

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Perquimans County Middle School student Caleb Copeland won second place in the Superintendent's Christmas Card Contest.

"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019

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State, local candidates file for office

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Legislators and local officeholders took time to sign the line when candidate filing opened Monday.

State Sen. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, and state Rep. Ed Goodwin, R-Chowan, filed for their second terms.

"It continues to be an honor and a privilege to

represent northeastern North Carolina in the largest legislative district in the entire General Assembly," Steinburg said Monday after he filed, joined by his wife Marie. "The strong relationships I have within the region and with leadership in Raleigh has meant that our voice is one that will be heard and not denied or ignored when it comes to the

challenges facing a rural legislative district."

Steinburg said he remains strongly committed to serving the region.

"I have the desire, energy, drive and commitment to continue representing this region in a manner that will ensure that the needs of northeastern NC will not be

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SUBMITTED PHOTO
NC Senator Bob Steinburg, joined by his wife Marie, files for re-election on Monday to a second term representing District 1.

Commission discusses algae, audit

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Algae and an audit populated the Perquimans County Commission's Monday agenda.

Earlier this year, high levels of toxins were discovered in algal blooms in Albemarle Sound waterways.

That's according to Leigh Stevenson, an algal ecologist and algal bloom response coordinator for the Division of Water Resources, a branch of the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality.

During Stevenson's speech to the commission, she said there were 18 confirmed algal bloom sites in the Sound and corresponding waterways that include the Perquimans and Chowan rivers.

When a bloom is discovered to pose a risk to the community, the division notifies the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services and issues a news release to media.

The division has three personnel assigned to performing monthly monitoring and tests for blue-green algae. The team is based in Washington and is responsible for testing in 21 counties within the Albemarle Sound region.

The two most common toxins produced by cyanobacteria are microcystins and cylindrospermopsin.

Kennedy Holt, chemical risk assessor with the NC Department of Health and Human Services, said the blooms can cause minor skin irritations for people who come in contact with them. He said cyanobacteria may also pack toxins that can cause more serious health issues for humans and animals.

Holt said folks who eat fish should not worry so much about the fillets because any toxins ingested by the fish would be more confined to the organs. However, the inverse is true with shellfish, so people should exercise more caution.

Brian Wrenn, ecosystems branch supervisor in the Division of Water Resources, a branch of the DEQ, said there is not one point-specific source for algal blooms, but there are many causes and solutions to the problem would not happen overnight.

County Manager Frank Heath said county has been making a concerted effort to monitor the matter and

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'TIS THE SEASON' Perquimans kicks off celebrations

Grand Illumination Friday
Hertford and Winfall
parades Saturday

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Two parades and the annual Grand Illumination tradition light up the beginning of the Christmas season in Perquimans County.

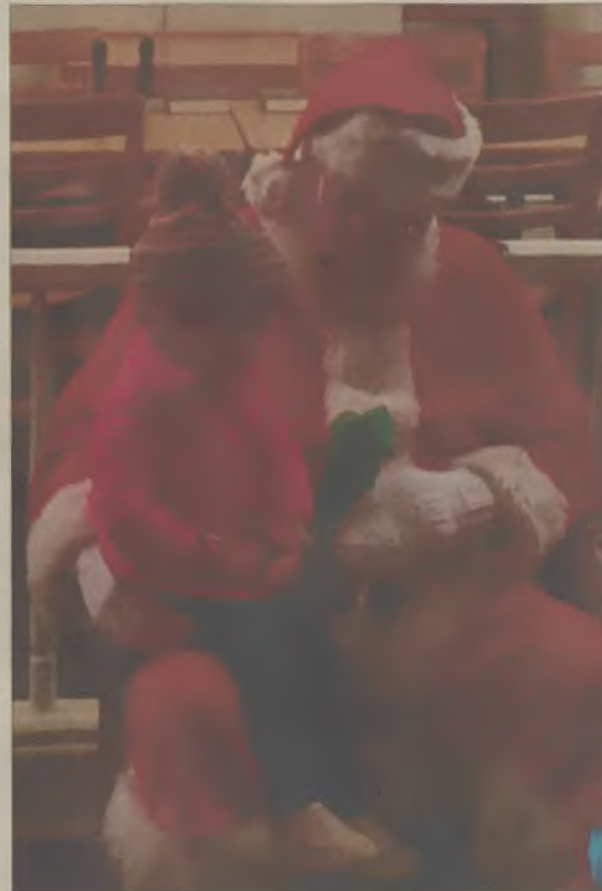
Parades in Hertford and Winfall are Saturday, but if you want to get in the Christmas spirit a day earlier, make plans to attend the Grand Illumination ceremony between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. Friday at the Perquimans Courthouse's lawn.

