

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



SCAN ME

"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2022

\$1.50



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Sheila Osborne used SML Flea Market to launch home-based biz



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Panthers end 15-game drought, defeat Pirates on road



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American Legion to hold flag retirement ceremony Sept. 24

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## Hazard addressed



REGGIE PONDER/THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

The roof has collapsed at this former gas station building at the corner of Church and Grubb streets in Hertford. The owner has taken action to brace the structure but additional plans are still being worked out between the owner and local officials.

## Gas station building roof collapses

Owner Zarpas braced walls to remove immediate hazard

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Staff Writer

Hertford town officials are glad immediate structural issues have been fixed at the gas station building at 203 N. Church Street and are awaiting plans for future action at the site.

The property is owned by Global Deluxe LLC of Virginia Beach, Virginia, according to county tax records. The land is valued at \$30,800, the primary building at \$13,400 and an outbuilding at the site at \$5,000.

The building sits on a 0.16-acre lot at the northwest corner of the Church Street-Grubbs Street intersection. A sign at the site indicates the building pre-

viously was operated as an Esso station.

Hertford interim Town Manager Janice Cole said the town asked the Perquimans County building inspector to examine the building.

"He did and marked it for condemnation," she said. "When notified, the owner, who lives in Virginia, acted immediately to brace the walls. He is shoring up the

building to remove the immediate hazard."

Cole told Hertford Town Council Aug. 22 that the building's owner Michael Zarpas responded quickly when notified of the county inspector's findings.

"He came down in two days to look at it," Cole told the council. "He had a structural engineer to look at it in

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## All four county schools got Cs on report cards

Turner: Quick return to in-person learning helped

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Staff Writer

Perquimans County Schools Superintendent Tanya Turner believes the district's decision to bring students back for face-to-face learning as quickly as possible helped improve student scores on annual state testing.

Information released by the N.C. Public Instruction last week shows all four schools in the Perquimans school district received C letter grades on their annual "report cards" for the 2021-22 school year, roughly the same grade most other districts in the area earned.

Only one district in the area — Elizabeth City-



TURNER

Pasquotank Public Schools — scored lower and was deemed low performing, one of only 29 districts in the state to receive the designation for the 2021-22 school year.

The state defines low-performing school districts as those "where the majority of schools received a D or F performance grade and have been identified as low performing."

Low-performing schools, according to the state's definition, are "those that receive a performance grade of D or F and do not exceed growth." According

See REPORT, A3

## FOCUS to get \$4M grant to speed up internet in county

Project to affect 1.6K in Chapanoke, New Hope, Winfall

BY CHRIS DAY  
The Daily Advance

Access to high-speed internet for thousands of area residents in rural areas is becoming more reality than wishful thinking, thanks to more than \$200 million in state grants announced last week.

Gov. Roy Cooper's office announced Sept. 1 that more than \$206 million in Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology grants has been awarded to expand high-speed internet access in 69 North Carolina counties. The grants were awarded to internet service providers that are performing the broadband expansion in each of the



COOPER

counties. Locally, four counties will benefit from Thursday's announcement: Camden, Currituck, Pasquotank and Perquimans. The internet service provider Brightspeed will lead the expansion efforts in Camden, Currituck and Pasquotank counties.

Another firm, FOCUS Broadband, will perform similar work in Perquimans and Chowan counties. Chowan County was notified in July that FOCUS Broadband had been awarded a GREAT grant.

"High-speed internet

See GRANTS, A3

## Toast the Perquimans set for Sept. 17

Beer-wine tasting to also include food trucks, band

BY JOHN FOLEY  
Staff Writer

If you've always wanted to raise a glass to the Perquimans River, you'll get your chance next weekend.

Historic Hertford Inc. is hosting Toast the Perquimans, a beer and wine tasting festival, at Hertford Marina on Saturday, Sept. 17. The event will

feature craft brews from local breweries, food trucks, wine tastings and music.

From 6 p.m. until 10 p.m., guests can raise a glass toasting the river enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Located entirely within Perquimans County, the river runs from Durant's Neck in the north to Harvey Neck in the south, passing through Hertford before emptying into the Albemarle Sound.

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PHOTO COURTESY HISTORIC HERTFORD INC.

Toast the Perquimans, Historic Hertford Inc.'s annual beer and wine-tasting festival, will be held at the Hertford Marina, Saturday, Sept. 17, from 6 p.m. until 10 p.m.

## Nelson in line to head commissioner group

Perquimans board chairman elected 2nd VP of NCACC

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Staff Writer

Perquimans County Board of Commissioners Chairman Wallace Nelson is on track to become president of the statewide county commissioners association — the first com-

missioner in the region to be in line for the post in several decades.

Nelson was elected second vice president of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners at the association's annual conference last month.

Nelson's election took place during the 115th NCACC annual conference, "On Track to Transform,"

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## Prizer named Advance, Herald, PW publisher

Chicago native coming to area from Spokane, Wash.

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Staff Writer

The new publisher and advertising director for The Daily Advance, Chowan Herald and The Perquimans Weekly expressed excitement last week about the opportunity to work for newspapers in three communities with a strong sense of community.

David Prizer, who took over the reins at the three papers last week, comes to the Albemarle from Spokane, Washington, but is no stranger to eastern North Carolina. He lived in New Bern while serving as digital sales director for Gan-



PRIZER

nett publications in Jacksonville, New Bern and Wilmington.

Prizer grew up in Chicago and has lived in New York City, but appreciates the way people know and relate to each other in communities like Elizabeth City, Edenton and Hertford.

Prizer said he went into a corner store in Elizabeth City for a cup of coffee last week and the women behind the counter struck up a conversation with him.

"And I love that," he said. "When I was in New Bern people would say 'good

morning.' They say the same thing in New York and Chicago but they don't mean it. But they really meant it in New Bern, and I get that same feeling here."

Prizer said people in the community look to their local newspaper for information that they need. "That makes me want to work here," he said.

"I want to be in the community and hear from people what the newspaper means to them and make sure that we're doing that," Prizer said. "I want to provide an even more thorough and even more effective way to make sure that the community has what it needs to get by every day."

With experience in digital advertising and digital engagement, Prizer is in-

terested in new ways to engage the community, whether through print or other means.

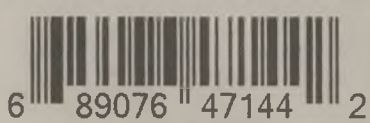
"I don't think that our business revolves around paper," he said.

Growing up in Chicago, Prizer had a neighbor who was a cartoonist for the Chicago Tribune. He thinks that might have been the start of his love for newspapers and the newspaper business, but his career has mostly tended toward community newspapers rather than the large metro dailies.

"At the end of the day our job is to keep the community engaged and to inform the community," Prizer said.

He said he is looking

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