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"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2019

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

A design shows the proposed Perquimans Marine Industrial Park with a man-made boat basin. The Perquimans County Recreation Center is located to the right at the foot of South Granby Street. The first phase of the boat basin is colored in light blue.

## County gets \$750,000 grant

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
 News Editor

A \$750,000 grant by Golden LEAF will put Perquimans County one step closer to the start of construction of a long-awaited marine industrial park.

The announcement by Golden LEAF executive director Dan Gerlach last week was applauded by county officials who applied for the grant last year. Golden LEAF was offering

counties up to \$1.5 million.

"I'm ecstatic," said Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath. "We have a pending grant with U.S. Economic Development Admin-

istration and in my view this just strengthens the case for getting it. We're on a good footing now, and that would put us on a better footing. We're also working on some other angles as well.

"It's clear Dan and Golden LEAF believe in our project. As you know, we've been

talking with them about it for years, and now it's happening. This also creates the effect of legitimacy for other funders."

Gerlach said Golden LEAF will work with other funding agencies to make the Perquimans project a reality.

"The closer you get the easier it is to find the rest of the money," Gerlach said. "We will be able to tell others, 'hey we're in, why don't you get in too.'"

The first phase of building an inland boat basin is estimated to cost between \$6 million and \$7 million. The state has already awarded the county almost \$2.9 million for the project. With the \$750,000 from Golden LEAF, the county has nearly \$3.6 million to spend.

The county owns the 72-acre parcel near the Perquimans County Recreation Center. The site is

See GRANT, 2

## County adopts fraud system

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
 News Editor

Perquimans County property owners are urged to take advantage of a free system that will alert them if somebody tries to file a deed or other action against their property.

A criminal may record a fraudulent deed making it appear as if they now own your home. Once they've done this, they can use your name as collateral on a mortgage or even attempt to sell your home to an unsuspecting buyer.

Register of Deeds Jacqueline Frierson said the service became active on Feb. 1.

Frierson said she is not aware of this type of fraud happening in Perquimans County but she knows it has happened elsewhere, including Wake County. She said Currituck and Gates counties have adopted the fraud alert program.

"Once you sign up, if a deed or any other type of document is filed with your name on it, you will be alerted," Frierson said. "If you know about it, and it's OK, there is nothing you have to do, but if you don't then you contact our office."

The system only works with e-mail, not with phone numbers. Once you log in, you will be asked to give a

See FRAUD, 2



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The new DaVita kidney center in Hertford will have 10 chairs and can serve 20 patients.

## DaVita to open kidney clinic

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
 News Editor

DaVita, a worldwide provider of dialysis treatment, plans to open a clinic in Hertford in March.

The clinic at 210 Ocean Highway South is in a shopping center that also houses a Family Dollar store.

Courtney Culpepper, a communications manager for Denver-based DaVita, said the Hertford clinic will have 10 chairs and expects to serve 20 patients. Additionally, the center is equipped with training rooms and will serve as a regional hub for teammate education efforts. DaVita has clinics in Elizabeth City and Edenton as well.

The Hertford clinic will

have a staff of about 10 people. That will include a nurse, dietician, social worker, insurance counselor and patient care technicians.

An estimated 31 million people in the U.S. have chronic kidney disease, according to the American Kidney Fund.

Diabetes and hypertension are the two leading causes of kidney disease. One in three people with diabetes and one in five people with hypertension also have kidney disease.

For people with stage five kidney disease, also known as kidney failure or end-stage renal disease, dialysis or a kidney transplant is required

See KIDNEY, 2



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A picture shows the lobby area of the new DaVita kidney center in Hertford.

## Schools want calendar control

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
 News Editor

Perquimans County is joining the list of school systems that are asking the state to give them back local control over the school calendar.

Interim Superintendent James Bunch made the request this month to the Perquimans County Commission and asked for their support. The county commission agreed to back the plan.

In 2004, the North Carolina General Assembly took control of school calendar and set what amounts to a "one size fits all" statewide mandate. Schools cannot start any earlier than the Monday closest to Aug. 26 and school must end no later than the Friday closest to June 11. The change was largely supported by the tourism industry. A longer summer break meant people had more time to vacation at the beach or the mountains and it provides teenage workers who wouldn't be in school.

School officials have been fighting to get back control of the calendar ever since.

In 2017, a bill passed in the N.C. House by a 100-8 margin to let any school system start as early as Aug. 15 to align with the community college calendar. The House voted 104-6 in favor of letting 20 primarily high-poverty counties start the school year as early as the Monday closest to Aug. 10.

Both measures never made it to the Senate floor.

That same year then Rep. Bob Steinburg sponsored a bill that would give complete control of the calendar to the school boards in Camden, Currituck, Edenton-Chowan, Elizabeth City-Pasquotank, Perquimans and Tyrrell County.

"One reason the issue

See CALENDAR, 2

## More funds available for winter heating help

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
 News Editor

Perquimans County has received another \$31,000 to help low-income people with heating help this winter.

Department of Social Services Director Susan Chaney said her department was notified of the grant on Friday.

The funding comes through the federal Low Income Energy Assistance Program, or LIEAP. The county received \$70,000 in late 2018 and those funds were all used by early January.

The initial grant was earmarked for people who were age 60 or older and disabled and who were already getting services

through Aging and Adult Services.

The new grant is opened up to low-income people, regardless of age. People are eligible for the new LIEAP funds if they make less than 110 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

That works out to about \$13,700 for an individual or about \$28,300 for a family of four, based on the pov-

erty numbers on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' website. There are also other limits.

People who received money in the first round of funding and ineligible for funding in the new round.

The money is paid directly to the utility, either electrical utility or something that provides fuel like

propane or oil. The amount ranges by how many people in the household. The most someone can get is \$400. The least is \$200.

If you take an average of \$300, the \$31,000 will be enough to help about 105 households.

For more information on the program, contact the Perquimans Social Services office at 426-7373.

## Long-time congressman dies at 76

BY BOBBY BURNS  
 The Daily Reflector

U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, the long-serving legislator who railed against deficit spending and advocated for

the active duty military and veterans alike, died Sunday at age 76 after struggling with health problems including a broken hip.

Jones, a Republican from the Pitt County town of Farmville, represented the 3rd Congressional District which includes Perquimans County. He had been re-elected to his 13th term in November and had announced he would retire at

the end of the term. He became ill before the new session began, however, and was excused on Dec. 11.

"Congressman Jones represented the best of North Carolina politics," said U.S. Rep. G.K. Butterfield, a Wilson Democrat who gave Jones the oath of office on Jan. 4 during a private visit to Jones' home.

See JONES, 2

## Man faces \$2 million bond

From Staff Reports

A host of law enforcement agencies were involved in the arrest of a man on Turnpike Road on Wednesday on weapons and drug charges.

Eddy Rodriguez-Pinto, 26, is being held on \$2 million bond on charges of trafficking marijuana, maintaining a dwelling and possession of a firearm by a felon.

He was living in the 500 block of Turnpike Road in Perquimans County. Sheriff Shelby White said more than 10 pounds of marijuana was seized.



RODRIGUEZ-PINTO

The sheriff would only say multiple law enforcement agencies were involved in the case, but he would not name them. A spokesman for the FBI in Charlotte said last week the pending charges were state related and her office couldn't comment on state charges.

More charges are expected. Rodriguez-Pinto is being held in Albemarle District Jail.

