

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020

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Perquimans Arts League looks back on 2020



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Volleyball team starts season with win-streak



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This week in North Carolina history

## Hertford's Bell Takes Job in Elizabeth City

BY REGGIE PONDER  
AND MILES LAYTON  
Adams Publishing Group



BELL

The city of Elizabeth City recently hired a new public utilities director, a familiar face to many Hertford.

Interim Elizabeth City Manager Eddie Buffaloe announced Tuesday (Nov. 24) that City Council confirmed his appointment of Dwan A. Bell as city public utilities director.

Bell, who succeeds former public utilities director Amanda Boone, is

slated to begin his duties Jan. 5.

Hertford Mayor Earnell Brown praised Bell's service to the community.

"Congratulations to Mr. Dwan Bell, the town of Hertford Director, Public Works," she said. "I am personally saddened that we will be losing one of our premier employees.

However, as much as I am saddened, I am equally elated, proud and very happy for his new career opportunity. I am sure Mr. Bell will display the same work ethic and be a major asset to Elizabeth City."

Bell has 19 years of experience, including 17 in Elizabeth City's Public Utilities Department and recent stints as public works director in the eastern North Carolina towns of Selma and Hertford, where he has worked since July 2019.

"Mr. Bell joined our Hertford or-

ganization approximately 18 months ago," Brown said. "Since that time he has successfully pursued and obtained grants to support Public Works operations, enhanced the ability to clean our streets, acquired much needed equipment and managed an outstanding cadre of employees. I am confident he will extend the same level of expertise, professionalism and zeal as he aspires to reach his fullest career potential. Again, congratulations, Dwan, you will be truly missed."

Bell's annual salary will be \$90,000 when he starts working for Elizabeth City. As public works director in Hertford, Bell earns \$67,200 annually.

Hertford Town Manager Pam Hurdle said she will be announcing who will serve as interim public works director soon. She said Town Hall will conduct a job search to hire someone to fill the position.

Buffaloe noted that Bell was

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## Scholarship Honors Higgins

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Michael Steven Higgins "Changing the World" Scholarship pays tribute to a young man who departed this world too soon.



HIGGINS

Higgins was a 2016 graduate of Perquimans County High School and graduate of East Carolina University where he received a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and a minor in

Security Studies.

Higgins was serving as an intern in the N.C. State Highway Patrol's college internship program and was tragically killed in the line of duty while riding as a passenger in a law enforcement vehicle in August in Pitt County.

Perquimans Schools Foundation Executive Director Brenda Lassiter said school officials admired Michael's determination, resourcefulness and kindness.

"Michael always found ways to be a part of something bigger and better," she said. "If he couldn't find one way to do something, he'd find an alternate route - always finding the way that most benefited others."

Foundation President A.J. Moore said that Higgins found his place in life by helping others.

"Michael touched so many people in his short 22 years of life and it is the hope that this scholarship will continue and encourage others to make this world a better place, as he did," he said.

One of Higgins' final accomplishments was working with a panel of students to revise the Emergency Operations Plan for Bertie County. This work has been acknowledged and has been named as one of the 2020 NADO Impact Awards spanning 19 states.

The project was selected due to students' creative approach to advancing regional economic development and improved quality of life through the revisions of the Emergency Operations Plan for Bertie County.

Higgins made an impression everyone he met.

"I teach many students, so I'm sorry, but I can't always put a name to a face. Mr. Higgins is one of the students I do remember," said Chad Jordan, an instructor at East Carolina University. "On the

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## Safety With Santa Claus

Drive-thru Christmas Parade Saturday in Hertford

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

First, let's give a shout out to Santa Claus, who is working the front lines during this COVID-19 crisis.



WHITE

We won't reveal Santa's alias other than to say he's got a nice house at Albemarle Plantation - more about the big man in a moment.

Santa would want the Perquimans Weekly to mention that there

will be a drive-thru Christmas parade between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5 in downtown Hertford.

Worth noting, Perquimans Chamber of Commerce has organized a "Fill the Boot" fundraiser to kickoff the parade that starts at 3 p.m. so as to support Durants Neck, Bethel, Belvidere, Hertford, Inter-County and Winfall fire departments.

And do you know who the parade's grand marshal will be this year? Answer, Dr. Anne White, chairwoman of the Perquimans Board of Education and a longtime educator.

Back to Santa - he's taking every precaution to to keep everyone safe. Perquimans Weekly met up with Jolly Old St. Nick for an exclusive interview recently at Brew 2 Rescue



SUBMITTED PHOTO S

Inner Banks' Santa is playing it safe and smart this year serving on the front lines of a pandemic.

to learn more about the precautions he and other like-minded Santas are taking to contend with COVID-19 and the holiday season.

"Back in March when the covid crisis began, everyone here in the Santa community immediately started talking," he said. "What are we going to do? Some guys even back then said I'm not doing anything this year and others were more like,

how can we save this thing? So we shared ideas for a couple of months on virtual visits and the Santa Claus school that I go to had classes on doing your background and lighting and you know, things like that. And from there we said I know how we going to save Christmas."

Is the man who can transcend

See SANTA, A2



Blast from the past, this file photo shows last year's Christmas parade through downtown Hertford. This year, things will be a slight bit different because of COVID-19. Drive-thru parade starts at 3 p.m. Saturday.

## History's Pulse: Shannonhouse

In Memoriam

**Editor's Note:** The newspaper will be featuring a bit of history from time to time so as to learn more about the past so as to understand our present and perhaps our future as a community. Maybe too, introduce folks to one another.

BY MILES LAYTON  
Editor

In December of 1873, Hertford lost a prominent physician, Dr. James Jennings Shannonhouse, whose legacy endures in the form of a home he built in Hertford.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Shannonhouse Place



PHOTO BY SARA WINSLOW

Work continues on the new bridge that will replace the S-Bridge in Hertford.

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