

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021

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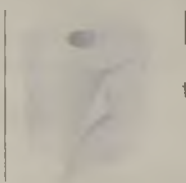
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Tri-County Animal Shelter Pets of the Week



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2020 in review, part 2



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Flush 2020: Reader say farewell to the year

Town Council Discusses Staff Salary Increases

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Monday's multi-hour Hertford Town Council work session touched on a number of topics.

First, Hertford Police Captain Gilbert Rodriguez has resigned. Perquimans Weekly has reached out to HPD Chief Dennis Brown

for comment about Rodriguez and the reasons for staff turnover within the department that has seen many changes to the duty roster within the past year or so.

Newspaper has also reached out to Rodriguez for official comment.

Neither Brown nor Rodriguez offered comment before press

time.

In other news, Harry Sanchez has been hired as interim public works director.

Sanchez takes the reigns from Dwan Bell, whose last official day was Tuesday, Jan. 5. Bell was hired as public works director for

See **COUNCIL**, A2



PHOTO BY MILES LAYTON

Hertford Police Captain Gilbert Rodriguez assists with handing out meals in March to help the needy.

Murphy Objects to Certifying EC Vote

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Congressman Greg Murphy, R-3rd District, voted to object to certifying the Electoral College vote.

Speaking to Henry Hinton on Talk of the Town on Tuesday, Murphy said he made the right decision after a careful review of the evidence that questions the integrity of the presidential election, particularly in Pennsylvania among other battleground states, and by listening to his constituents, a majority of whom said he should object.

Murphy said he made the decision based on facts, not emotions.

"I swore an oath to the Constitution of the United States when I came into office and I take that with his grave of seriousness as I do anything in my life," he said. "I did not swear an oath to a party. I did not swear an oath to a person I swore an oath to the United States Constitution."

Murphy said it was not an easy decision to make, but that it was the right thing to do.

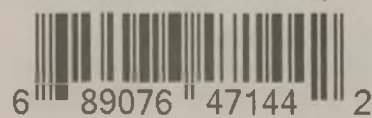
"I want to make sure that there is airtight evidence that my decision can actually be backed up, in fact, and backed up constitutionally and cannot be refuted to be very very honest with you," Murphy said. "I have gone back and forth on this decision. I will tell you it's not an easy decision because I'm not basing it on emotions. I'm trying to base this upon reason."

However, Murphy contended that while he and other members of Republican congress planned to object when the Electoral College vote that took place Wednesday, he knew these actions would not overturn the reported results of the election because Democrats control the House of Representatives.

Shortly after the interview, Murphy posted this statement to social media:

Americans deserve a free, fair, and accurate election.

See **OBJECTS**, A3



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ROWELL'S WORDS

Winslow Oil Fire Remembered

Worst Fire in Town History

BY WILLIAM ROWELL

Forty-three years ago this week Hertford's normalcy and calmness were suddenly interrupted at 7:55 AM on Tuesday, January 10, 1978, with an explosion at Winslow Oil Company.

Two tanker trucks were unloading fuel when a spark ignited flames, engulfing the trucks and quickly spreading to nearby ground-level tanks.

The initial explosion and chain reaction ones that followed occurred from the early morning into the afternoon and rocked the town.

Black smoke from the resulting fire could be seen 20 miles away. In addition to the seven of the 11 large tanks exploding, several 55 gallons drums exploded and were "launched" across the river to be found later near the railroad tracks in Winfall.

Nearby businesses and residences were threatened and some families were evacuated. Hertford Fire Department responded.

See **FIRE**, A3



WRAL/SCREEN SHOTS

The most historic fire in Hertford's history started 43 years ago at 7:55 AM on Tuesday, January 10, 1978, with an explosion at Winslow Oil Company.



Winslow Oil Company losses included nine of the 11 oil tanks were lost while some product is still in the remaining two. transports and three service trucks.

EDITOR'S NOTE

To read stories about the big fire written 1978, see [PerquimansWeekly.com](https://www.perquimansweekly.com)
Also, see the digital archive from January 1978 at <https://www.digitalinc.org/newspapers/the-perquimans-weekly-hertford-n-c/>



An oil tanker is consumed by the blaze.

Nelson Receives Vaccine

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Wallace Nelson, Chairman of the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners and a member of the Albemarle Regional Health Services Board of Directors, received the Covid-19 vaccine from the Vidant Bertie Hospital Occupational Health Nurse, Debbie Bragg, on December 29.

Nelson, a pharmacist, works part-time at both Vidant Bertie and Vidant Chowan Hospitals.

"Getting the vaccine is the responsible thing to do. It has nothing to do with politics - it is about trying to help our community stay safe and healthy," Nelson said. "That's also why I follow the protocols advised by Vidant Health and Albemarle Regional Health Services: Wear a mask; Wait 6 ft. apart; and Wash your hands frequently."

Battle Betts, the director of Albemarle Regional Health

See **VACCINE**, A6



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Perquimans County Commission Chairman Wallace Nelson recently received Covid-19 vaccination shot.

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ARHS hosting COVID-19 vaccine clinic today (Jan. 7)

Vidant Chowan Hospital Welcomes 1st Baby of 2021

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
Chowan Herald

EDENTON — Vidant Chowan Hospital welcomed its first baby of 2021, Ezekiel Lowell Dunbar, on Jan. 2.

The boy is the latest addition to the family of Alicia and Kelvin Dunbar, of Columbia, in Tyrrell County. Ezekiel was born at 4:19 p.m., weighing in at 7 pounds, 12 ounces and

20.5 inches long. He is the younger brother of Kelcie, who is 13 years old.

The Dunbars said that when they told Kelcie she would soon be a big sister, she was happy.

Ezekiel was due on Jan. 10, but decided to make an early arrival. While his birth was a surprise, grandmother predicted that he'd be done on Jan. 2, Alicia said.

See **BABY**, A3



PHOTO COURTESY VIDANT CHOWAN HOSPITAL

Kelvin (left) and Alicia Dunbar are shown with their newborn son, Ezekiel Lowell Dunbar, at Vidant Chowan Hospital in Edenton, Sunday, Jan. 3. Ezekiel was Vidant Chowan's first baby born in the new year.