

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022

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**PAGE A2**  
Hardee's drive-thru damaged in multi-vehicle accident



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Fundraising for sheriff's gun range upgrade in high gear



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Edenton's Sears Hometown store to close June 22

## Council adopts budget with 9.5-cent tax rate hike

Cole: Tax hike will be offset by electric rate cut

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Staff Writer

Hertford Town Council voted unanimously Monday to adopt a 2022-23 town budget that increases the property tax rate by 9.5 cents while decreasing electric rates.

The budget, which takes



COLE



HODGES

effect July 1, reduces electric rates by 1 cent per kilowatt hour.

Under the new budget,

the owner of a \$100,000 home will pay \$95 more in property taxes but pay about \$120 less for electricity.

"For a resident whose home is worth the median property value for the Town of Hertford, which is \$132,400, the rise in their annual property tax payment will be offset by their monthly savings in their electric bill," interim Town Manager Janice Cole

told town councilors in the budget message attached to the recommended spending plan. "It will have a costlier impact on those whose homes are of higher value and energy efficient, but this is an equitable solution."

The budget increases the property tax rate from 55.5 cents per \$100 of valuation to 65 cents. Electric rates, meanwhile, would fall from 12.17 cents per kilowatt hour to 11.17 cents per kWh.

"That will then put Hertford's electric rate more in line with what is charged in Elizabeth City and Edenton and less than what is charged by Albemarle Electric," Cole said in her message, referring to Albemarle Electric Membership Cooperative.

The budget message notes that those who live in public housing or rent their homes and use the average amount of electricity, which

is 1,000 kWh a month, will save about 10 percent or roughly \$120 a year on their electric bill.

In comments at Monday's meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Ashley Hodges noted that town councilors had advised Cole at the beginning of this year's budget discussions to "build the budget you need to run the town the right way." That

See BUDGET, A3

## Pirate pride



PHOTO BY JOEL SUTTON

Trent Byrum, one of three co-valedictorians of the Perquimans County High School Class of 2022, speaks to fellow graduates during the school's commencement exercises Friday. PCHS conferred high school diplomas on 116 graduates during the school's 97th annual commencement ceremony.

## 116 turn tassels at Perquimans High

Byrums, Benton end up in 3-way tie for valedictorian

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Staff Writer

Perquimans County High School's principal told the school's 116 graduating seniors Friday that hard work, heartbreak and failure can prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead.

Laura Moreland, who took over as PCHS principal the year Class of 2022 mem-

bers were in sixth-grade, also encouraged graduates participating in the school's 97th annual commencement to enjoy the little things and to take time to slow down and enjoy moments with family and friends.

"Life is not a microwave, it's a crock pot," she said.

Moreland told graduates they will face obstacles but can grow and improve every day.

"Make one decision today that will leave you a better tomorrow," she said.

Moreland encouraged them to make every moment count. And she thanked them for "seven years of absolute joy."

The Class of 2022 had a three-way tie for valedictorian: Trent Byrum, Mason Byrum, and Jewel Benton.

During his remarks, Trent Byrum said it's important to develop a plan and stick with it.

"For most of us the best times of our lives are beginning right now," he said.

He thanked teachers,

coached and parents for their support.

"Time is a valuable thing," he said. "We can't rent or buy it, but we can spend it wisely."

Mason Byrum talked about the family feel of the Pirate football and baseball teams he played on.

He also turned to a sports analogy to describe the transition that graduation represents: "Y'all can celebrate tonight, but tomorrow we

See PCHS, A3

## Former councilor Jackson charged with sex offenses

Jackson accused of sex offense with female 15 or younger

BY REGGIE PONDER  
AND CHRIS DAY  
The Daily Advance

Quentin S. Jackson, the former Hertford town councilor now seeking a seat on the Perquimans Board of Commissioners, has been charged with three felony sex offenses, police records show.

Jackson, 36, of the 300 block of S. Church St., Hertford, was arrested Wednesday, June 8, and charged with three felony counts of statutory sex offense with a female child 15 years of age or younger,



JACKSON

according to a copy of the arrest warrant. The three offenses occurred between May 15 and June 3, and the arresting agency was the Elizabeth City Police Department, the warrant shows.

According to the police arrest report, Jackson was arrested Wednesday afternoon at a residence in the 300 block of S. Dyer St., Elizabeth City.

Jackson was confined

See JACKSON, A3

## Perquimans Chamber seeking new director

Biz group also has appointed new 11-member interim board

BY JOHN FOLEY  
Correspondent

Are you an organized multi-tasker with a passion for community and business and a penchant for planning events and parties?

Is your dream to have a lovely office in a historic and growing downtown, next to a bakery, where everyone knows you on a first-name basis?

If so, the Perquimans Chamber of Commerce may have a job for you.

The Perquimans Chamber is seeking applicants for its vacant director's position. The job is a 30-hour-a-week, part-time position.

"We are searching for a candidate who enjoys working with people and businesses in a wonderful community," said interim Chamber President Jill Cohen. "The applicant should be detail-oriented and enthusiastic about small

See CHAMBER, A3

## Perquimans earns Communications Center of Year award

Center honored for helping Gates with dispatching service

From staff reports

Perquimans County's 911 Communications Center has been named the top 911 emergency communications center in North Carolina for 2022.

The center was presented the N.C. Communications Center of the Year award by

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Belvidere VFD's improved fire rating to help homeowners.  
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the North Carolina National Emergency Numbers Association during last month's N.C. Public Safety Communications Conference in Wilmington.

The Perquimans 911 center was nominated for the award because of its work assisting Gates County with emergency dispatch service both late last year and earlier this year.

Because of staffing shortages at the Gates

County 911 center, Perquimans' 911 center temporarily provided dispatching services in both Perquimans and the neighboring county from Dec. 17 until Feb. 17.

The Gates 911 Dispatch Center temporarily relocated to the 911 center in Perquimans and Gates telecommunicators began working there on Dec. 17.

Perquimans officials said in January that shared 911 operations with Gates had gone smoothly and all calls were being answered on a timely basis.

Gates officials said its dispatching services would return to the county once its dispatcher vacancies were filled.

Julie M. Solesbee, Perqui-

mans County Emergency Services public information officer, said staff for both 911 centers worked hard to ensure the shared dispatching service worked well for both counties.

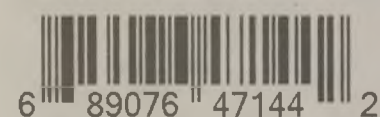
"The transition of relocating an entire 911 center operation happened in less than 12 hours, on a Friday, and shortly before the holidays which could have been an issue but our teams were blessed to have amazing vendors that worked after hours, during the weekend, and as needed to ensure that operations for our telecommunicators were as smooth as possible," she said. "There was a lot of

See AWARD, A3



PHOTO COURTESY PERQUIMANS COUNTY

Krystal Tutwiler, a 911 shift supervisor for Perquimans County Central Communications (second from left) holds the North Carolina Communications Center of the Year award. Perquimans was recently awarded by the North Carolina National Emergency Numbers Association. Posing with Tutwiler are (l-r) Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath, Telecommunicator Crystal Wright, 911 Shift Supervisor Andrea Stoner, and Emergency Services Director Jonathan Nixon.



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