

## BOE

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"I think my age and having children in the schools is a huge advantage to me also," he said. "Parents and teachers alike are around my age as are people who I interact with often. These folks really keep me informed of what is going on in the schools. Stuff the average board member would not know."

Winslow said if elected, there are a number of things that he hopes the board can accomplish including supporting Superintendent Tanya Turner's policies to improve the school system. A top notch administrator, educator, talented runner and photographer with a powerful work ethic, Turner grew up, taught and coached in the Perquimans school system.

"I believe this board's

biggest accomplishment to date was to hire Superintendent Tanya Turner," he said. "Who knew we would find ourselves in a nationwide superintendent search just three years into a new superintendent. We have an effective, highly intelligent superintendent. Turner will need the board's support to continue moving our district forward."

Winslow said school safety is a matter of concern too.

"I feel like we cannot do enough to ensure school safety. That will be an ongoing effort," he said. "Some of our schools have some hot spots of negative data. Superintendent Turner is working hard to correct this but it is something I am well aware of and monitoring."

Lassiter of Belvidere, a retired federal planner for aircraft carriers, was first elected to the BOE in 2016 and has many ties to

the school system. Born and raised in Perquimans County, Lassiter graduated from PCHS in 1979 and his wife, Brenda, PCHS Class of 1982, served the school system 20+ years as public information officer. Presently, she is now executive director of the Perquimans County Schools Foundation.

The Lassiter's three children attended Perquimans schools and three of their eight grandchildren began school last fall. Worth noting, Lassiter's middle son John is principal at Hertford Grammar School.

Lassiter said if re-elected, he will be work hard to ensure that children get a quality education.

"I want to ensure that the public education system in Perquimans County continues to thrive and provide children with the knowledge and tools they need to be successful in life," he said. "Educating students

is two-fold: 1) education that comes from the school system; and 2) education that comes from within the home. The partnership is critical to the success of our children."

Yates of Winfall was first elected to the BOE in 2008, has served three terms and has children and grandchildren attending Perquimans schools. She is the owner of the childcare facility, Learning Center of Perquimans County.

Yates said if she is re-elected, she will be a strong advocate for salary increases and academic achievement.

"I hope to increase the salary for all bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, maintenance and increase supplements for our teachers," she said. "Therefore, I am committed to closing the achievement gaps among students."

Courtesy of the U.S.

Coast Guard, Joseph Silva of Winfall came to the area 25 years where he has raised a family with two children who graduated from Perquimans County High School along with two sons who are currently enrolled as students in the school system. Silva works as a technical photographer in the engineering division at the Coast Guard Aviation Logistics Center and his wife Ellen is a speech pathologist for Perquimans Central School.

Silva said if elected, he will work with others to pursue the smart choices needed to provide the best education.

"Rural schools have many challenges," he said. "Since the 2008 recession education funding has slowly trickled back to pre-recession levels but it's a struggle to get resources. Raleigh is not coming to help us. Our elected officials are in

a cage match over budgets and that leaves us uncertain about future challenges. We can't make more money fall from the sky but we can make smart choices to ensure our teachers and administrators can focus on our children and not stress about resources. We have an obligation to ensure that every child, regardless of the challenges they may carry, has available, the best education we can deliver. To that end, I think I have some talent for working with people on complicated problems."

Last note needed to top off this election story: Perquimans County Commissioners running unopposed who are seeking re-election are Kyle Jones, a Republican, and Democrats Joseph Hoffer and Charles Woodard.

Democratic Register of Deeds Jacqueline Frierson is also running re-election.

## LAYTON

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**Sid Eley and Dick Schulze**, a longtime prominent Pennsylvania congressman, now retired.

Congratulations goes to Hertford Rotary's Students of the Month **Ashante Griffin and Matthew Gregory**.

**Forensic Files II** premiered Sunday on HLN. The series delves into the world of forensic science profiling intriguing crimes, accidents and outbreaks of disease from around the world.

