



SENIOR NIGHT

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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2017

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Senate OKs funding for marine park

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

The budget bill passed by the N.C. Senate last week includes \$2.8 million for the Perquimans Marine Industrial Park.

If the funding remains in the budget and other matching funds can be secured, Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath said the county could be poised to put the project out to bid immediately, perhaps this summer. Projections have been

that if fully developed, the park could bring hundreds of new jobs to the area.

The county is trying to develop the park, which is located on 71 acres of state owned land inside the 400-acre Perquimans industrial park off Harvey Point Road. The original cost estimates to fully develop the park, including a boat basin, was \$20 million.

But several years ago state and local officials put forth a plan to dig the basin in phases.

The first phase is expended to cost about \$5.3 million.

Sen. Bill Cook, (R-Beaufort), who represents the region, helped push to get \$2.8 million in the budget. Golden LEAF might also provide some funding and a separate state grant is an option.

Jordan Hennessy, a spokesman for Cook, said officials approached the Senator about a year ago seeking help with the

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Davison makes pitch for jobs, investment

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Perquimans County missed out on \$35 million in investments that could have brought upwards of 640 jobs because the county's marine industrial park hasn't been developed.

Cathy Davison, the executive director of the Albemarle Commission, said that's just one of the arguments she uses to get lawmakers to fund the

development of a boat basin at the site off Harvey Point Road near the Perquimans Recreation Center.

"People have wondered why I've been working so hard on the marine park," Davison said. "It's because it's a regional project. The impact it could have on our economy regionally is substantial, so I've spent a lot of time in Raleigh knocking on doors."

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Schools get solar grant

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Nancy Rountree, a teacher at Hertford Grammar School, hugs her daughter Savannah last week as graduates toured area schools.

While Perquimans County commissioners debate the local role of renewable energy, two groups are offering cash to set up a small scale solar power project at Perquimans County Middle School to teach students about it.

NC GreenPower picked PCMS as one of five schools to fund a solar project this year.

The group launched the program in 2015 to provide matching grants for the installation of solar arrays that convert sunlight into electricity at schools so students could use and learn about renewable energy.

The grants won't come even close to providing all the power the middle school's requires, but that's not the point said Perquimans Superintendent Matthew Cheeseman.

"It has nothing to do with anything else then having kids learning. It's solely related to education," Cheeseman said. "It's not about policy."

But it could be about teaching students about a growing field of jobs.

According a story published by Forbes, the U.S. solar industry employed 260,077 workers last year, a

See SOLAR, 2

SENIOR WALK



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Mikayla McCall (right) hugs a student at Perquimans Central School last week during a "Senior Walk" by upcoming graduates of Perquimans County High School. Right, Nancy Rountree, a teacher at Hertford Grammar School, hugs her daughter Savannah last week as graduates toured area schools.



Griffin named top principal

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

When Hertford Grammar School principal Jason Griffin went home from work last week he had plenty to be happy about. His school was awarded a "B" grade on the state's A,B,C,D,F grading scale last year. He was also a regional finalist for the state Principal of the Year award.

When he went back to work Monday and met with teachers and staff, Griffin had one more thing to be happy about.

He's now North Carolina's Wells Fargo Principal of the Year winner for 2017. The awards ceremony was in Cary on Friday.

"The past 72 hours has been crazy," told his staff in a meeting in the school library Monday afternoon.

He said he's see "unreal" amount of attention from requests for interviews and social media.

"It's been a very interesting ride considering where we were before."

When Griffin started at HGS as a teacher in 2011, Hertford Grammar was on the state's list of troubled schools. Unless something positive happened, the state could fire the staff and replace them and take the school over.

Now it's one of only six elementary schools in the north-



GRIFFIN

See GRIFFIN, 3

Flag program for veterans continues to grow

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Volunteers will set out later this month to make sure the grave of every veteran in Perquimans County has an American flag on it for Memorial Day.

Ken Rominger, a member of American Legion Post 126, said the program was started by the late Charlie Skinner in 1987 and grown larger.

Last year with Ed Madre chairing the committee, more than 700 flags were placed at veteran's

graves in 26 cemeteries throughout the county.

About 400 of the of the flags are placed in Cedarwood Cemetery in Hertford. But Rominger said as the Legion has reached out and been able to add some small church and family cemeteries to the list.

The task of cataloging all the information is hampered by the fact that some gravestones don't indicate a veteran is buried there.

Rominger said in the past individuals who knew the history

See FLAG, 3

Caleb Richardson named national Presidential Scholar

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A Perquimans County High School senior and one

of his teachers will be honored by the U.S. Presidential Scholars program.

Caleb Richardson was among 161 students selected this year out of about 4,000 nominees nationally. He will attend an event in Washington D.C. next month.

The Presidential Scholars program was established in



RICHARDSON

and is meant to honor the nation's most distinguished

graduating high school seniors.

In 2015 the program was extended to recognized students who have excelled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) fields. It is in that field that Richardson was nominated and is being recognized. Only 20 students nationally are being

honored for their CTE part of the Scholars award.

Also being recognized is Angel White, the agriculture teacher at Perquimans County High School. Richardson nominated her.

Richardson started raising and showing animals at age 9 with 4-H. Now at age 17, he owns 30 head of cattle

and is part owner of Whistlin' Pines Farms. He maintains day-to-day operations of the cattle farm along with being an honor student at Perquimans High and helping his father, a commercial fisherman.

Richardson admits dur-

See SCHOLAR, 2



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