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"News from Next Door"

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Aples to step down from Hertford seat

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

A Hertford town councilman widely seen as a moderating influence on other members of the town's governing board has announced he'll be stepping down on Jan. 1.

Archie Aples, who also serves as the council's mayor pro tem, didn't say

why he'd be leaving with nearly a year left on his current term. He did promise, however, to have more to say about his plans when the board meets again on



APLES

Dec. 10. He made the announcement at a meeting last Tuesday.

A New Orleans native who spent 20 years in the Air Force before moving to Hertford with his wife, Aples is about three years into his four-year term on the Town Council. He was seen as a moderating influence on the board, seeking to calm egos and urge fellow councilors

to reach toward a common goal.

Aples ran for the town board in 2013 but finished short. With two seats open, Ed Lane had the most votes with 247 followed by Lillian Holman with 223 and Aples with 208. Quentin Jackson finished fourth with 87 votes.

Two years later as a write-in candidate, Aples was the

clear winner. He drew 166 votes compared to 93 for Eley, 88, for Frank Norman (another write-in) and 25 for Frank Jaklic.

Aples appeared to be growing frustrated, however, with some fellow council members' behavior, including the alleged assault of Councilman Sid Eley by Councilman Jackson. When Jackson had his last court

date on the assault charge, all members of council were called as witnesses in the case since the incident happened after a regular town meeting.

Mayor Horace Reid said Aples would be missed.

"I know a lot of people who will not be happy to see this happen," Reid said.

See APLES, 2

Winfall bridge project delayed

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

Construction on a new bridge on Creek Drive in Winfall will not be completed by the end of the month as was originally thought. Instead it may be the end of December before the cars can start using it again.

David Otts, the resident engineer for NC DOT in Elizabeth City, said there were a number of factors that contributed to the delay.

T.A. Loving Company, the contractor, has about 61 percent of the work complete, according to a progress report listed on DOT's web site.

"They had some things that were under their control and some things that were beyond their control," Otts said.

One factor was weather. While Perquimans County was spared major damage from two hurricanes that hit the coast this year, the threat of a hurricane halted work on the bridge.

"They had to secure the worksite starting about four days ahead of the storm, and a lot of the workers went home. Some lived in the Sneads Ferry area and they sustained damage on their homes and some didn't come back."

Also asbestos was found insulating a water line under the bridge and that stopped

See BRIDGE, 2



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

A woman is carried by firefighters from the scene of a HAZMAT drill involving a van and a train.

Crews practice HAZMAT drill

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

What started as an accident between a van and a train quickly turned into a more deadly scenario involving the plague in a hazardous materials drill played out in Perquimans and Chowan counties Saturday.

About 100 emergency officials, including firefighters, paramedics and emergency management workers took part in the drill that started in Winfall and included Vidant Chowan Hospital.

The effort was coordinated by the Chowan-Perquimans Local Emergency Management Planning Committee, said Jonathan Nixon, Perquimans County's EMS director.

In the exercise a van ran into the side of a Chesapeake and Albemarle train at a crossing. In the process, lime spilled from a train car and coated the scene.

Firefighters got the four people



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

A person in a HAZMAT suit carries what is thought to be a container full of plague to a containment chamber.

out of the vehicle and they were transported to Vidant Chowan Hospital. But in the process of getting the people out, firefighters discovered a metal cylinder that was hissing. Tests indicated it con-

tained the plague.

Mary Spruill, emergency management coordinator for Vidant Chowan Hospital and Vidant Bertie

See HAZMAT, 2

Housing authority installs cameras

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

The Hertford Housing Authority has installed security cameras at two of its developments. Housing officials say the move has drawn rave reviews from the people that live there, but some town officials have concerns.

The issue was brought up at a town council meeting last week.

Gail White, the executive director of the authority, spoke to the board about what she has done, and why.

"We aim to offer people who need it a safe and secure place to live," White said.

Wynne Fork Court/Wynne Fork Drive has been the site of a number of violent incidents including murders, shootings and stabbings. There have been crime problems at the King/Stokes Street location as well.

So the authority followed suit with what other housing development have done, and bought 10 cameras from Nixon Solutions, a Hertford firm.

Five of the cameras are at the 36-unit King Street/Stokes Drive development and the other five are at the Wynne Fork Court/Wynne Fork Drive location. That one has 69 units.

For now, none are installed at the 12-unit Church Street/White Street project because White said they

See CAMERAS, 2

Rocky Mount man named interim director of Albemarle Commission

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

Robert Murphy of Rocky Mount will serve as interim executive director of the Hertford-based Albemarle Commission.

He began working earlier this month.

Murphy's hiring follows Cathy Davison's resignation, which took

effect on the first of November. The agency's Board of Delegates announced Murphy's new position after an emergency Sunday meeting.

Murphy has experience in local government leadership. He gradu-



MURPHY

ated from Old Dominion University in 1970 and earned a master's degree in urban affairs from Virginia Tech in 1974.

After serving as county manager in Carteret County from 1997 through 2001, he served as county manager for Nash County from 2001 until his retirement in 2013. Since then he has served as the interim county manager for numer-

ous counties, including Caswell, Pender, Vance and Warren.

Murphy, who is 70-years-old, plans to work in Hertford three days a week. He will commute from his home in Rocky Mount.

The Commission administers state and federal programs over 10-county region of northeastern North Carolina. It has an operating budget of \$6.4 million.

Murphy said he's had a life-long interest in local government and agencies and looks forward to his temporary stay in Hertford. He does promise one thing.

"I will be as open and as transparent as possible. I have found over the years, it is best to be that way"

See MURPHY, 2

Jackson takes Town of Hertford to court

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

Hertford Town Councilman Quentin Jackson has filed civil complaints against the town and a town employee for their role in the transfer of a vehicle he says was his to another person.

Jackson refused to comment on the issue last week.

However because of pending legal action, the other town council members met behind closed doors Tuesday with the town attorney to discuss the case. Jackson was excused from that meeting.

Based on two complaints filed in Perquimans County the issues revolve around



JACKSON

the license plate agency the town operates inside town hall. Motorists can get new tags and transfer vehicle titles in the office.

Apparently at one point a former business partner of Jackson went to the office and transferred the title of a vehicle from the company's name to his own. Judy Bateman, a town employee and notary, notarized the signature. She is name as a defendant in one of the two complaints. The town itself is

See JACKSON, 2

TURKEY DROP



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

John Christensen unloads the car of Darla Matthews with two turkeys last week during the annual Turkey Drop at Hertford United Methodist Church.



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