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Hertford again declared excellent community

Following a visit from representatives of the North Carolina Department of Commerce on Thursday, the town of Hertford was again recognized as a Community of Excellence for the year 1980.

In order to qualify for redesignation as a Community of Excellence, the town was required to play the role of attracting an electronic component company to the area, conferring with "company officials" to answer questions about industrial sites, the labor force, and the community's livability.

In a meeting Thursday

morning attended by representatives from the "company," town and county officials played the part of luring the company to Perquimans County.

In addition to showing a slide show depicting the area's recreational facilities and historical features, the town also circulated a brochure profiling every aspect of community life in Hertford from average climate to available utilities.

A brief introduction to the area played up the community's several firsts: home of the state's first permanent settlement, the state's first

church building, the country's first post-mistress, and the first religious service in proprietary North Carolina.

Town and county spokesmen fielded questions about the labor force. One representative asked if the labor force had already been absorbed by the local shirt factories.

"I see your industry as being male-related," answered Hertford Mayor Bill Cox, "a large percent of the workers in the shirt factories are women."

Housing was also discussed. Although it was admitted that "housing was not readily

available," it was countered with the point that contractors are.

Wayne Ashely of the Bank of North Carolina pointed out that an average ranch-type home with three bedrooms and two baths could be built within the \$45,000-\$50,000 range, and that financing was readily available.

R.L. Stevenson of People's Bank and Trust Company also brought up the availability of water front property in the county.

Following the question-answer session, the "company officials" shed their roles and became judges for the award.

They toured three industrial sites, located near the Don Juan shirt factory, and one site located on Harvey Point Road, the Newbold-White House, and made a general inspection of the town, according to Cox.

"They were really impressed with the cooperation displayed between the county, the town, and the community," said Cox.

Cox added that he felt the role playing had been a beneficial exercise.

"Going through the client visitation gave us an opportunity to look at ourselves and see where our weak points

are so we can improve upon our presentation," he said.

The Community of Excellence Award was originally established as part of Governor James Hunt's balanced growth program and intended as an aid in helping small communities attract industries to their areas.

Once a town is designated a Community of Excellence, it is registered with the North Carolina Department of Commerce as an area that is prepared for, and actively seeking, industrial development.

Although the Department of Commerce had intended to

refer any interested industries to communities recognized as "excellent," few referrals were made as a result of last year's awards. The town of Hertford received no industrial inquiries following 1979 designation as a Community of Excellence.

According to Cox, the Department of Commerce will still make referrals should inquiries be filed through their office. "But they are encouraging communities to go out on their own initial contacts," said Cox, adding that the department would remain valuable in a back-up capacity.

Asked whether the community had any direction to follow in their search for potential industry, Cox responded, "I think what we need to do in Perquimans County is to take the Tidewater, Virginia area and contact established industries there and encourage them to expand here."

The town was aided in its effort to achieve redesignation as a Community of Excellence by Pam Whitley, economic development planner with the Albemarle Regional Planning and Development Commission.

55th annual

PCHS commencement

A capacity and then some crowd of family, well-wishers, and friends packed into the high school gymnasium last Wednesday for the 55th graduation of Perquimans County High School seniors.

Commencement speaker was Dr. James Howard Jackson, professor of business education and office administration at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.

Twisting an oft quoted line of William Shakespeare's play, "Hamlet," Jackson said the question facing today's young people is, "To be, or what to be?"

"And the answer to that question is, anything you want to be," said Jackson.

But in order to be what one wants to be, according to Jackson, one has to excel.

Jackson characterized the attributes of a leader, or one who excels, giving priority to independence.

"A leader is not a herd follower — no matter what you do, be your own person," he said.

Possessing goals, the willingness to make sacrifices, and optimism are other characteristics of a leader, said Jackson.

"There is one important thing to remember. You can be anything you want to be," he concluded.

High school principal William Byrum awarded medals for academic ex-

cellence to Charles Skinner, class valedictorian, and Charles Bullard, salutarian. Schools superintendent Pat Harrell urged the graduates to continue their achievements.

"You have made many contributions to your school and your community," he said, "don't stop now."

Diplomas were awarded by Clifford Winslow, chairman of the Perquimans County Board of Education.

In a farewell address to his classmates, class valedictorian Charles Skinner spoke of the importance of happiness.

"As long as you enjoy what you're doing, you have achieved a great deal," he said.

Tracing his career as a high school student, Skinner said the past four years had seemed like a lifetime to one so young, and reflected on his childhood.

"There's always a little child in everyone. And it is this child that makes this place a better place to live," said Skinner.

His final admonishment, following a grim assessment of the current state of world affairs, was not to underestimate the class of 1980 — a declaration met with applause and cheering from the graduates.

And following a rendition of the song "Memories," by graduate Walter Overton, the class of 1980 became just that.



A helping hand

A concerned student straightens up this graduate's mortarboard as he prepares to pose for a picture following last Wednesday's graduation at Perquimans High School. A total of 114 students were issued diplomas, the largest graduating class ever.

No action on recreation

Commissioner Lester Simpson could again find no second to his motion for a vote on whether or not Perquimans County residents should be taxed for recreation in a Monday night meeting of the board of commissioners.

Simpson first made the motion last Monday, but it died for lack of a second.

Despite a great deal of

discussion among the commissioners when Simpson made the motion again this week, other board members said they wanted more time to consider the matter.

Simpson's motion calls for a vote on funding recreation through tax dollars, with the county paying for the entire program. Currently, recreation is funded jointly by

the town of Hertford and the county.