Distributed nationally and internationally, the show has ties to Hertford's **Gary Lico** of Albemarle Plantation. Yep. A local, Lico of GaryLico.TV is the show's distributor and so much more.

In other news, **Lynne Raymond** (See her col-



Hertford Rotary's Students of the Month are Pirates' Ashante Griffin and Matthew Gregory.

umn page A5) shared this quote about the S-Bridge that comes from Hertford's newspaper, which sarcastically reported on July 27, 1892: "We can justly claim the only float bridge in the world and we can also remark that we are the only people in the world that want one."

Maybe, but many people consider the S-Bridge a unique part of Hertford's history and a tourist attraction if ever there was one. A few years back, our family made a special trip to Hertford just to cross the bridge. Later, I took a solo trip to kayak

around and under the bridge. Pretty neat.

Now, for whatever reason, every time I cross the big US 17 Bridge, I instinctively look over at the tall cranes that are doing the bridge work. The bridge replacement is part of the N.C. Department of Transportation's \$57 million project to upgrade and improve U.S. Highway 17 Business/N.C. Highway 37 between Hertford and Winfall in the northern of the county. Besides the bridge replacement, the project also includes improving the causeway north of the bridge, which has been damaged by settling of the ground underneath it.

McLean Contracting of Chesapeake, Va., was awarded the contract for the project, which is scheduled to be complete in December 2021. Wonder

if the turtles will approve of the new bridge.

A few quick announcements:

**Saturday, April 25th:** Week of the Young Child Children's Festival and Safe Kids Day

The 12th Annual Festival will be held 10 a.m. — 2 p.m. at the Perquimans Recreation Center, hosted by **Chowan/Perquimans Smart Start Partnership and Safe Kids Chowan**. This FREE admission and activities event is funded by donations from the local community and provides children a chance to learn through play and new experiences. For more information, contact Sarah Williams at 252-482-3035.

**Perquimans Library:** Feb. 29, 10 a.m. — Power of Positive Community with Vin Ajwani

Beginning March 1, we will have a Kids Chess Club

on Tuesdays at 4 p.m.

March 3, 4 p.m. — ecoEXPLORE Botany

**Holiday Island Yacht Club News:** March 14th 5 p.m. Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner, Members \$12/Non-Members \$15; We will just be selling 64 tickets/Call 426-5522 for tickets

**Perquimans Arts Hosts Shamrock Soiree:** Join us on Tuesday, March 17 for a dinner of Corned Beef & Cabbage, Irish Soda Bread and yummy desserts! This event will be held at the former Carriage House Restaurant, 108 Dobbs St. in Hertford. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under and may be purchased at the gallery at 109 N. Church St. All proceeds benefit the PAL Building Fund. For more information, call the gallery at 426-3041.

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## FARM

Continued from A1

year after the Great Recession, says John Newton, American Farm Bureau chief economist and author of the study.

"It's a perfect storm of events. Bad weather, hurricanes, storms, excessive rain, and then you compile that with low commodity prices," said David Corum, president of the N.C. loan agency AgCarolina Farm Credit. "And on top of that, you add insult to injury, the trade wars."

Congress created the Chapter 12 bankruptcy in 1986 to help beleaguered family farmers. It offers a

range of benefits, including flexible monthly debt payments, limited protection from high interest rates, and the potential of a "hardship discharge" — which frees farmers beset with medical illnesses or natural disasters from paying down loans.

But only a narrow group of farmers qualify for such relief. At least half of farmers' income and debt must be tied to the farm, and their debts cannot exceed a \$5 million cap.

That's why what looks like a slight uptick in bankruptcies can spell trouble for the whole farm economy, said Scott Marlow, N.C. nonprofit Rural Advancement Foundation International senior policy specialist, who takes

calls from farmers in danger of losing their farms.

Agriculture and agribusiness combined still make up the largest sector of North Carolina's economy, and the state ranked 13th in the nation for its exports in 2017, shows data from the U.S. Trade Representative.

But two years of a trade war among the United States, China, Canada, and Mexico slapped farmers with heavy tariffs. The tariffs hit North Carolina's top agricultural products, shriveling the state's tobacco and soybean exports to China.

