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Pastors share Easter messages, B1

"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2020

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'We Are Going to Win This Fight'

Clinic Adjusts to COVID-19 Reality

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

Devin Gregory works in health care, so she serves on the front lines of the pandemic that has swept the globe.

Daughter of Dr. Robert E. and Chris Lane, Gregory grew up working around the family business, Coastal Carolina Family Practice in Hertford. As the clinic's administrator, Gregory is

responsible for the overall operations, success and development as well as making sure the medical practice is compliant with industry regulations.

Gregory is optimistic that the nation and world will defeat COVID-19.

"I believe in my heart we are going to win this fight, but it is going to be a long time coming," she said. "The global community of scientists are making incred-

ible progress in therapies that may help treat the virus and the various ways it attacks the immune system in addition to the work that is being done to create a vaccine to hopefully prevent its spread in the future. The world is truly working together to beat this and we will, but all of these things take time and time is a luxury we don't really have right now."

See FAMILY, A2

Perquimans Couple Embraces Uncertainty as COVID-19 Stalks

Those with underlying health conditions show resolve

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

A Perquimans County couple lives day to day dealing with un-

certainty in the wake of the pandemic that more directly threatens their lives.

Tom and Shannon Koelzer have been married 32 years and they moved from Michigan to the area in 2008.

See COUPLE, A6

Region records 2nd death from COVID-19

FROM STAFF REPORTS

A Hertford County resident has died from COVID-19, the second person in the region to succumb to the novel coronavirus, the area's health department reported Saturday.

Albemarle Regional Health Services spokeswoman Amy Underhill said in a press release the agency was notified of the patient's death by one of its "hospital partners." She did not name the hospital.

The Hertford County resident was older than 65 and died from complications associated with the virus, Underhill said. She did not release further details, citing ARHS' desire to protect the privacy of the patient's family.

"It is with deep regret that we make this announcement and our hearts go out to the family and friends of the individual," ARHS Director Battle Betts Jr. said in the release. "We recognize that this is a difficult time; we are facing a historic public health challenge, but let us remain vigilant in the daily steps to keep us all safe, especially handwashing, sanitation, and social distancing."

ARHS also reported Saturday that a second case of COVID-19 has been confirmed in Perquimans County, and that eighth and seventh cases have been confirmed in Pasquotank and Bertie counties, respectively. A Bertie resident became the region's first COVID-19-related death on Thursday.

The new cases in Pasquotank, Bertie and Perquimans raise the number of COVID-19 cases in the region to 25. Also reporting cases are Hertford, which prior to Saturday's announced death had four; Currituck which has two; Gates, which has one; and Chowan, which has one.

The Dare County Division of Public Health also announced the fourth positive test result for COVID-19 in that county on Saturday.

"The individual is currently receiving care at a hospital outside of Dare County," Dr. Sheila Davies, director of the Dare County Department of Health & Human Services, said in a press release.

It is not known how the Dare resident acquired the virus, Davies said. The Dare health department is investigating and anyone determined to have had contact with the individual will be notified, she said.

According to the N.C. Department of Health and Human Ser-

See COVID-19, A6



PHOTOS BY SARAH HILTS

A fourth generation farmer, Carlton Baker has been driving a tractor since he was 8-years-old on his family's farm by Belvidere.

'When the Seed is in the Ground, Everything is in God's Hands'

PHS' Colton Baker is Student of the Month for April

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

With schools closed for nearly a month, it was a bit of a challenge to find a senior who could be Perquimans Weekly's Student of the Month for April.

However, God loves farmers and answers prayers, even from journalists.

Pirates' Carlton Baker, 17, comes from a farming family - 1,200 acres by Belvidere - so he plans to attend North Carolina State University in the fall where he will study agribusiness management and field crop technology.

Baker can drive a tractor and do most anything around the farm - break ground, conduct equipment maintenance, run the grain cart during harvesting, do construction work and scout crops. Family grows corn, soybean, wheat and peanuts.

"With farming, you have to have faith, because once the seed is in the ground, everything is in



Bound for North Carolina State University, Carlton Baker has a grade point average of 4.27 and he is ranked ninth in his class of 120 seniors.

God's hands. You have to trust that God will provide the rain and sunshine the crop needs to for it to be productive," said Baker, who attends Up River Friends Meeting.

Even this pandemic and its growing economic consequences are in God's hands.

"I am not particularly worried; God has a plan in all of this," Baker said.

Like what many parents may

be discovering, it's good to have the kids at home these days - an extra set of hands - maybe a blessing.

"Well, as far as handling school, my dad (Charles) is glad that I am home to help now that we are getting into the field and needing to get everything ready for planting," Baker said. "For me, time out of school means

See BAKER, A3

ROUND-UP

Oz and the Revolution

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

A round-up of all things Perquimans County...

Councilman Jerry Mimplitsch and his wife Missy celebrated their 5th wedding anniversary on Saturday. Congrats.

Speaking of Town Council, those folks along with members of the **Hertford Police Department** and other volunteers provided more than 500 meals to people traveling through downtown on Saturday.

Councilman Frank Norman passed along this news tidbit about Mediacom helping families - he's been working behind the scenes, locally. See related press release on page A3. Norman called and asked if I have children. Answer, three small but growing kids. Norman said, "Qualifying families who subscribe before May 15, 2020, will receive 60 days of complimentary Mediacom Connect2Compete service."

That's good news - thanks

See LAYTON, A3



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Love this photo of **Dick and Nancy Schulze** in front of this special tree that is bearing a very valuable commodity - toilet paper. These days, I'll bet the fruit from this tree is worth a lot of money - maybe money does grow on trees.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Monday, Perquimans Schools served 1,716 meals - 771 breakfasts and 945 lunches - in a school district that boasts a total population hovering close to 1,700 students.



Meals Provide Blessing to County's Communitites

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

And there it was -- school doors were closed, so a plan was needed to feed a county full of school aged children - a daunting task that required God's attention, maybe a miracle.

"I believe when you are in the hands and feet of Jesus, He blesses you in those efforts," Superintendent Tanya Turner said. "He's blessing our community through unsung heroes. It's beautiful to see."

Perquimans Schools' adminis-

tration had to do what had never been done before, so plans were set in motion that included drop-off sites and bus runs. More than 30 transportation and school nutrition employees have heeded the call to make sure that each child has a warm meal, whether they live in Bethel or Belvidere.

Some staff start their mornings between 6-6:30 a.m. and a normal day would end about 2:30-3 p.m., but many days managers are there later and take work home. Other staff members rotate in see."

See MEALS, A6

