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Elementary honors teachers, 6

"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2018

75 cents



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Heavy equipment starting moving dirt for a retention pond at the new Perquimans County High School athletic complex last week.

Stadium project moving forward

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

Perquimans School officials are pressing ahead with plans to have the new football field ready to play on for the first game of the season in August.

"We'll be playing football on Aug. 17 providing we don't get any hurricanes," said Jim Davison, the school system's maintenance director.

The school system had been hoping to be further along in the process, but a permit for erosion control took more than 10 days longer than expected. The project is still expected to cost about \$1.2 million.

An earlier schedule had concrete pads being poured the week of June 25-29 and the installation of sod on June 27. Davison said that

may or may not be accurate now.

"Some of the estimates have changed, but the overall completion date has not," Davison said.

This week people should be seeing the grading of the football field and more erosion control work. The large piles of gravel on the site are going to be used for the construction entrances at the side.

Trees on the south side of the site will be burned off this week.

The home season opener this year is Northside-Pinetown on Aug. 17. The following week, the Pirates are to host South Creek.

Other home games this year include Currituck, Gates, Manteo and John A. Holmes.

See STADIUM, 2

Road, bridge projects reviewed

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 AND MILES LAYTON
 Staff Writers

EDENTON — State DOT officials confirmed Thursday that bids for the Mid-Currituck County bridge project are scheduled to be let in October — if not delayed by environmental or traffic studies.

Also, projects associated with the proposed I-87 highway are being vetted to determine if they will be included in the upcoming 10-year transportation improvement plan.

N.C. Department of Transportation officials answered questions about ongoing and proposed road projects during an informal public hearing last week at the Division 1 office in Edenton.

The meeting was held to get public input on which transportation projects in 14-county Division 1 area should be a top priority in the State Transportation and Improvement Program — a 10-year plan that identifies funding for projects and schedules them for construction.

DOT officials also made a presentation to the Perquimans County Commission Monday night. There are three projects, including the replacement of Hertford's S-Bridge, that are listed as "current projects."

The S-Bridge construction is expected to start in the spring of 2019 and be complete by December 2021. The cost is estimated at \$56.9 million and final design work is underway.

There is also plans to widen and resurface New Hope Road from Union Hall Road to Woodland Church Road. The project was let in April and is expected to be complete by May 2019. The cost is estimated at \$1.8 million.

The third project is replacing a bridge over Mill Creek in Winfall. That \$1.5 million project was let in May and is expected to be complete by Nov. 30.

There are six other projects.

See DOT, 2



STAFF PHOTOS BY PETER WILLIAMS

Top, police and Perquimans County Sheriff's deputies emerge from Perquimans County Middle School after a live shooter drill last week. Right, one of the coordinators of last week's live shooter drill gives a thumbs up at Perquimans County Middle School.



School hosts shooter drill

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

Area lawmen and emergency officials drilled last week on what would happen if the unthinkable happened — a person opened fire inside a school.

The scenario played out June 12 at Perquimans County Middle School. In the exercise, an armed man went through the front door and started firing a shotgun. In the drill, the shooter and four other people were killed and six people were injured, including a sheriff's deputy.

About 90 school employees played the role of students and teachers for the drill. Officers from the sheriff's office and police from Winfall and Hertford participated along with the N.C. Highway Patrol and Perquimans County Emergency Medical Services. Firefighters from Winfall, Hertford and Belvidere also participated.

"I think it was an excellent opportunity for first responders and a chance to prove to the community how important we think school safety is."

Jonathan Nixon
 EMS Director

Sheriff Shelby White said the exercise was the first time he's known of with a live shooter. There have been tabletop simulations, but the Tuesday drill included person firing blanks and one deputy was armed with a 9mm pistol, also firing blanks. Both White and EMS Director Jonathan Nixon said some of the

school employees were worried that somehow real bullets might end up in guns, so precautions were taken.

"When we met at Perquimans Central, we had all of the officers unload their guns and bring them to me personally and I put zip ties on them."

The zip ties were to the weapon prevent the weapon from being loaded or fired.

"We also made sure they didn't have Tasers or extra ammo. When they left Central, the weapons were checked again, and when we got to the middle school, they were checked again."

Jonathan Nixon, the director of Perquimans EMS, also said it was worthwhile.

"I think it was an excellent opportunity for first responders and a chance to prove to the community how important we think school safe-

See SHOOTER, 2

Eviction petition rejected

BY PETER WILLIAMS
 News Editor

A Chowan County magistrate rejected an eviction complaint involving a Hertford town councilman last week, meaning the complaint will likely have to be decided in District Court.

Magistrate Keith Nixon denied the eviction petition sought by Catherine Flowers against her cousin, Hertford Town Councilman Quentin Jackson.

Flowers was seeking Jackson's eviction from her house on Brace Avenue in Hertford. She also was seeking six months of rent from Jackson — a total of \$2,400 — and \$200 for damages she claims Jackson made to the property. Jackson in turn took out a criminal complaint against Flowers for coming onto the property.

Nixon, however, said his authority only allows him to rule in eviction cases when there is a clear landlord-tenant relationship between the parties. He said that wasn't shown on Wednesday, so he had no choice but to deny the claim.

The burden of proving that Jackson was in violation was on Flowers, not Jackson, Nixon said. The Chowan magistrate was asked to hear the eviction complaint because Jackson is a Hertford councilman and Hertford is in Perquimans County.

Nixon explained that having a small claims case heard by a magistrate is the lowest level in the judicial system and quite often no lawyers are involved.

"For that reason a lot of people refer to it as 'The People's Court,'" Nixon said.

In Wednesday's case, neither Flowers nor Jackson had an attorney.

Still Nixon asked if either side objected to be sworn in using a Bible. Jackson did

See EVICTION, 2

Some lawmakers split over early voting

From Staff Reports

Area lawmakers are split on a controversial bill that would increase early voting hours in many counties

but would also eliminate the last Saturday of voting.

The House and Senate voted on party lines to approve Senate Bill 325. Originally a tax bill, House Republicans rewrote it to change the state's early voting schedule, introducing it Thursday and passing it the next day in a 60-41 vote, after which the Senate voted 23-11 to approve it with no

changes.

The legislation would start the early voting period on the third Wednesday before an election, or one day earlier, and require early voting to end by the Friday before the election, ending voting on the Saturday before the election. That means early voting for this November's election would run from Oct. 17 through

Nov. 2.

In addition, the bill would require all of a county's early voting sites to be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on workdays. If the counties allowed early voting on Saturdays and Sundays during early voting, it would have to open all its polling places on the same hours those days.

See VOTING, 2

HISTORIC PRESERVATION



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Reid Thomas (left) gave talks on historic preservation last week in Hertford.

