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Teacher Appreciation Week, B1

"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020

\$1.00

NEWS

Hertford K9 Diesel to get vest — A5

COMMUNITY

Perquimans Extension provides an update on their programs — B2

HISTORY

Learned what happened this week in North Carolina history — B3

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

Perquimans Weekly hopes you enjoy your special day on Sunday, May 9.

Town Hall Releases Draft Budget for FY 20-21

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

Hertford Town Council released its proposed budget Monday for fiscal year 2020/21 that mentions the need for a possible tax increase.

When compared to fiscal year 2019/20 budget of more than \$7 million, the draft budget proposal of more than \$9.6 million increases spending by at least \$2.6 million — if there are no modifications.

"The budget you are reviewing has been through zero cut drills, so please do not panic over how high the numbers are. You can and should expect them to be drastically reduced over the next week or two," Mayor Pro Tem Ashley Hodges said in a statement issued Tuesday morning.

In order to fund the draft budget at the current level — no modifications — Town Hall would need to raise the funds necessary to generate \$2.6 mil-

lion more in revenue, according to the budget proposal.

Moreover, Town Manager Pam Hurdle is projecting a 94 percent collection rate on property taxes, which would generate \$506,565 in revenue — down from last year's 96 percent collection rate. Budget forecast said COVID-19 will have a larger impact on sales and use taxes — down between 20 percent and 30 percent from the previous year. Utility Franchise Tax revenue is expected to be

down 1.5 percent.

Hodges said as the budget process develops, council will have intelligent conversations over tax and utility rate changes and/or fund balance usages to increase revenue.

Hodges said that consistent with council's efforts to forge a multi-year strategic plan, council asked Hurdle to send the entirety of the department heads' "wish lists" so that council will be fully aware of what's not being accomplished each year due

to budget limitations.

Hodges compared the wish lists to how federal budget proposals includes items known as "unfunded" or "unfunded operational requirements."

Hodges said normally, the town manager would work with a department head to cut their budget before it gets to council. By providing Town Hall's wish lists from departments

See BUDGET, A3



DR. MARIA TRENT

PQ Native Picked for Top Post

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

Dr. Maria Trent, formerly of Hertford, was recently appointed as the inaugural Division of Adolescent Medicine Chief in the Department of Pediatrics at the John Hopkins School of Medicine.

"I am excited about this new position and look forward to being able to contribute to the health and well-being of young people in Baltimore and beyond," she said.

When Trent was just 3 years old, her family moved from College Park, MD, back to Hertford, according to a long ago article that appeared in the Baltimore Sun. She was educated in Perquimans

See NATIVE, A2

ARHS: County has Second Virus Death

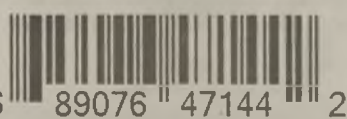
BY STAFF REPORTS

Albemarle Regional Health Services said Monday it's been notified of a second COVID-related death in Perquimans County.

The regional health department said in a press release the person was over 65 and died from complications associated with the virus. ARHS said it would not release further details about the person.

"We are extremely saddened to share this announcement and we extend our condolences to the individual's loved ones," ARHS Director R. Battle Betts Jr. said in the release. "Our thoughts are with those

See DEATH, A2



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Lizzy Story (center) works alongside her brothers to empty crab pots while harvesting the crustaceans from the Albemarle Sound.

Pirates' Story to Tell

Student of the Month for May

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

Sunrise on the Perquimans River by the Albemarle Sound, folks may see a small white boat checking crab pots. That's where we begin this story about Lizzy Story, Student of the Month for May for the Perquimans Weekly.

For early morning mariners, it is a sight to behold when Story's family boat makes stops at the plastic/foam buoys marking the best spots, whether they be near the trunk of a long extinct cedar tree a hundred yards or so from shore or in open waters.

This close-knit crew will pull up the crab pot to see if the creatures have taken the bait. Then, either strong backs return the pot into the water with fresh bait or harvest the alien crustaceans. The work can be hard, but rewarding to this Pirates' senior.

"Crabbing season begins for us whenever we can get our pots out in the water," Lizzy Story said. "We are working on the pots right now and will hopefully have them in the water by the mid or end of May."

Most mornings, Story and her brothers go crabbing in quiet, still waters. Small wisps of fog hover in spots above the Sound. Nothing is out there, not even any seabirds —



An expert fisher(woman), Lizzy Story knows how to bait a hook, clean a fish.

peace if ever there is such a thing as inner peace.

Except for a wayward kayaker or fisherman searching for God and a good spot to drop a line, there is not a living soul on these hallowed waters.

Life lessons are learned on the water.

"We go crabbing in the Albemarle Sound and get on the water at first light," she said. "It may be small, but something I have learned over time

from crabbing is how to think more of others and not myself. Getting up early in the morning has never been something I have loved, but not everything is about me."

A carpenter, Christ embraced fishermen because they are the salt of the earth. Smug secularist city folk may forget how fish comes to the dinner table, but the rest of the world knows the value of hard

See STORY, A2

ROUND-UP

Shop Local and Zoom

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

A round-up of all things Perquimans County... Shop local — support our local businesses be it restaurants, gas stations, pharmacies or whatever.

Traveled to Story's Seafood for the first time. Been meaning to go for awhile. Lizzy Story's story inspired me to try out her family's business. Good fish and shrimp. Won't have to travel to Columbia anymore to get fresh fish.

Like Captain Bob's, Story's Seafood is known far and wide across Perquimans County and northeast NC. Same is true with Layden's Country Store out in Belvidere.

Per restaurants, there are many places that deserve a look in our area no matter when King Cooper lifts his unpopular job killing edict. Thank God most places are still doing carryout.

Hertford's new utility bill gives the citizens more information about their utilities and the usage.

"We have gotten many compliments on the information that the new bill gives the citizens," Town Manager Pam Hurdle said. "We also had many calls of clarity on how to read the bill and all callers have clear understanding of the new layout of the bill and the information it contains."

Speaking of Town Council, nope, Councilman Frank Norman did not apologize during Monday's meeting to Mayor Earnell Brown about his recent remarks where he referred to her as Hitler. Monday, Brown and Norman sparred over a few items, such as revisions of the agenda and the K9 policy, but there was no name calling. Still, it's certain that their exchanges were eye-rolling for many viewers.

To learn about another matter arising from town council, see this week's Opinion page A4 where Joseph Hoffer talks about Councilman Quentin Jackson's recent

See LAYTON, A3

Landings at Albemarle Poised for Grand Opening

BY MILES LAYTON
 Editor

Nearing completion, Landings of Albemarle is poised to add more quality housing for senior citizens in Perquimans County and northeast NC.

Located on Church Street, construction that started in May 2019 to build the 26,784 square foot assisted living facility along with the 17,797 square foot two-story independent living building has been completed. Facility is now awaiting final shipments of furnishings, linens and décor.

The Landings of Albemarle has

See OPENING, A3



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Construction is complete for Landings of Albemarle senior living center.

The facility features 74 apartments — 50 of those apartments are in assisted living, and 24 will be in the independent living building.