

Steinburg: Stay-at-home order should end April 30

Extending order worse than virus 'at its worst,' he says

BY PAUL NIELSEN
For the Perquimans Weekly



STEINBURG

State Sen. Bob Steinburg says extending North Carolina's stay-at-home order because of the COVID-19 outbreak beyond April may have dire economic consequences — far more devastating than the virus would be "at its worst."

Gov. Roy Cooper's stay-at-home order started March 31 and is scheduled to end April 30. It orders people not to leave their homes except for work at essential businesses along with activities such as getting food, going to the doctor or exercising.

The stay-at-home order contributed to more than 350,000 state workers seeking unemployment benefits last week, and the Associated Press last week obtained a report written by N.C. General Assembly staff that predicts the state could lose at least \$1.5 billion in expected revenue because of COVID-19.

North Carolina Chamber of Commerce General Counsel Ray Starling told the N.C. House Select Committee COVID-19 Economic Support Working Group on Tuesday that more than half of the state's small businesses will close by mid-April if Cooper's stay-at-home order remains.

COVID-19 models developed by the University of Washington suggest the virus could peak in North Carolina on April 16.

Steinburg, R-Chowan, said common sense measures like social distancing and encouraging hand washing need to be continued but that shuttered businesses need to be reopened sooner rather than later. Steinburg said he's heard that Cooper is considering extending his stay-at-

home order another 30 days. The first-term state senator said he thinks that would be a mistake.

"I do know that we cannot continue to have this state shut down for much longer," Steinburg said. "I am looking

at all this new modeling coming out, and looking at the numbers, I am afraid that the damage that is going to be done to this state, this region and our country as a result of keeping us on lockdown is going to be far more devastating than COVID-19 would be at its worst. We are getting to crunch time because this state and this country cannot be shut down much longer."

Steinburg believes state officials should listen and consult with medical professionals on ways to combat the spread of COVID-19 but that non-elected officials shouldn't dictate policy.

"We are obviously listening to our medical people, Gov. Cooper is listening to those people, and we all need to listen to what they are saying," Steinburg said. "But medical people were not elected by the people of North Carolina to run the state of North Carolina. Elected folks were elected by the people to serve them and to lead. I think people in leadership need to take a look at all aspects of this COVID-19 situation and evaluate it and make a decision that is in the best interest of the region, the state and the country."

Steinburg said he was dismayed when he heard Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, chairman of the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the University of Pennsylvania, say during a nationally televised interview that the lockdown needs to

stay in place for 18 months unless a COVID-19 vaccine is produced earlier.

"That is sheer madness," Steinburg said. "Eighteen months and this country as we know it is finished. We will not be looking at a recession, which we are looking at now, but we will be looking at a depression that would make the 1929 Great Depression look like a walk in the park."

Steinburg called the 55 COVID-19-related deaths in the state as of Tuesday "tragic" but said that number is extremely small in a state with a population of 10.5 million people. One of those deaths was in Hertford County, one of the 11 counties Steinburg represents.

"We are going to see more (deaths) in the next couple of weeks, there is no question about that," Steinburg said. "But if it was a 150, if it was 350, if it was 550, is that enough reason, as sad as it might be and as tough of a decision it might be, is that enough reason to keep the state's economy shut down indefinitely? I don't believe it is. What people are looking for is they want a date certain when business can begin preparing to reopen and get us moving again."

Steinburg said he knows people will disagree with his position but he noted that he himself is in the high-risk category if he contracts the virus.

"I'll be 72 in July, I am a diabetic, I am a heart patient," Steinburg said. "So, believe me, I know the risk if I get this disease. I don't want to die and I am going to continue to follow the safety precautions and protocols in place and we are going to have to follow them for some time. But we can't wait a year before we reopen this economy or there will be no country to reopen."

Paul Nielsen is a staff writer for the Daily Advance.

OBITUARY

John Richard Godfrey, Sr.

HERTFORD - John Richard Godfrey, Sr., 69, of Hertford, passed away Saturday, April 4, 2020, peacefully at home with his beloved wife Donna by his side.



Mr. Godfrey was born in Perquimans County on December 16, 1950, and was the son of the late Braxton Young Godfrey, Sr. and Onella Trueblood Morton. A veteran, he proudly served in the U.S. Army in the Vietnam War, and later in the U.S. Navy as a Quartermaster Navigator.

Following his military service he had been employed as a correctional officer in South Carolina, and as an industrial craftsman and cook in Florida. An avid sports fan, he also enjoyed cooking on the grill with his family and friends; gardening, yard work and mowing the grass; fishing, hiking/bird watching and raising goats. He was a member of New Hope United Methodist Church and the Disabled American Veterans.

Surviving are his wife of 38 years, Donna Lema Godfrey of Hertford, NC; his son, John Richard Godfrey, Jr. and wife, Lori Godfrey; his grandson, Mason Thomas Godfrey, all of Southern Shores, NC; two brothers, Braxton Young Godfrey, Jr. of Hertford, NC and William Thomas Godfrey of Winston, GA; two sisters, Bonnie Wyche of Buxton, NC and Chris Howland of Grandy, NC, and many other extended family members and loved ones.