Organized by Historic Hertford Inc., the event promises fun for everyone.

"The Grand Illumination event is a family-friendly event for all ages. The entertainment line up includes pre-schoolers, youth, teens, and adults," said Joyce Gurganus, co-chairwoman of Grand Illumination. "With so many school age children participating, it becomes a happy, festive event for participants and viewers."

Co-chairwoman Nancy Rich-Lodge added, "The highlight of the evening for us is watching the children interact with Santa. The anticipation of seeing

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FILE PHOTOS

O' Christmas tree, O' Christmas tree! Last year's tree sets the standard for what is to come this season.



Left: Santa Claus will be making a stopover to talk to kids as part of the Grand Illumination celebration that takes place between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. Friday at the Perquimans County Courthouse. The event features music and a tree lighting. Above: Last year, these kids were most certainly on Santa's "good" list.

Scholarship deadline is Feb. 1, 2020

BY STAFF REPORTS

The Perquimans County Schools Foundation announces the availability of the following scholarships for high school seniors attending Perquimans High School. Deadline to apply is Feb. 1, 2020.

Bessie Smith Harrell Scholarship

The Bessie Smith Harrell Scholarship of \$500 is given in honor of Bessie Smith Harrell, a native and lifelong resident of Perquimans County, who passed away in 2004. The intent of the donor, David Jordan, is that this award will encourage studying basic or applied fields of science by students. Recipients are selected based on scholastic achievement, community service and character.

Rhonda Gregory Business Scholarship

This \$1,000 scholarship is a scholarship sponsored by Danny and Rhonda Gregory and is offered to a PCHS senior planning to attend College of the Albemarle and entering the field of business. Recipients are selected based on financial need and academic standards.

Bogue Scholarship

The Bogue Scholarship of \$2,500 is given by Mr. and Mrs. William A. Bogue, Jr. in memory of his mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. William A. Bogue, aunts Margaret B. Butler and Edith B. Spivey, and all the descendants of the first William Bogue of Perquimans who have called Perquimans County their home for more than 300 years.

Eugene Rountree, Sr. Scholarship

This \$500 scholarship in memory of Eugene Rountree, Sr. is sponsored by the Inter-County Department Fire Department and is available to a high school student. Mr. Rountree was a charter member and retired Fire Chief of the Inter-County Volunteer Fire

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Turner: Schools are good places to work

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Perquimans Schools Superintendent Tanya Turner said the school system's employees are happy in the workplace serving the students and the community.

To learn more about some of those staff who were recognized for their achievements during the Nov. 25 Perquimans Board of Education meeting, see pages A6-7.

During Turner's report, she presented a summary of the 2019 Local Teacher Working Conditions Sur-

vey. Soon after starting as superintendent in May, Turner began talking with teachers, staff and administrators to learn their opinions.

Among the many issues surveyed included questions concerning class size, instructional time, student discipline, leadership, instructional resource accessibility and community support.

Turner concluded that the school system's metrics met or exceeded state standards - meaning the school system is a good place to work.

"Perquimans County School employees are dedicated to this county and the students of our community," Turner said. "That is what makes this such a special place to live and work. There is a true sense of family that permeates the school system making it a great place to be. When 96.55% of your employees say that this is a great place to work, you know you are in a great place! I'm so proud to serve the people of Perquimans County schools!"

In other news, Rube Blanchard, school system's

chief financial officer, provided an update regarding the renewal of property insurance coverage with the NC Public School Insurance Fund. Rates will be slightly increasing primarily due to the addition of the new football stadium to the coverage plan.

Also, Blanchard noted that the system pays out more than \$162,000 annually for students to have Chromebook laptops. Vendor has asked for an additional \$3,000 to pay property taxes associated with the laptops. Because the laptops are leased, BOE

and Blanchard are going to review the contract to learn more about this charge.

In other matters, Dr. Latoria Johnson and Ashley Waters - school district's mental health counselors - provided a presentation that concluded more attention is needed to better provide for students' mental health well-being.

Nearly 1 in 5 Tarheel state students have a mental health and/or substance use disorder; of those, 75% will not receive treatment in the current system,

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