

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



See a picture of a local sunrise, 2

"News from Next Door"

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DOT NOW FAVORS DIFFERENT BRIDGE

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

After a decade of study, the N.C. Department of Transportation has reversed a decision it made 18 months ago on how best to replace Hertford's S-Bridge.

DOT now says another swing bridge — not a fixed bridge like the U.S. 17 By-

pass over the river — is the preferred option.

The swing bridge will cost more — an estimated \$32 million vs. \$19 million — and it will shut down direct traffic between Winfall and Hertford for up to three years, vs. eight months. But even those who opposed any option that would stop traffic that long say they're

ready for the project to move forward.

"It (the three year closure) will create some problems for businesses downtown in my opinion," said Susan Cox who owns a business on Church Street and is president of the Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce.

But Cox went on to say

"this is the closest thing to what a majority of the people wanted. It's time to make a decision and move on with this thing. We've been dealing with it a long time."

The fact that the town boards of Winfall and Hertford, and the Perquimans County Commission endorsed the swing bridge op-

tion was mentioned in DOT's announcement. It came out Friday just before the long Labor Day weekend.

The pressure against DOT's first preferred option known as D-Mod got traction when the State Historic Preservation Office said it would adversely impact the historic nature of that area of Hertford. Even though no

federal money is being used on the replacement, the federal government must issue the permit and agencies dealing with historic issues got involved.

Alternative B, the swing bridge, also impacts the nature of the historic district according to state and

See BRIDGE, 6

Veteran recalls Sept. 11 attack

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

When William Horton saw the planes crash into the World Trade Center towers 15 years ago, he knew it was no accident.

What he didn't know was his building was next.

Horton is a retired colonel in the U.S. Air Force and a pilot. The Vero Beach, Fla. native moved to Perquimans County in 2005 from northern Virginia. He was working as a contractor in the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I can vividly remember everything just like as if it was yesterday," he said last week. Horton hopes people remember Sunday is Patriot Day, and people will remember the 2,977 people who were killed on that day 15 years ago.

He arrived to work that day at 6:30 a.m. and remembers a clear, blue sky. He checked into his office and then went to a meeting several floors below.

"As I was walking back to my office about 9:30 a.m. I passed my supervisor in



HORTON

See PATRIOT DAY, 3



FILE PHOTO

Clear skies and warm temperatures should greet visitors to the 35th annual Indian Summer Festival Friday and Saturday.

Festival weekend arrives

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Historic Hertford Inc. is still looking for a few good vendors as the clock winds down to the start of the 35th annual Indian Summer Festival on Friday.

More than 30 businesses and organizations have signed up for booths as well as four food vendors.

But Susan Cox said that's down from last year and there is still time. Cox is a member of HHI, the group that puts on the event.

"We're always excited about the festival and it should be a good time for everyone," Cox said. "If anybody is interested or knows somebody else who may be interested they can call me,"

See ISF, 3



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Periauger will again be offering the opportunity to sail from the town dock on 'Miss P' during the Indian Summer Festival. The sailings will be at 10 a.m., noon, and 2 p.m.

School test scores improve

COMING NEXT WEEK:
Find out what schools did to make the improvements in test scores.

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Perquimans County Schools has a report card it won't be ashamed to take home.

The school system earned a "B" and two "Cs" last week in a report released by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. This time last year it was "D" and two "Cs."

The "B" grade for the Hertford Grammar School is the first time a school in Perquimans has earned that grade. The improvement of Perquimans County Middle School to from a "D" to a "C" is also cause for celebration, according to Superintendent Matthew Cheeseman. The high school retained its "C" grade.

"We no longer have any school that is low performing," Cheeseman said. He points to the state report that 65 percent of school districts have at least one school rated "D" or lower.

"I can't tell you how excited we are for our students, our community and all the professionals that work for us," Cheeseman said.

See SCORES, 6

Couple makes large donation to schools foundation

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Harvey and Elizabeth Alter leaving Perquimans County for a new home in Florida, but they're leaving something behind for students.

The couple has donated property worth \$76,000 to the Perquimans County Schools Foundation as a parting gesture.

"I don't know of any magical words to say 'thank you' to the Alters for their gener-

osity to the Foundation," said Brenda Lassiter, the director of the foundation. "With a land transfer gift valued at \$76,000 and scholarships for PCHS students ranging back to 2011 valued at \$18,000, it is the second largest donation by any contributors."

Harvey Alter, who is from



H. ALTER



E. ALTER

New Jersey, and his wife moved to Albemarle Plantation seven years ago. Six years ago the couple

started giving two annual scholarships to Perquimans County High School students. One male and one female student got \$1,500 a year each for college. The gifts were aimed at students

interested in applied science fields like medicine and nursing.

While the scholarship will end, the foundation will have proceeds from selling the land to do with what it wants. The funds are unrestricted.

"We're moving and decided since we're not going to continue that scholarship we'd donate the property to continue to help the youth of Perquimans County," Harvey Alter said last week. The couple saw a need

to help local students long before he was named to the foundation board in 2014.

"It (the foundation) is an extremely worthy organization and not enough people realize it and not enough people support it," Harvey Alter said. "We just felt we wanted to do something for the county since the school has no money and the state is treating us like second hand citizens."

Alter is in his 70s and his wife is in her late 50s. They don't have children in the

local school system, yet he said, "these are our kids. They are the future of the country and we have to encourage these kids to come back after college and the only way they're going to do that is if they can earn a decent living."

He was specifically critical of Gov. Pat McCrory.

"We have a stupid governor who says we (in the northeast) should be aligning ourselves with another

See DONATION, 4

Hermine brings wind, rain, outages

From Staff Reports

Tropical Storm Hermine left its mark on the area late Friday and Saturday, downing trees and utility lines,

leaving several thousand people in the region without power and forced some motorists to deal with flooded streets and highways.

Perquimans County Emergency Management Director reported no injuries or major damage.

Albemarle Electric

See STORM, 3

Early voting to start on October 20

From Staff Reports

Perquimans County will be able to start voting for the presidential election on Oct. 20.

The county, and other counties in the state, held off setting early voting hours because the issue of voting rules was being debated in the courts.

On July 29, a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit struck down photo ID require-

Decision 2016

ments and associated laws pass by the N.C. General Assembly. The provisions "target African-Americans with almost surgical precision" and "impose cures for problems that did not exist," the judges wrote.

On Wednesday The Supreme Court denied a re-

quest from North Carolina to allow provisions of its controversial voting rights law to go back into effect.

In the 4-4 split, high court justices left undisturbed the lower court opinion that struck down the law.

Last week Perquimans County issued its schedule for voters who want to cast a ballot before the Nov. 8 election. In releasing the list, officials said it would stand "barring a different outcome on appeal."

Early voting will be offered from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Oct. 20-21, Oct. 24-28 and Oct. 31-Nov. 2. On Nov. 3-4 the hours will be from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. and Saturday voting will be offered Nov. 5 from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.

All early voting takes place at the elections office on Edenton Road Street.

The state sets down rules on how many hours each county must provide for

See VOTING, 3



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