

Rec department aims for activities for everyone

"Something for everyone" might well sum up the recreation philosophy of new Perquimans County recreation director Mac Sligh. In the short time Sligh has been in Perquimans County, he has sought to insure that the recreation department offers some activity or another for both sexes in every age group.

"We want to build the number of programs as well as attract a more diverse group of participants," said Sligh.

Three new programs have been added to the fall slate of recreational activities. They include gymnastics, mixed doubles tennis, and men's horseshoes.

These are added to previously established programs that include football, cheerleading, ceramics, slimmastics, and tennis lessons.

Sligh has also taken steps to enrich program offerings at the senior center.

"There were 15 agencies that promised services in the center when the building was built, but there's been very little programming," said Sligh.

It wasn't the fault of the agencies, he said, but programming had never really been pushed at the center.

Monthly offerings
Now five area agencies have agreed to offer programs at the center on a regular monthly basis.

The Perquimans County Department of Social Services

presented its first program last week, centering on public transportation for the elderly.

The library hopes to show monthly films at the center, Home Extension will provide a monthly program, and Sister Gloria Gilman of Catholic Social Services will lead prayer services.

The Area Agency on Aging will also offer a monthly program.

While some of these agencies had conducted programs at the center in the past, they had not done so on a regularly scheduled basis.

"We are trying to get programs going over there because of the large number of senior citizens we've got participating, and there are more we want to get involved," Sligh said.

A crafts sink is expected to be installed in the center in the next few weeks so that various arts and crafts can be taught at the center.

Previously, bingo and exercise classes were the only regularly scheduled activities at the center, with the exception of senior citizen club meetings.

Small staff, little money
Sligh said the biggest problems in expanding program offerings have been staff, which is very small, and money, which is very scarce.

When the crafts sink is installed, for instance, there won't be any funds available to hire a part-time teacher. Sligh will have to depend on finding a county resident who doesn't mind donating his

time and talents.

He has, however, gotten some help from almost within his own family. Tammy Albertson, Sligh's fiancée, is teaching two gymnastics classes and an exercise class called slimmastics, and is only receiving pay for teaching one class.

The two share an intense interest in recreation. Tammy has a master's degree in adaptive physical education from East Carolina University.

In establishing new

programs, knowing what people are going to want to participate in is pretty much a hit or miss affair, Sligh said.

Mixed doubles tennis, for instance, has attracted very little participation, whereas the gymnastics class for 4 to 9 year olds filled up quickly and has a waiting list. Men's horse shoes, on the other hand, has generated a great deal of interest, but few sign-ups.

Teenagers are the hardest age group to get interested in recreation, Sligh said. "We need to develop programs for

that age group," said Sligh. "You set up programs and they won't sign up."

The irony is that teenagers have a need for the structured, supervised kinds of activities that recreation can offer.

Cultural activities
While continuing in the current athletics-oriented program, Sligh hopes to offer more cultural activities through the recreation department.

Arts and crafts, and drama are possibilities, perhaps even a visit by the North Carolina

Symphony Orchestra. Sligh also hopes to see the department expand out into the county a little more, but that presents problems.

"We want to expand our programs more into the county because it is a county department," said Sligh. "But with the majority of the facilities in Hertford and the surrounding area, we more or less have to cater our programs to where the facilities are."

One county outreach project Sligh hopes to establish in the

future is a fun wagon route.

"One day it could be in Durants Neck, the next day in Belvidere, and the next in Bethel. It would carry recreation to the people," Sligh said.

The fun-wagon would be stocked with games, balls and other recreational equipment and the driver would conduct activities out in the various communities.

Again there would be expenses in providing staff and equipment, but the fun wagon would be a minimal cost type

of recreational program, Sligh said.

Further into the future, Sligh hopes to do more towards developing the potential for water recreation in the county.

But for now, the recreation director would be satisfied with seeing a few more people come out and take part.

"A lot of people are not taking advantage," Sligh said. "We're offering programs for all ages and sexes and we want them to come out and try it."



Domino effect

Perquimans County recreation director Mac Sligh demonstrates the domino effect to county youngsters as he gives a line of them a shove



Open house heralds fire prevention week

The Hertford Fire Department will hold an open house at the fire station on Grubb Street, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Oct. 7, 8, and 9 as a part of their Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 5-11) celebration.

Static displays of special rescue equipment, fire investigation tools, home fire safety methods, and antique fire fighting apparatus will be displayed.

Fire Chief C. T. Skinner, Jr. extends an invitation to all religious, civic, fraternal organizations, and individuals to attend the open house. School groups may visit the

station by setting up an appointment for Oct. 8. Members of the Hertford Fire Department will participate in the annual Fire Prevention Week Parade to be

held in Columbia Oct. 11. A special hose handling team directed by Fire Fighter Billy Owens will take part in the hose stream water contest following the parade.

