

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

Volume 36, No. 51 USPS 428-080 Hertford, Perquimans County, N.C., Wednesday, Dec. 31, 1980 20 CENTS

Hertford receives more money for waterfront

The town of Hertford received a Christmas present of sorts last week in the way of a \$15,000 grant intended to help foot the bill of the some \$208,000 waterfront park project.

The town will use the State Community Development grant as part of the its match requirement, according to Hertford Mayor and Town Manager Bill Cox, who said that the town had agreed to a 50 percent match of the total project cost some four years ago when the park project was originally conceived.

He added that the town had since applied for and received grants to help cover the town's share of the park cost. "We're hoping to receive enough grants (to fund half of the cost) so we won't have to put any local money into it (the project)," said Cox.

Initiated in February of 1977, the waterfront park has suffered setbacks largely due to red tape. Work on Site B of the park, which consists of the boat ramps located behind the Municipal Building, was completed in June of 1980

at a total cost of \$45,297.80. But work on Site A, which comprises approximately 4.7 acres of river-front land located behind the recreation department's building on Grubb Street, still lags. Cox attributed setbacks to the reluctance on the part of contractors to bid on the work.

While he said that the town was presently in the process of negotiating with a contractor, bids on Site A work may have to be re-advertised after the first of the year.

The town has, however, begun some site work on its own. Cox said that the town has hired a "local operator," at a cost of some \$5,000 to break and grade the site, and that funds for the work were budgeted under revenue sharing.

He added that any money spent on preliminary site work would be credited toward the town's match obligation, at "a fair market price," which would probably exceed the actual cost.

Because construction costs have greatly increased since plans for the

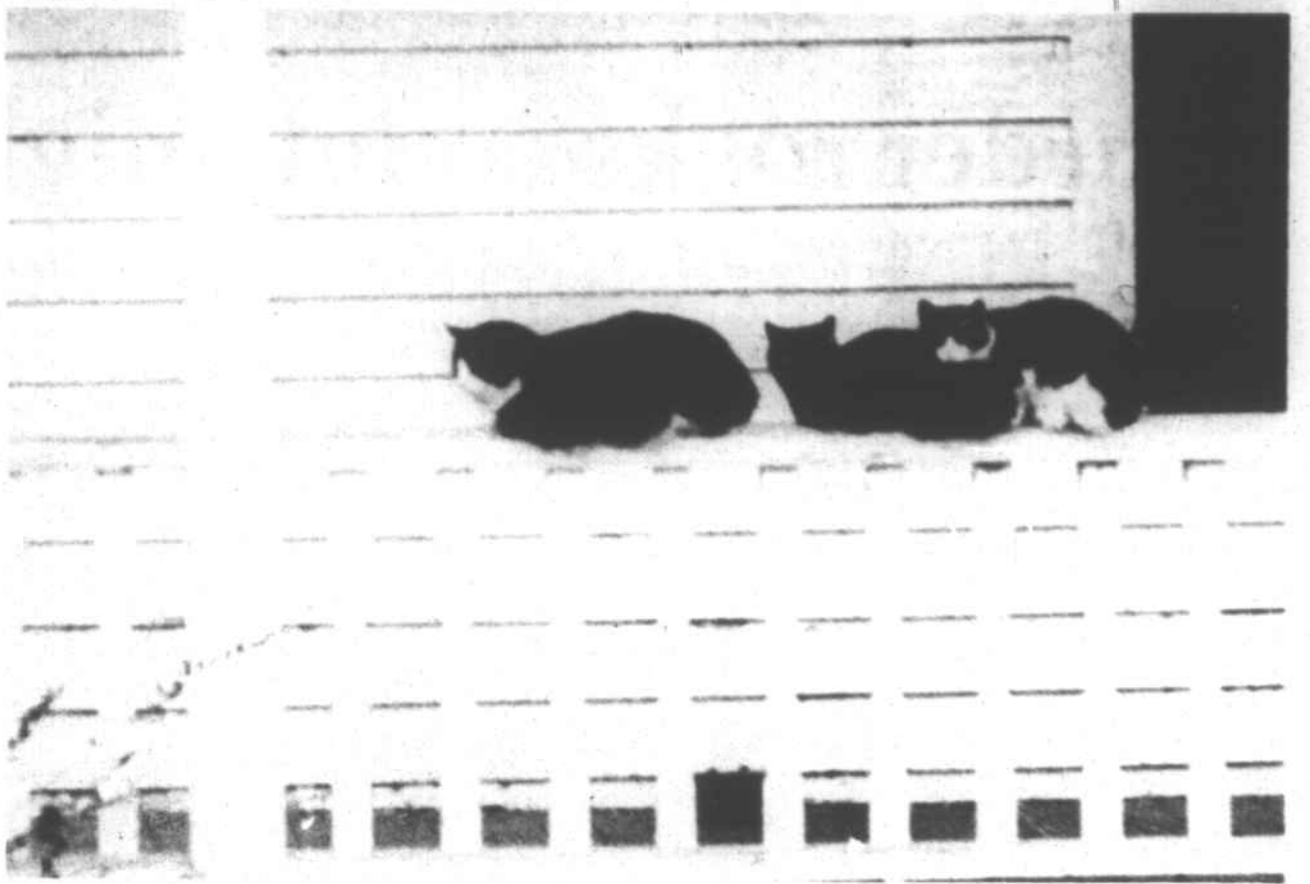
park were drawn up in 1977, many of the original features have been discarded so that the project may remain within the projected budget.

