

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## School facility needs total over \$8 million

By MIKE McLAUGHLIN

A recently released survey estimates that it would take more than \$8 million to bring Perquimans County School System facilities up to snuff.

The survey was developed to provide reference material for a legislative research commission organized to study statewide school facility

needs and make a case for a statewide bond referendum to the general assembly.

"We did it with some advice and guidance from consultants, engineers, and so forth in the division of planning and plant operations," said schools superintendent Pat Harrell.

Because of rapidly rising construction costs, the figures

are not intended to be completely accurate, but are the best estimates that can be made utilizing available resources, Harrell said.

The comprehensive survey includes eight categories of need, with a cost estimate for fulfilling each need.

Under replacement of temporary facilities, the county's need was listed at

\$415,000. Harrell said the school system has two mobile units which are "getting some age on them" and need to be replaced at a cost of \$100,000 each.

Replacement of obsolete facilities would require \$3,500,000, Harrell said, the approximate cost of replacing Perquimans High School.

The two story building was constructed in 1924, and its open stair wells make it a tremendous fire hazard, Harrell said. The wiring in the building is obsolete, and is dry rotting in certain areas because of age, he said.

The building is overcrowded, with classes presently being conducted on

the stage, in the auditorium, in the cafeteria, and in other areas not designed as classroom spaces, he said.

The system also reported the need for \$1,600,000 to pay for renovation of buildings suitable for long range use. Harrell noted a long list of needs in this category, including the need for a band

room at Perquimans Union (the band is presently being housed in the old agriculture shop most recently used for storage), the expansion of a too small library at Hertford Grammar, inadequate shop space at the county high school, and the need for expanding the cafeteria to include another serving line at Union.

In order to provide new or renovated facilities for the handicapped in the county, some \$200,000 would be required.

The county presently has no space designed to meet the needs of the handicapped, such as those students with speech or hearing defects or learning disabilities.

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## Hard times impact on area car dealers

by NOEL TODD McLAUGHLIN

Present interest rates, rocketing fuel prices, and the predicted pinch on area farmers have combined to significantly lower the sales of Perquimans County automobile dealers.

The single most important factor, though, appears to have been an all around poor year for area farmers.

"At least 90 percent of Perquimans County's farmers did not have a good year," said Robert Louis Stevenson, Executive Vice President of People's Bank, Hertford. "This was primarily due to poor weather conditions and mediocre prices," added Stevenson who also agreed that the grain embargo will have an adverse affect on county farmers.

"60 to 65 percent of our business is farm related," said Wayne Winslow of Winslow-Blanchards Ford in Hertford, "if they (farmers) can't spend any money, they can't spend any with us."

Winslow said business was

about 35 percent lower this month than in January of 1979.

Joe Towe White, Sr., of S & J Motors, Hertford, conceded that he, too, was feeling the pinch due to the weakened pocketbooks of local farmers.

"People have completely quit buying," said White, who added that his business had been "good until 30 days ago."

Bobby Hollowell of Hollowell Chevrolet, Hertford, agreed that the automobile business always has been contingent upon the prosperity of local farmers, but said that a combination of several factors have affected his sales.

"It's a total net effect of several things," said Hollowell who included inflationary fertilizer costs, the present state of the economy, high fuel prices, and high interest rates among them.

"It's hard for a dealer to make money on new cars," said Hollowell who explained that the practice of "floor planning" or financing a new car until its sale was netting much of dealers profits.

"It costs me \$100 a month to keep a \$6,000-\$7,000 new car on the lot," said Hollowell, "I lose all profit to the interest."

Despite all the negative influences, Hollowell insisted that business this year is "a whole lot better than last year."

"The money is in the used cars now," said Hollowell who said that he foresaw hard times ahead and stocked up on used cars.

"A '77 Caprice looks as good as an '80, you can buy it for about half the price, and the extended warranties look attractive," said Hollowell.

White, however, who deals exclusively in used trucks, said that his situation has been worsened because of used vehicles.

"It's easier to finance a new car," said White, "because agencies think they have more to fall back on."

Wayne Ashely, Vice President of the Bank of North Carolina, said that banks are currently practicing more

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Just looking

L. Clinton Winslow takes a look at the sticker price of a 1980 LTD Ford at Winslow-Blanchards in Hertford. Winslow said he was just looking, not buying. (Photo by MIKE McLAUGHLIN)

## Filing deadline nears

Candidates for county office must file at the board of elections office before Tuesday (Feb. 4) at 12 noon.

Two more candidates had filed for non-partisan school board seats as of press time.

Incumbent Emmett Long filed for the Bethel Township seat, and Clifford P. Towe filed in the New Hope, Parkville District.

So far, all candidates for partisan commissioners' seats are Democrats. District I pits incumbent Lester Simpson against Lee Brabble. District II (two seats) has drawn incumbent Joseph Nowell, Jr., Billy L. Pierce, and Charles H. Ward into the race.

Jeanne White is so far the only candidate to file for the Register of Deeds office.

Voter registration is at the board of elections office in the old agriculture building on Dobbs Street, open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Registration closes April 7 for the May primary.

Absentee ballots will be available from March 7 through April 30 and may be obtained through the board of elections office.



