

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2021

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More than 100 earn degrees at COA summer commencement



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Free tours offered during National Lighthouse Day



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Milot: Political divide more than partisan polarization

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Town gov't expert questions release of Brothers info

Bluestein: Town Council could release information, not Jackson

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

Some of the information Hertford Town Councilman Quentin Jackson cited at last week's residency challenge hearing for a political opponent may have been information that shouldn't have been publicly disclosed by an individual,



BROTHERS

according to a recognized expert in municipal law.

A town councilor acting on their own initiative — as Jackson appeared to do last week — is not permitted by state law to publicly disclose a citizen's municipal utility billing information, according to municipal government pro-



JACKSON

fessor Frayda S. Bluestein of the School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Jackson testified at the July 22 residency challenge hearing that town records show Connie Brothers has not had a valid utility account in her name since 2016.

He also alleged Brothers is on the list of people who owe significant amounts of money to the town because of unpaid utilities.

There is now an active electricity account at 504 Willow Street, which Brothers claims as her residence, but there is no water and sewer service, Jackson said at the hearing.

Brothers is one of six candidates seeking one of two seats in the Hertford Town Council election this November. Jackson is also on

the November ballot, seeking a second term.

The hearing last week was held to consider Jackson's allegation that Brothers is not a town resident and thus ineligible to run for a seat on the town council.

Asked about Jackson's public disclosure of Brothers' utility billing information, Bluestein said that under certain circumstances Hertford Town Council could vote

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Positive message



REGGIE PONDER/THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

Participants in the one-day community Youth Camp at Camp Cale Sunday afternoon enjoy outdoor games after the weather cleared following a rainstorm. Tanner Thach, a member of the Class 1-A State Championship baseball team at Perquimans County High School, was the featured speaker for the event.

Thach urges youth campers to trust Jesus

Pirate baseball standout featured speaker at Camp Cale event

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

Perquimans High School baseball standout Tanner Thach told area teens Sunday that studying the Bible is essential to Christian living the way practice is critical to success on the baseball diamond.

Thach and his Perquimans Pirates teammates got a full taste of baseball success recently when they claimed the N.C. High School Athletic Association Class 1-A State Championship in a June 27 victory over East Surry.

Once you accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior it's only the first step in the Christian journey, which is a daily venture in growing closer to God, said Thach, a rising senior at PCHS who is a first baseman and pitcher on the Pirates baseball team and was named Most Valuable Player of the state championship series.

"We can never get too close to



MALCOLM SHIELDS/THE DAILY ADVANCE

Perquimans County's Tanner Thach (left) poses with the MVP plaque with a representative from the NCHSAA after being named the NCHSAA Class 1A Baseball State Championship series Most Valuable Player, Sunday, June 27.

God," Thach told the youth.

Thach spoke during the closing worship service at a community Youth Camp Sunday at Camp Cale. Forty-one teens from Perquimans County and across the area partici-

pated in the Christian day camp. The event was sponsored by Piney Woods Friends Meeting and a community youth ministry coalition that formed this year to bring Christian motivational speaker and former Major League Baseball great Darryl Strawberry to the area. Strawberry spoke to area students and also held a youth rally at Piney Woods.

More than 30 adults also turned out to support the youth ministry Sunday afternoon at Camp Cale, a Baptist-affiliated camp on the shores of the Perquimans River. The event included indoor games and even some outdoor games once the skies cleared, as well as small group discussions and the closing worship with music by area youth and Thach's Gospel presentation.

Reading the Bible every day will help you grow in the faith and impact the world for Christ, Thach said.

"This right here is how you solve the world's problems right now," he said as he held high a Bible.

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Perquimans Chowan: Masks mostly optional

CDC: Both counties seeing rising transmission of COVID

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

For now, wearing a face mask in indoor public places remains optional for both vaccinated and unvaccinated residents in Chowan and Perquimans counties despite new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the governor's office recommending they be worn where the rate of COVID-19 transmission is either high or substantial.

But officials in both counties were expected to discuss possible changes to that stance at their meetings this week.

As of Saturday, the CDC considered Perquimans an area of substantial transmission for the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 while Chowan was considered an area of high spread.

As evidence of how quickly those designations can change based on the number of new cases and positivity rates, the CDC's 7-day COVID tracker a few days earlier had rated Perquimans high for transmission and Chowan substantial. As of Friday, Perquimans had seven active cases of COVID and Chowan had 19, according to Albemarle Regional Health Services.

Public health officials said COVID cases again are rising — after dropping for months — largely because of a new highly contagious delta strain of the coronavirus that causes the disease. Cases are particularly spreading in areas where COVID-19 vaccination rates are low. As of Saturday, the percentage of fully vaccinated residents in

Perquimans was 19.5% while Chowan's rate was nearly double that, 35.9%

Based on the CDC's warnings about how quickly the delta variant of COVID is spreading, Gov. Roy Cooper announced July 29 that state government will begin verifying the vaccination status of its workers.

"Employees not vaccinated are required to wear a mask and be tested at least once a week," according to a press release from the governor's office. The governor's statement said a recent upswing in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations is driven by unvaccinated North Carolinians.

"Until more people get the vaccine, we will continue living with the very real threat of serious disease, and we will continue to see more dangerous and contagious variants like Delta," Cooper said.

The state's Department of Health and Human Services has recommended that both public and private employers verify vaccination status of employees.

The statement from the governor's office also cited the new CDC guidance on masks.

"Moving forward, everyone in a red or orange county in North Carolina, including those who have been vaccinated, should wear a mask in public indoor settings," the statement says. "Additionally, in accordance with the updated CDC guidance, all K-12 schools should require universal masking, regardless of vaccination status."

Local officials were expected to discuss this week what additional steps if any should be taken in light of the

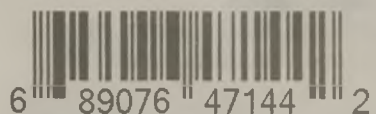
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Farmers hear timely tips for cotton, peanuts at NE Ag Expo

Parrish and Son, Beech Fork farms hosted agricultural event

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

ROCKY HOCK — This could be a big year for cotton in Perquimans County.



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Daniel Lilley, field crops agent for Perquimans County, said in an interview at the July 29 Northeast Summer Ag Expo that Perquimans farmers have planted more cotton this year than last year. The number of growers planting peanuts has decreased over the past several years but the growers who still plant peanuts seem to be maintaining about the same acreage, he said.

Lilley said the weather last year was less favorable for planting cotton and that probably contributed to a dip in cotton acreage last year.

Jim Parrish of JM Parrish and Son Farms in Rocky Hock grows

crops including peanuts and cotton on his farm, which along with Beech Fork Farms served as host site for the Summer Northeast Ag Expo.

In an interview at the expo he said both crops are looking pretty good.

"They're looking pretty good but it's getting really dry up my way," Parrish said. "We're actually irrigating right now."

Commodity prices also look good right now, he said. The irrigation should make a difference for the crops and pay off because of decent prices, he said.

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REGGIE PONDER/CHOWAN HERALD

Charlie Cahoon, a weed specialist with N.C. State Extension, talks to farmers about herbicide resistance in ryegrass as he stands next to a cotton field on JM Parrish and Son Farms during the Northeast Summer Ag Expo on Thursday, July 29.