"There's also a self-inflicted wound here, and that's the trade wars," said Scott Lincicome, Cato Institute adjunct scholar. "Trade uncer-

tainty has become a major factor in the global economic slowdown."

The U.S. and China signed a trade deal in January, easing the tensions of the last two years. But the agreement didn't lift U.S. tariffs on \$370 billion in Chinese goods, which were left for later negotiations. The agreement has made farmers cautiously optimistic, said Shawn Harding, N.C. Farm Bureau president.

"There's a bit of optimism that is coming back. We're calling this a recovery year ... Farmers are eternally optimistic," Harding said. "All of us liked hearing that we're getting some of these trade deals signed."

But that optimism is

dampened by new fears over the outbreak of the coronavirus and the possibility of quarantines in China. And while the economic damage to farmers might have improved with the slowdown of the trade war, its effects will linger.

"During the trade war, they developed new suppliers. They're going to use those to diversify and to hedge their bets," Lincicome said. "We're not at the bottom of the barrel. But there are some headwinds out there, and that uncertainty still weighs on things."

Making things worse, farmers are struggling after years of hard weather in eastern North Carolina, Corum said.

"It's been a stretch year after year. That happens with farming," Corum said. "They're burning through their equity each year. Some of them hit the wall, run out of options, and file bankruptcy. ... Some farmers have lost money for four years in a row, and it gets to a point where they can't go on."

The General Assembly tried to mitigate farmers' losses by appropriating \$240 million to farmers affected by Hurricane Florence with the Agricultural Disaster Program of 2018.

"The number one topic of conversation since Florence has of course been the weather-related losses," Rep. Jimmy Dixon, R-Duplin, said.

## GUN RIGHTS

Continued from A1

the Second Amendment right to bear and use arms was taken away, other amendments would also be erased, and with them the entire Constitution, he said.

"We're taking a stand to say that we support the Constitution as it is written now," he said.

Commissioner Bob Kirby, the board's vice chairman, said he was torn on the resolution. He said he voted against a similar resolution in 2019 because it wouldn't have had any impact on Chowan County. But he said things have changed since then.

Referring to the General Assembly in nearby Virginia, Kirby said lawmakers there have "made no secret of their intent to institute many and varied ... limits on the rights afforded by the Second Amendment," adding that Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam "has pledged to support these Second Amendment limits."

Kirby noted that other states like California also have restrictive gun laws. He said his son-in-law, a Navy Seal, recently asked him to keep his personal weapons for him after being assigned to a duty station in California.

"You see, despite the fact that California lives under the same Second

Amendment as Virginia and North Carolina, they have instituted laws which erode our Constitution to the point where even active duty military officers, whose very lives depend on their proficiency with handheld firearms, are prohibited from privately possessing such weapons,"

he said.

McLaughlin said while he's a gun owner who believes in the right to own firearms, he found the resolution to be superfluous.

"The oath we took to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of North Carolina distinctly points out in the

Second Amendment that we have the legal right to bear arms," he said. "This resolution won't do much to change anything."

McLaughlin said as much as he agreed with the resolution, it was "meaningless to me because we already have the protection that the U.S. Constitution provides."

Kirby agreed that Chowan's resolution was "purely symbolic," but said he still planned to vote for it anyway.

"I fear there will come a time when certain elements of our society will come to tell us that there is no longer a God-given right to keep and bear arms," he said.

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RE-ELECT

# RUSSELL LASSITER

Perquimans County Schools Board of Education on March 3rd

4 Years Experience  
1979 PCHS Graduate  
US Government Retiree (36 Years)  
Life-Time Resident of Perquimans County  
Common-Sense Approach  
Public School Advocate

Announcement from  
Neil DeNunzio, MD  
Perquimans Medical Center.

It has been my pleasure to serve our community for the past 35 years. I will be retiring on April 15, 2020.

Copies of patient records can be obtained by request up until that date by calling the office at 426-9172 or mailing a request to P.O. Box 9 Winfall, NC 29785