Collecting cans

Marcus Forehand, 11, was collecting aluminum cans on Edenton-Road Street last

week. Forehand said he turns in the aluminum cans for

extra cash. (Photo by NOEL TODD-McLAUGHLIN)

## Annual banquet

## Winfall firemen, wives honored

When Winfall firemen and their wives gathered at Angler's Cove for their annual banquet Monday night, it was more than just a chance for chief Wayne Winslow to hand out awards and tell a few jokes.

It was a time for the firemen to reflect on more than 12 years of growth and development, and a time for exchanging memories, some of them funny, all of them proud.

The fire department was born in 1967 out of bake sales, fish fries and various other fund raising endeavors. Its first fire truck was a homemade job, the chassis a 1959 purchased from the state for \$450, and the body donated by the Hertford Volunteer Fire Department along with a marine pump engine.

Winslow related a humorous account of the department's first efforts to put out a fire with the truck its members had spent long hours putting together.

He and Paul Smith, Sr. were planning to set a practice fire at the old Tom Nixon place in Bagley Swamp near Winfall. They pumped kerosene from a tank in the back yard, took it indoors and doused a corner of the house with it.

The old frame house didn't exactly burst into flames. "It won't even be hot when they get here," Winslow remembered complaining, and they poured a little more kerosene on the fire. Still, the results weren't that good. "About enough fire to cook a hotdog on," Winslow recalled.

But he and Smith went across the street to call the fire department. "The boys were primed. They were ready," he said. After making the call, though, Winslow said

they came back outside to find the house lighting up the sky but with no fire department in sight.

Here Smith interrupted from the audience. "You forgot something, Wayne. That was a party line in that house and when I tried to call somebody was on the line. I told that old woman there was a fire but she said, 'I pay my bill just like everybody else and I've had that one pulled on me before.' I had a time getting that call through."

And that was just the beginning of the young department's troubles.

The house was totally engulfed in flames when the men arrived and laid their hose to fight the blaze. Trouble was, the back pump on the fire engine ran out of gas and wouldn't draw a drop of water.

The house burned to the ground but there was a smokehouse in back, so they got some more gas, torched the smokehouse, and prepared to do battle again. This time they ran out of water.

When they had burned down the old well, the only wooden structure left on the property, the fire fighting mission was over.

"The only thing left to do was to go over to Lloyd Ray's (Winfall Supermarket), get some hot dogs and have a wienie roast," Winslow said.

Since that time, though, the department has made giant strides. A ladies' auxiliary was formed in the early seventies and raised enough money to purchase sirens for the fire house. A new fire truck has been added, and the department recently had its insurance classification lowered from 9A to 8, resulting in a significant insurance

savings for homeowners and businesses within the district.

Two men who contributed a great deal to the department's progress were honored Monday night. L. Paul Smith, Jr. was selected fireman of the year for 1979, an award bestowed on the fireman singled out by his peers for his outstanding contributions to the department.

Wayne Hurdle received an award for meritorious service, in recognition of his willingness to accept new responsibilities during the

year, and for his general outstanding service.

Several members of the Winfall Town Council and their wives were on hand, and had words of praise for department members in general.

"I think the fire department always needs a pat on the back," said councilman Durwood Barber. "They've done a good job down through the years and they've put a lot of time in it."

Aside from honoring out-

standing firemen, the dinner was intended to honor the firemen's wives, in recognition of their support for the fire department.

And Winslow did not exclude the women as he made the rounds with his humor. "But you know it's a women's world," he said. "When a baby's born people ask, 'How's the mother?', when he gets married they say, 'She's a beautiful bride,' and when he dies they ask, 'How much did he leave her?' The poor man gets left out all the way around."

## Webster relieved as coach

The Perquimans County School Board voted unanimously to replace Calvin Webster as the head coach of the Perquimans High School football team in a meeting on Friday.

Schools superintendent, Pat Harrell, said Monday that the school board felt the replacement of Webster would be in the best interest of the high school's football program.

Harrell would not comment further on the matter. Webster, however, said last week that he had been told he was being replaced because of a lack of community support and disputed any such lack of support.

Webster has headed up the football program at the high school for the past seven years. Harrell said it has not yet been determined who his replacement will be.

In other action, the school board moved to commission a thorough study of inter-scholastic sports in the school system.

The study, to be completed

with the assistance of the Division of School Athletics of the State Department of Public Instruction and the State High School Athletic Association, will look at facilities, cost of operations and sources of revenue, coaches and their teaching responsibilities, and other athletics-related matters.

Harrell said the study does not necessarily mean that other changes will be made in school athletic programs.

The board also entered

executive session to discuss acquisition of the Urquhart Property, adjacent to the County High School.

The school board has been attempting to purchase the property for three years in order to expand parking and athletic facilities. Harrell said the board is closer to reaching an agreement than it has ever been before and will seek a meeting with the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners in order to discuss the matter.

## Robbery arrest made

A Hertford man is alleged to have forced his way into an occupied residence last week and to have removed several household items.

Jeffery Felton, 24, of the Savoy Apartments on Market Street in Hertford, has been charged with common law robbery, a felony, according to Hertford Police Chief Marshall Merritt.

The victim, Judy Whitehurst, of 210 King Street,

Hertford, said Felton forced his way into her trailer on January 21, and removed two televisions and a vacuum cleaner valued at approximately \$184.

Merritt arrested Felton on January 24, and he was released on \$600 bail.

According to Merritt, Felton will have a first appearance hearing on January 30, in District Court.