks funds for county's visitor center

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The Perquimans County Restoration Association is trying to raise the last \$18,000 it needs so it can complete renovations to the visitor's center at the Newbold-White House.

Philip McMullan, the president of the PCRA, said the total project is expected

to cost \$60,000 and \$42,000 has already been raised. The PCRA is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation and donations are tax deductible.

The Newbold-White house is not a state funded historic site. Unpaid volunteers make the house available for tours during the spring, summer and early fall.

The visitor's center houses exhibits, meeting rooms and the offices for PCRA. It's located adjacent to the Newbold White house, which was built in the 1730s and is the oldest brick home in North Carolina. The house

is off Harvey Point Road.

About 25 years ago, the visitor's center was built but over time it needs work.

"The first phase has already been done," McMullan said. "We've replaced a lot of the old siding and built a new porch."

Phase II will complete the restoration and re-siding of the north and east sides of the building. It will also expand the building to the east and provide an interior gallery that would allow the hosting and catering of special events. PCRA



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

The Perquimans County Restoration Association is raising money now to make improvements to the visitor's center at the Newbold-White House.

See FUNDS, 3

