

School board receives audit report

Perquimans County Board of Education members received copies of the 1979-1980 fiscal year audit report at a short meeting Monday night. Board members will study the audit, and discuss it at the next regular meeting. The audit apparently finds the accounting practices of the school system sound. "No exceptions were made in the audit report," said schools superintendent Pat Harrell. As is common practice, the report included comments and recommendations for improving the schools' accounting practices, Harrell said. The audit report on the \$300,000 Title I program for

exceptional children was also passed around for inspection by board members. The report notes that Title I will not pay for a full-time secretary-book-keeper for the program and that 25 per cent of the funding for the position must come from the local budget, Harrell said. He said that Title I is expected to come under scrutiny during the lame duck session of Congress as a possible target of federal budget cutting. "It's one of the areas Congress is looking to cut back in," said Harrell. In anticipation of less funding, two vacant aid positions in the

program have gone un-filled. "We should know something in March," Harrell said. Another federal program that benefits local government, revenue sharing, is also expected to come under scrutiny, and the board recently passed a resolution supporting the continuation of the program. Copies were sent to elected officials in Washington, and the board received letters from President Jimmy Carter, Senator Bob Morgan, and Representative Walter B. Jones saying they too favor a continuation of revenue sharing. There was no response from Senator Jesse Helms.

In another matter, the board moved to request a student-teacher ratio greater than state law allows in 10 Perquimans County classrooms. Harrell said the request was a routine matter. The board also agreed to a cooperative arrangement with The Perquimans County Recreation Department for grading the Perquimans Union baseball field. Finally, the board agreed to hire an aid for the trainable mentally retarded class at Perquimans Union, and approved the disability retirement of Union aid Reba H. Owens.

Resident

(Continued from page one) Skinner also complained that the tax office had printed a schedule listing dates on which appraisals would be done in various parts of the county and that his property had been visited two weeks earlier than the schedule indicated. Haskett responded that he was "ahead of schedule." He said that he never enters the actual living area of a house without permission, and that his office simply lacks the manpower to personally notify every tax payer before visiting property. "I feel my job is to be fair and honest with everybody in the county," said Haskett. "How can I do that if I don't visit the property?" Skinner, though, was equally convinced of his position. "I still feel you are wrong and if it's pressed far enough, it'll show you are wrong," Skinner said. The commissioners also discussed calling for a county-wide vote this spring on a recreation department fully funded by the county.

County finance officer D.F. Reed, Jr. estimated that should the county take over the program in full it would mean a 5 or 6 cents increase in the county tax rate. "If it goes on a county-wide basis it'll mean a whole lot more in materials and personnel," said Reed. Three commissioners expressed support for a vote at Monday's meeting. Commissioner Welly White did not comment and commissioner Waldo Winslow was not present. The county and the town of Hertford currently split the cost of the program on a 50-50 basis, and commission chairman Joe Nowell said that had the town spoken up sooner about its intentions of dropping the program, the question could have been on last week's ballot. As it stands, a special election may be required this spring at the county's expense, and board members said that it is time to begin planning for one. In another matter, the commissioners elected to employ Hertford building inspector Sam Long to inspect all non-residential buildings to insure that

thermostats are set no higher than 65 degrees in the winter and no lower than 78 degrees in the summer, and that water is not heated beyond 105 degrees. The county will be reimbursed \$20 for each inspection Long makes. In other business, the commissioners heard a complaint from two county residents living on state road 1300 that the state had refused to pick up a .3 mile section of the road until it is brought up to state standards. The county had passed a resolution requesting that the state take over maintenance of the road, and will pursue the matter further. Finally, Reed told the board that auditors had taken exception to a \$26,000 expenditure of funds for an architect's drawings for the Albemarle Regional Planning and Development Commission building in Hertford. The plans had been commissioned before a grant was actually awarded by the federal Economic Development Administration.

Land use plan moving along

Due in February, Perquimans County's Coastal Area Management Act land use up-date is 70 per cent complete, and planner John Ferren foresees no problem in getting it finished on time. The plan was initially contracted to the Albemarle Regional Planning and Development Commission, but the regional agency could not meet an Aug. 30 deadline, and the county secured another planning firm. Ferren, formerly of GRW Engineers, Inc. and now a private contractor, is handling the plan, and said that it can have an impact on future land use in the county. "All federal and state agencies that issue permits are using these plans for any individual area that needs permitting," Ferren said. For instance, if the plan includes a policy statement against dredging in the county, a dredging permit would not be issued by the Army Corps of Engineers, Ferren said.

The plan can also be used to encourage or discourage certain types of development, he said. Ferren recently completed what he called a "windshield survey" of land use in the county, and this, along with other documents such as aerial maps, will be used to compile a land use analysis for the county. His next step will be to meet with the county planning board and the board of commissioners in developing up-dating policy statements for the plan. "We're getting ready to discuss policy statements, and that's the heart of the plan," said Ferren. When policy statements are finalized, a public information meeting will be conducted to inform county residents on the direction the plan is taking. Citizens have already exercised one opportunity to voice their opinions on future needs of the county in a survey which was conducted last spring. Ferren said the survey, conducted by

former ARPDC planner Dan Tew, will be utilized in the plan up-date. Some 16 per cent of 2,500 surveys were returned, and improved medical facilities topped the list of county concerns, followed by more employment opportunities. The survey indicated that another high priority item is the four-laning of U.S. 17, and the impact of a four-laned highway 17 through Perquimans County will be addressed in the plan, said Ferren. He said the plan is unlikely to reveal any radical new direction, but may well improve the county's chances of staying on previously charted courses. "As far as new goes, there's probably not a whole lot of new ideas," he said. The update will hopefully improve the county's implementation of previously established policies. "As an example, Ferren cited development. "Hopefully, it will improve the county's way of encouraging and discouraging certain types of development," Ferren said.