The revised waterfront park plans include the elimination of bulk heading, a boat basin, and a multi-purpose court from Site A. It is anticipated that the water-front area will include picnic tables and shelters, as well as public restroom facilities and a walkway.

But even the revisions have been revised. Cox said that recent changes include modifications of the picnic shelters and restroom facilities. "They won't be as elaborate as planned," he said.

Cox said that he hoped that Site A work would begin "by early spring," and be completed by "mid-summer."

The water-front park project is coordinated by the Albemarle Soil and Water Conservation District, chaired by Floyd Matthews, in conjunction with the town of Hertford.



Three's a crowd

Three's company for this trio of coxy cats pictured on a front porch in Winfall. The cats held their pose just long enough to be photographed, then scurried away. (Photo by NOEL TODD-MCLAUGHLIN)

A calendar full of events made 1980 a special year

As of midnight tonight, 1980 will be no more. The old calendar can be discarded and a new one hung in its place, a new calendar to be filled with the dates and events that will make 1981 special.

But before throwing away that old calendar, take time to flip through the months past and remember.

On Jan. 5 of 1980, the first snow of 1980 fell in Perquimans County. It wasn't much to talk about really, only a couple of inches. But it was indicative of things to come.

The first of a long season of political events also took place in January. Governor James B. Hunt was the guest of honor at a \$10 a head pig picking at Anglers Cove Restaurant in Bethel.

For farmers, it was the beginning of a bleak year, as the embargo against the Soviet Union established in retaliation against the Soviets' march into Afghanistan, wreaked havoc on grain prices.

Near the end of the month, it was announced that a \$20,000 grant had been approved for the Tri-County Career Center funding search. The center, which would teach advanced vocational and academic courses to students from Gates, Chowan and Perquimans Counties, is yet to become a reality.

In February, the Atlanta regional office of Health Education and Welfare turned down a request for funds from the Northeastern Rural Health Development Association, which had sought to establish medical clinics in Perquimans and Bertie Counties.

NRHDA had generated a great deal of support as well as controversy in its plans to provide medical clinics through public funding.

The first of two 1980 blizzards also took place in February, as Perquimans County was dumped on to the tune of from 15 to 20 inches on Feb. 6. Activities came to a dead halt as residents of town and county began digging out.

On Feb. 12, a Perquimans County jury determined that former Hertford resident Waymar Billups was indeed the man who shot and robbed Isaac Wood Lowe in his home on Feb. 20, 1979.

March came in like a lion, as the worst snow storm in recent history rocked the county on the first two days of the month. An estimated 25 inches of snow fell, swirled by winds of up to 60 miles an hour and accompanied by thunder and lightning.