Commissioner Waldo Winslow wanted to know if the referendum would determine whether or not to have a program, or whether or not to share expenses with Hertford.

But Simpson said members of the Hertford Town Council had all but told the commissioners that they want the

county to take over the program.

He said he is against the county's funding recreation from other sources if residents vote against a tax levy.

"I'd be hesitant to fund it from revenue sharing if the county voted it down," Simpson said.

He said, however, that there could still be a recreation program, but it would have to exist independent of county financing.

Commissioner Marshall Caddy appeared undecided on the issue, at one point calling it the "fairest way," and at another saying that the commissioners might be sidestepping their responsibilities in calling for a vote.

"Are we not here as representatives of Perquimans County to make these decisions?" asked Caddy. "Are we not neglecting our duties?"

In response to Caddy's query, county finance officer D.F. Reed, Jr., said that the situation is almost identical to the industrial development issue that arose a few years ago.

The county was asked to pick up a program initiated by the town, a referendum was called, and the voters approved an assessment of up to a nickel on the tax rate for industrial development.

Board chairman Joe Nowell, however, said that the county commissioners should make the decision without a vote.

"I think that's what we're here for," Nowell said. "If we make the wrong decision the people will vote us out of office," he said.

Commissioner Welly White took no sides when asked his opinion on the matter. "I don't know," said White. He advocated a public hearing to determine whether or not county residents want to vote on the matter.

Winslow said that if the county does take over recreation, an effort should be



Tree trimming

Joe Tove White was busy trimming trees on the Courthouse lawn in Hertford last Thursday. White said the branches were clogging up the gutters.

Funky Fourth is planned

On July 4 at 12:30 p.m., pilot Walter Edwards, Jr., will swoop down over fields at Hertford Grammar School and Perquimans High School in a small plane, pelting the two fields with 1000 ping pong balls.

If things go as planned, a mad scramble will ensue, with prizes going to those persons who can collect the most balls.

It's all part of a somewhat bizarre and completely different celebration of Independence Day.

The Perquimans County Jaycees, assisted by the Jayceettes, are planning a day long list of activities for a fun

Fourth, many of which have never been seen before in this area.

For instance, few, if any, county residents have ever participated in a cow chip throwing contest, but they will have the opportunity to do just that at 1:30 p.m. at the Perquimans High athletic field.

Other examples of the lunacy are a husband and wife beating contest at 6:30 p.m., and a mummy contest at 7 p.m. (wrap your victim from head to foot with a roll of toilet paper faster than the other contestants and you win a prize).

Contestants can also compete against former major league pitching star Jimmy Hunter in clocking their fastest pitches by use of a radar gun (5-6 p.m.).

The list of events goes on and on, and while most of them are somewhat unusual, some of them sound perfectly normal.

How about a pet and bicycle parade for the youngsters? The parade begins at 11 p.m., and prizes will be awarded for the best dressed pet, the most unusual pet, and the pet that does the best tricks.

Riders of the first, second, and third best decorated bikes

will also receive prizes. There will be a dunking booth, a car smash, and horse shoes, not to mention bingo, and a hog calling contest.

As a grand finale, the sky over Hertford will light up with a \$1000 firework show. Jaycees are currently selling chances on \$100 in Susan B. Anthony dollars to finance the show.

All of the activities are open to everyone who would like to participate.

A schedule of Jaycee sponsored Fourth of July activities will appear in next week's edition of the PERQUIMANS WEEKLY.

Dry weather threatens corn

As of press time, Perquimans County crops were extremely thirsty, but an extended forecast called for a chance of light rain Tuesday night through Wednesday morning, and scattered thunder showers on Thursday and Saturday.

For area corn crops, though, the anticipated rain may be too little, too late. "Some of our yield potential has been reduced already," said county extension chairman Bill Jester. "If we don't get some rain within the next week it could be disastrous for our corn crop."

Jester said that the growing season has so far been unusually dry. "Some parts of the county haven't had much rain to speak of in a month," he said.

The dry weather has so far had little impact on soybean and peanut crops, Jester said, but added that soybeans

stands "are not quite as good as they should be."

There is, however, a bright side to the weather picture. The dryness has reduced diseases in wheat, Jester said, and provided excellent conditions for harvesting the crop.

ARPDC director resigns post

The executive director of the Albemarle Regional Planning and Development Commission announced his resignation last week, saying he will leave by the end of the month to accept employment in Raleigh.

Robert C. Whitley, director of the Hertford based organization since September, 1976, said that he had been considering the move for some time, and had resigned to join his family in Raleigh.

He said that ARPDC

Clees would probably be named acting director.

According to members of the ARPDC board of directors, Whitley took over the organization when it was in serious financial trouble, and under his directorship, ARPDC again became financially accountable.

Whitley's leadership, however, has come under fire in recent weeks and one staff member, upon resignation, launched a barrage of criticism at the directorship.

Whitley, however, said that much of the criticism stem-

med from a pay plan that angered some staff members.

He told the DAILY ADVANCE that his resignation had nothing to do with recent controversy.

Cobey visits Hertford

Republican candidate for lieutenant governor William Cobey visited Hertford on Friday afternoon as part of a campaign tour of North Carolina.

Cobey and his family passed out literature outlining his achievements and his con-

Donald Bryan, chairman of the ARPDC board of directors, said that 60 to 90 days would be required to find a replacement for Whitley.

servative philosophy, and visited with area residents on the streets of Hertford.

A former athletic director at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Cobey has picked up a wide range of endorsements in his quest for lieutenant governor.

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