A Celebration of Life service is being planned and those arrangements will be announced once the precautions and restrictions associated with the Coronavirus have eased.

The family wishes to express their deep appreciation to the VA Home Based Primary Care Team, especially for the special care given by Karen Votava, RN, and also to the staff of Community Home Care & Hospice for all the love, care, and support shown to them in their time of need. Heartfelt thanks also extended to his other health care providers too numerous to name.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in his memory may be made to New Hope United Methodist Church, 2098 New Hope Road, Hertford NC 27944, or DAV - Disabled American Veterans, PO Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250-0301.

Miller & Van Essendelft, Funeral and Cremation Providers, 1125 Harvey Point Road, Hertford, is assisting the family with arrangements, and online condolences may be made by visiting www.millerfhc.com.

OBITUARY POLICY

For information on submitting obituaries or death notices Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., call 252-329-9505 or email obits@apgcnc.com and specify that you are interested in obituary information for The Perquimans Weekly. On weekends and holidays, email obits@apgcnc.com. We do not accept

notices by fax. Obituaries must be received, processed and approved by noon on Tuesday to appear in print in the Thursday edition. Death notices are \$25 and can include the name and age of the decedent; funeral and visitation or viewing information; and the name of the funeral home.

\$241,940 grant will help fix 'Freedom House'

BY SUBMITTED REPORT

A recent grant from the National Park Service African American Civil Rights Grant Fund will help tell a more complete story of Edenton's recent past. The home of Civil Rights activist Golden Frinks recently was acquired by the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources for use as an interpretive space for sharing the stories of struggle and triumph in the fight for equal rights in eastern North Carolina.

The North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources has

been awarded a grant by the National Park Service (NPS) to preserve the Frinks House as the newest part of the Edenton State Historic Site. The NPS approved the \$241,940 grant request that will fund repairs to the house to prepare it for use as an educational space.

"We are grateful for this grant program from the National Park Service, which will help us to preserve this important part of North Carolina history and tell the story of the struggle for Civil Rights in our state," said Susi H. Hamilton, secretary of the Department

of Natural and Cultural Resources.

According to Director of the Division of State Historic Sites Michelle Lanier, "We are incredibly humbled and inspired to embark upon this new 'Freedom House' project and to further illuminate the stories of Civil Rights champions such as Golden Frinks."

Golden Frinks purchased the property in 1958 and lived there until his death. The house was known as the "Freedom House" to locals because many visited him there to plan and carry out Civil Rights protests and other

activities. Changes have been made to the house since Frinks' death in 2004 and it remains reflective of his lifetime of service to the fight for equality.

Frinks was Field Secretary for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and was responsible for organizing protests, sit ins, and other forms of resistance across North Carolina and the southeastern United States. He often opened his home to local organizers and hosted visits from national leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

LAW ENFORCEMENT LOG

Hertford Police Department incident reports filed between March 13 and April 11:

■ 3/13 DWI and Drug Paraphernalia Possession arrest made by Officer Burkett on Wynne Fork Drive.

■ 3/14 Damage to Property on Wynne Fork Court. Known person broke out a window. Warrants advised.

■ 3/14 Shoplifting at the Food Lion. Officer Castellanos trespassed the suspect.

■ 3/15 Assault on a Female on Railroad Street. Officer Castellanos investigated and suspect arrested.

■ 3/16 Damage to Property on NC 17. Officer Wilkins investigated and juveniles petitioned.

■ 3/17 Resist Obstruct and Delay an Officer on King Street. Officer Sullivan made the arrest while serv-

ing a warrant on a suspect.

■ 3/17 Hit and Run Accident at McDonalds. Chief Brown investigated and parties settled without charges being issued.

■ 3/18 Hit and Run Accident on Dobbs Street. Officer Sullivan investigated and suspect arrested.

■ 3/21 Misuse of 911 at Wynne Fork. Officer Downing investigated a false complaint of a shooting. Incident under investigation.

■ 3/22 Damage to Property on NC 17. Officer Sullivan investigated rocks being thrown at vehicles. Petition filed.

■ 3/23 Domestic Violence on Wynne Fork Court. Officer Burkett was assaulted by a juvenile. Juvenile petition filed.

■ 3/24 Assault on Wynne Fork Court. Captain Rodriguez investigated but victim did not want to

pursue charges.

■ 3/27 Assault on a Female on Brace Ave. Officer Downing is investigating.

■ 3/27 Violation of Governor's Order by large gathering on Stokes Street. Captain Rodriguez dispersed the crowd.

■ 3/31 Damage to Property on Wynne Fork Court. Officer Downing is investigating the slashing of a car tire.

■ 4/2 Damage to Property on Wynne Fork Court.

Officer Downing investigated the slashing of a cable wire. Juvenile petition filed.

■ 4/11 Trespassing on Wynne Fork Court. Officer Downing investigated the incident with property damage. Suspect cleared the scene and warrants advised.

Perquimans Sheriff's arrests between April 3 and April 8:

■ Gary Steinhoff of Chesnut Street, Hertford, was arrested April 3 and charged with larceny. Bond/

other.

■ Trayvien Miller of West Island Trail, Hertford,

was arrested April 4 and charged with failure to appear. Bond set at \$1,000.

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