The month also went out on a quirk, as three Marine helicopters landed on the Four Mile Desert Road because of

mechanical difficulties. The marines were taken by plain old Perquimans County hospitality, and even enjoyed a bucket of ham biscuits offered by a county resident.

Crop insurance As April came into being it was announced that county farmers would be eligible for federal crop insurance. They had little way of knowing how badly they would need it after a drought-laden 1980 farming season.

A con artist walked away with \$2,700 in savings belonging to an 85-year old Hertford woman in April, after he told her he was a bank examiner attempting to catch an embezzler.

It was also in April that the results of a survey designed to get public input into the county's land use plan update were released.

Medical facilities headed the county's wish list, followed by employment opportunities, educational facilities and industrial development.

On April 19, fire ravaged the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Stokes of Front Street in Hertford. The Stokes home has now been fully restored.

And then it was May, time for the primary election, prelude to the presidential election in the fall.

County residents endorsed Clifford Towe, Emmett Long, and Preston Stevenson for seats on the board of education, and made Charles Ward, Joe Nowell and Lester Simpson the Democratic nominees for county commissioner.

Hertford Police Chief Marshall Merritt noted in May that crime and citations had been on an upward march in the town for the past several years. County Sheriff Julian Broughton, however, indicated that crime in the county had remained steady over the years.

In June, more monies became available for the Tri-County Career Center funding search, bringing the total for the year to some \$73,000.

Band day took place on June 14, a carnival-like event that raised some \$3,000 for band uniforms.

Albemarle Regional Planning and Development Commission director Robert C. Whitley resigned his post during June, saying that his resignation was not connected to charges of poor leadership from ARPDC employees.

The town of Hertford was again declared a community of excellence in June, and another Perquimans County High School graduating class marched

out of the high school gym, diplomas in hand.

Area residents also began to enjoy new boat ramps and docking facilities that are part of a waterfront park plan for the town of Hertford.

Holiday drowning On Saturday, July 5, Winfall resident William Cherry drowned in the Perquimans River behind Reed Oil Company while trying to recover a drifting boat.

Young men born during the years 1960 and 1961 began registering for the draft in July, and separate traffic fatalities claimed the lives of Camden resident Ruth Ward Hurdle, 64, and Harry Everett Smith, 71, of Holiday Island.

Some 55 jobs in the county were lost during August, when Hertford Apparel announced that it would be closing its doors. The firm had been making mens' and boys' pullover shirts in Hertford for some three years.

On August 8, Harris Building Supply in Hertford was hit by armed robbers. One of them trained a shotgun on business owner Edison 'Spec' Harris, and another held a knife to the throat of clerk Worth Dale.

The two victims, along with customer Jan Spruill, were forced into a restroom

and the robbers fled with \$150 from the cash register and the wallets of Spruill and Dale.

Two of three men charged in the robbery have been convicted, and another awaits trial.

It was also in August that the financial crunch of the town of Hertford first came to light. The town is still trying to extract itself from a deficit that approached \$100,000.

Another traffic fatality occurred in August when an auto driven by Charles Luther Burch of Hampton, Va. skidded off a sharp curve on Beach Springs Road. Andrew Hamby, 32, of Newport News, Va. was killed in the accident.

Perquimans County High School's band made its marching debut at the first home football game in September, and both band and football team turned out to be successful.

The Pirates battled to a 9-1 season record and an Albemarle Conference co-championship under new head coach Pat Morgan.

September also saw Carolina Telephone announce details of a rate hike proposal that would hike local phone service by about a third.

(Continued on page 2)

12 year old youth mounts brave battle with cancer



Dwayne Parks fiddled with an empty sleeve as he answered questions about his pre-Christmas operation.

The brown-eyed 12-year old boy was almost stoic about the amputation that claimed his right arm and part of his shoulder.

"It had to be done," he said, without a trace of bitterness. While X-raying a bone broken throwing a football, doctors discovered a tumor on Dwayne's arm. It was diagnosed as Osteogenic Sarcoma, a rare form of cancer.

Dwayne said he didn't mourn the loss of his arm. "It hurt so bad I'm kind of glad it's off now," he said.