Schools closing

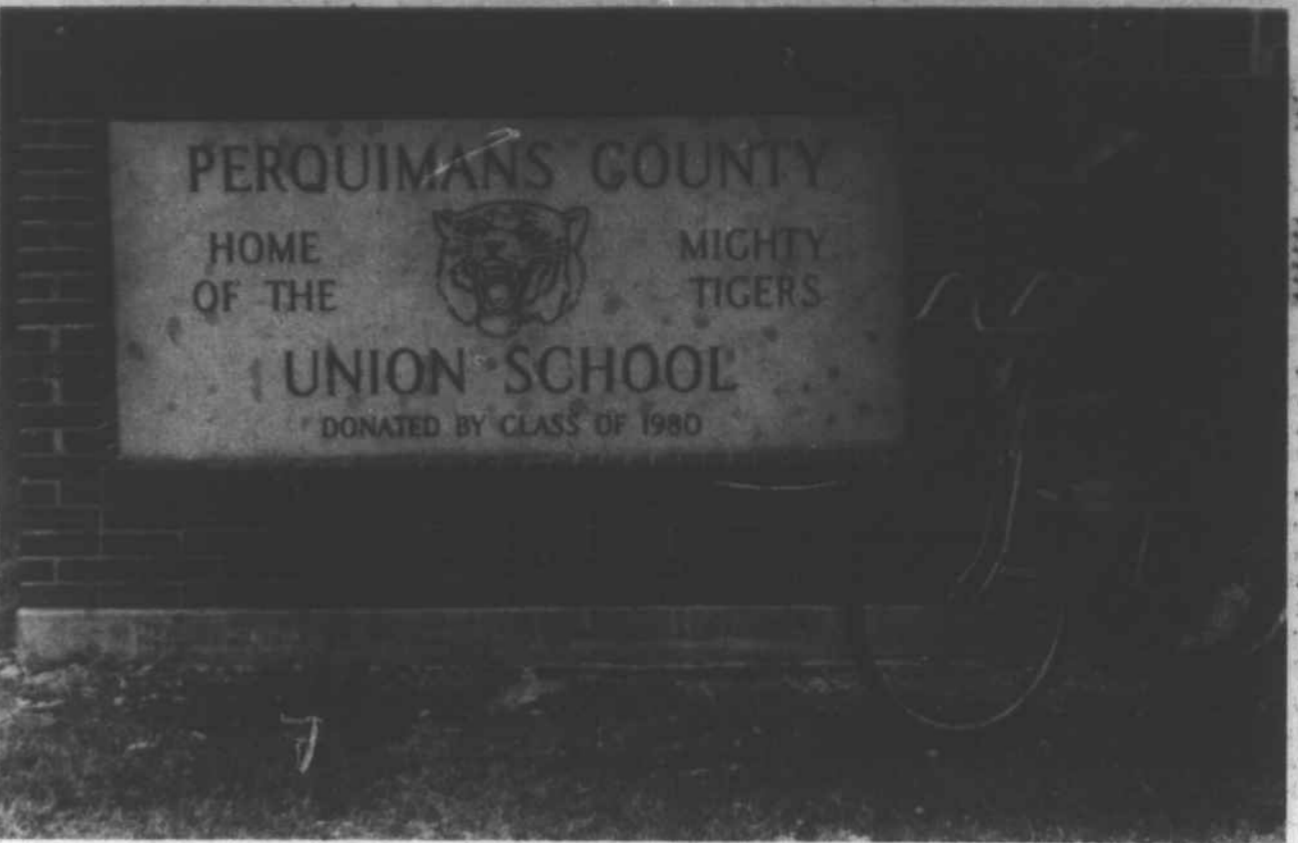
Perquimans County Schools will be closed for both student and teachers Tuesday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veteran's Day. According to school superintendent Pat Harrell, the statewide public school holiday is the result of legislative action. Classes will resume at the regular time on Wednesday, Nov. 12.

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Monumental gift

A Perquimans Union student admires the marble monument that is a gift to the school from the class of 1980. The student government association raised money for the monument, which cost \$1,400, through candy sales and other fund-raising projects.

EIC to be awarded grant

Congressman Walter B. Jones recently announced the approval by the Community Services Administration of an Administration and Local Initiative grant of \$242,000 to Economic Improvement Council, Inc., Edenton, N.C. covered by this grant are: rehabilitation of 280 sub-standard houses; reducing unemployment among 400 poor citizens; reducing energy use among 200 citizens; teaching 75 poor citizens to read and write; and preventing malnutrition among the poor.

Mr. Fentress Morris is Executive Director of the Pasquotank, Tyrrell, program which serves Perquimans, and Washington Camden, Chowan, Dare, Counties.

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