Dismal harvest

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and other tracts hardly worth harvesting. Overall, though, the picture is not good.

"On the average, every farmer got a reduction this year," Riddick said.

Though average production losses for

the state are not as great as those for Perquimans County, many farmers across North Carolina are in the same boat.

"An awful lot of farmers are in cash flow difficulties," said Dr. Robert C. Wells, state extension economist.

"Production costs have risen quite rapidly and income from some crops and livestock, combined with weather losses, will not keep up," said Wells.

He said that farmers who have done a good job of management in years past will be able to weather the disaster year but the shoe string operator will face

severe difficulties. "The fellow who had a sloppy operation going into the year has little chance of survival," said Wells. He said that some farmers have indulged in impulse buying in years past and now they are suffering the consequences.

"They buy whether or not it's really needed," said Wells. "Some buy for income tax purposes and that's not sufficient justification."

"For years and years farmers have known what the recommended production practices of extension are and those who have followed them have had a better opportunity to make a go of it," Wells said.

ASCS director Tommy Riddick said that project yield losses are 30 per cent for peanuts, with a production average of 2,000 lbs. per acre, 30 per cent for

soybeans, with a production average of 21 bushels per acre, and 35 per cent for corn, with a production average of 72 bushels per acre.

These figures were compiled in order to qualify county farmers for FmHA emergency loans. The loans may be used to finance carry-over debt at an interest rate of five per cent.

To qualify, the farmer must have sustained a 20 per cent loss in at least one basic crop, and be unable to obtain sufficient credit elsewhere. He must also demonstrate ability to repay the loan.

"One of the critical points in making a loan is repayment," said FmHA supervisor Howell. "Whether they can repay the loan under average yield and average prices is very critical," he said. Many farmers have turned to federal crop insurance to assure a basic

production level and price in years like 1980.

Crop insurance may eventually become a requirement for making production loans to farmers, said Stevenson, of Peoples Bank. The insurance is becoming more reasonable in cost and more generous in protection, he said.

"Now they've got it down to the point where the farmer probably can't afford not to take it," Stevenson said. Observers agree that what is truly needed to brighten up the farming picture is an excellent 1981 growing season. But they said the same thing about 1980, and a good growing season may not be enough for some farmers.

Even so, farmers will roll the dice again this spring, and put their crops in the ground in hopes of a profitable harvest.

Apprenticeship Week proclaimed

Hertford Mayor Bill Cox has proclaimed the week of Oct. 6-10 as Apprenticeship Week throughout Perquimans County.

The idea of a week to honor apprentices and their employers was recently proclaimed in North Carolina by Governor James B. Hunt.

According to Cox, "It is important to highlight the contribution of the highly skilled worker. Young people should be encouraged to give serious consideration to becoming craftsmen as a way

of enjoying good pay, good working conditions, and the satisfaction of doing a job well."

Apprentices usually spend four years in on-the-job training and related classroom instruction to become skilled craftsmen. Once completing a program approved by the North Carolina Department of Labor they may be considered journeymen.

Journeymen are the highest skilled craftsmen in occupations that are considered

"apprenticeable." Skill, productivity and short supply make journeymen among the highest paid workers in North Carolina business and industry. The average wage for a North Carolina journeyman is well above \$20,000 per year, according to North Carolina Commissioner of Labor, John C. Brooks.

In this area, the Albemarle Area Apprenticeship Association is spear heading the development and operation of apprenticeship

programs. The association is the first organization of its type in North Carolina.

Occupations such as optical technician, embalmer, plumber, tool maker, electrician and air conditioning mechanic are among the more than 700 trades and crafts where apprenticeship is the usual way of training skilled workers. Men and women of all ethnic backgrounds have successfully completed apprenticeships and have become journeymen.

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Publisher (signed) David R. Dear

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

General Managers (signed) Mike McLaughlin Noel Todd McLaughlin

Plan retirement

People who are thinking about retiring at the end of the year should start making some serious plans now.

And those plans should include Social Security. There are several factors a person should consider.

First, a person under 65 considering retirement should remember that his Social Security benefit will be permanently reduced if received before 65.

The amount of the reduction depends on the number of months a person gets benefits before 65.

The reduction amounts to 20 percent at 62, 13 and a third

percent at 63, and 6 and two-thirds percent at 64. The reduction is figured by the number of months a person is under age 65.

Future cost of living benefit increases will also be reduced by the same amount.

Other factors can influence a person's decision to retire. Availability of a company pension could be a factor. So could the person's ability to continue working.

At any rate, a person should apply for Social Security retirement checks 2 or 3 months before he reaches 65 even though he has no retirement plans.

I am not responsible for any debts other than my own.

Michael (Mike) Edward White