The youth was spending the Christmas holidays at home with his family in Belvidere, and their trailer looked like anyone else's home might look on the day after Christmas: games on the couch, stockings still hung and bulging with treats.

But a phone call was expected within the next several days signaling that the holidays were over, that it was time to return to Bethesda, Maryland for follow-up chemotherapy treatments.

These will require a rigorous schedule of three-day weekends that could last anywhere from five months to a year.

It will be eight weeks before Dwayne can return to school at Perquimans Union, and he will miss many Fridays and Mondays while undergoing treatment.

Doctors in Maryland said that attitude is two thirds of the cure,

though, and Dwayne has the right kind.

As a matter of fact, Dwayne's mother said it was her brave son who helped to keep her spirits high during their stay in Bethesda.

"He supported me. He was braver than I was," said Ms. Gail Griffin. "After the operation when they took him to intensive care, the first thing he told me was, 'Don't cry Momma. I'm alright.'"

Being at the National Institute of Health, where cancer is "just another regular everyday word," also helped a mother accept and learn to deal with her son's illness.

There was a kind of esprit de corps at the hospital that was a source of strength. "When something was going good we'd all cheer together and when something went wrong we'd all cry together," said Ms. Griffin.

But when the treatments are done and Dwayne is back in Perquimans County, he must face, and overcome his handicap alone. The youth appears ready to do just that.

"He said when he goes back to school he's just going to pull his shirt off and let all his classmates see it and ask all the questions they want to," said Ms. Griffin.

After that, Dwayne will get down to the business of being a normal 12 year old boy again.

The boy describes himself as a "pretty good" student who wants to be "a pro baseball player or football player — and a farmer" when he grows up.

He also likes music a great deal.

The only things Dwayne didn't get that were on his Christmas wish list were a Mr. Microphone and some church clothes.

Now he's thinking about buying a stereo with the \$120 he's received from friends over the holidays.

Dwayne was right-handed, and must learn to write all over again with his left hand when he returns to school, but he isn't waiting for instructions from a teacher. "I've already been practicing," he said.

Returning from Bethesda by airplane was a first for Dwayne, and he loved it. There will be a lot more trips between Perquimans County and Bethesda, and travel expenses will mount.

But because Dwayne's cancer is a rare one, doctors at NIH are using it for study, and are helping with some of the expenses.

As for the rest of them, Ms. Griffin is hopeful that they can be met, despite her low income.

Expenses are not Ms. Griffin's major concern, though. "God will provide a way," she said.

Dwayne has two little brothers, inclined to look up to him as little brothers will. His bravery in facing the operation has increased his stature in their eyes.

"I imagine I'll have to look up to him even more now," said 10 year old Robbie.

Dwayne had planned to play little league baseball this spring, but because of the operation, he's going to have to delay those plans for awhile. "I won't be able to play this year,"

he said. "I reckon I'll have to practice up for next year."

Part of the baseball inspiration stems from visits from major league players Jimmy Hunter and Jim Spencer.

Spencer dropped to see Dwayne while visiting with Hunter in Perquimans County before the operation. He said for Dwayne to give him a call and he'd drop by while he was in the hospital.

Dwayne called him in Bethesda, and Spencer took the hour's drive from his home to visit.

He brought the kid a baseball signed by all the New York Yankees, and more than that, he brought Dwayne a good dose of determination.

Spencer was telling Dwayne about all the calisthenics major league baseball players do to keep in shape.

"When he got to the part about pushups Dwayne just hung his head," said Ms. Griffin. "Dwayne said, 'I can't do pushups' but he said, 'oh yes you can!'"

Pushing chairs tables and everything else out of the way, Spencer got down in the floor to demonstrate one-armed pushups.

Dwayne passed that determination on to other patients. "One man had his leg amputated and was ready to give up," said Ms. Griffin. "After talking to Dwayne he was up walking around on crutches."

His cancer has a 97 per cent chance of recurrence but Dwayne is not gum about the odds. Minus a wing, he is still trying to fly, and confident that he can do it.

Dwayne Parks — determined cancer victim