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Employees

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town and county.

"It has been all hands on deck," Biggs said. "We began meeting with Golden Peanut, and their parent company Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), within days of the announcement of the closure of the Aulander plant."

Biggs said Bertie County Commission Chairman John Trent worked to get a meeting with officials from ADM. He said the company was insistent that it wasn't the town or county, but simply the market that was driving the closure.

The local contingent found out there was nothing that could be done to stop the closure, so they immediately began working with the 81 employees who were losing their jobs.

Biggs said nine companies attended a job fair for those who worked at the facility. He said the job fair was open just to those employees at the request of those nine companies.

"A lot of people filled out a lot of applications that day," he said. "There were several peanut companies among them."

Biggs said the companies were looking for good employees, and they all agreed the people from Golden Peanut would be good employees.

There is no way to know yet how many employees found

jobs at the job fair, or through more traditional methods, Biggs said. Most employees wanted to stay until the plant closed.

Biggs said both Roanoke Chowan Community College and Martin Community College were interested in retraining the workers to find other jobs if they could.

In addition to working to find jobs for those 81 employees, Biggs said his office, the commissioners and the town of Aulander were all working diligently to find a company to go into the ADM facility.

"We have two companies who have been wearing our phones and email out, and we in turn have been wearing out the email and phones of ADM and Golden Peanut," Biggs said.

The companies preferred to go into the facility before it "went dark," but that was not possible.

Biggs said one of the companies remains interested, even indicating they were "on pins and needles to write a check." He said the company not only wanted to continue the work being done there by Golden Peanut, but also wanted to expand into retail.

Biggs said the commissioners would be kept up-to-date about the possibility of another firm's purchasing the former Golden Peanut Plant, and then opening operations.



LESLIE BEACHBOARD / Bertie Ledger-Advance

William Peele III (second from left) is congratulated on being named Regional Principal of the Year by (from left) his predecessor in the post, Steve Lassiter, as well as Bertie County Superintendent

of Schools Elaine White and board members Jo Davis Johnson and Barry McGlone.

Peele

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North Carolina Department of Instruction.

Peele is in his 16th year in education, each of which has been spent serving the students and families of Bertie County.

Peele, who comes from a family of educators, said "it has been an honor and privilege to represent Bertie County Schools and the northeast region of this great state."

"I enjoy working with children and adults," he said. "I enjoy helping children become more successful in life, and I enjoy helping teachers to become successful in teaching."

Bertie County Schools Superintendent, Elaine White, said, "It was so hard not to tell him. I was so glad when today got here. He is a hard worker for his children and his staff."

Peele's mother, Gwendolyn H. Peele, taught special needs children in the middle grades for many years. His late father, William Peele II, was an assistant principal, a principal and



William Peele receives congratulations from his brother, Dr. Dexter Peele.

an assistant superintendent. He served as director of the Shaw Cape Center in Ahoskie.

"I grew up around education," said Peele. "I had a lot of positive role models in elementary, middle, and high school."

Peele is a 1996 graduate of Bertie High School. He majored in history at Elizabeth City State University and became a history

teacher through the lateral entry program.

Peele's philosophy in education is as follows: "I believe that having a quality education provides you with opportunities and options in life."

Peele said, "his strong work ethic was most likely one of the attributes that helped him be named principal of the year. I want to see my students grow and succeed, I am also always trying to reflect on processes and the things I am trying to do for my school."

About Principal of the Year

The Wells Fargo Principal of the Year Award was introduced in 1984 to recognize outstanding leadership in North Carolina's schools and the role of the principal in establishing an environment conducive to the pursuit and achievement of academic excellence. Wells Fargo sponsors the award in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the Chapel Hill-based Center for School Leadership Development.



At left: William Peele III speaks to the audience gathered to celebrate his being chosen as Regional Principal of the Year. He is joined by his wife, Keisha, and their son, Whitman. Peele, who has twice been Bertie County Schools Principal of the Year, was named to represent the region in the State Principal of the Year competition.



LESLIE BEACHBOARD / Bertie Ledger-Advance

There were a number of people in attendance at Bertie Middle School's Health Fair last week.

Fair

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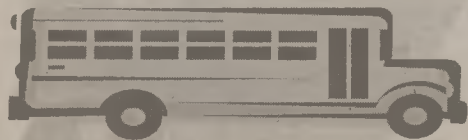
was available with information about services provided to the community.

Danny Perry, Bertie County Schools Health Liaison, stated this is the second year Bertie

County Schools sponsored the event. They have two health fairs a year free to the public.

"We offer the health fair as a service for the community. We have a wide variety of information available at the health fair," said Perry.

BERTIE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING CLASS



FEBRUARY 9-11, 2016
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

BCS Bus Garage
135 County Farm Rd, Windsor
YOU MUST ATTEND ALL THREE DAYS!

A BCS employment application must be completed online prior to attending class

For more information or to register, call 794-6005

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice of Public Hearings Relative to a Proposed Community Service Block Grant Anti-Poverty Plan for FY 2016 - 2017

Notice is hereby given that public hearings will be held by Choanoke Area Development Association of N.C., Inc. (CADA) for the purpose of receiving comments from the public concerning FY 2016 - 2017 Community Service Grant funding and the proposed Anti-Poverty Plan.

Bertie County
Tuesday, February 16, 2016
10:00am - 10:30am; 4:00pm - 4:30pm
Bertie County NC Works Center
128 East Granville Street
Windsor, NC 27983

Martin County
Tuesday, February 16, 2016
12:30pm - 1:30pm
Martin Memorial Public Library
200 North Smithwick St.
Williamston, NC 27892

All interested persons are encouraged to attend the hearing to make comments and recommendations. We are currently in the planning process, so this will be a general session to provide the community with a summary of the CSBG program as well as a brief question/answer session. All recommendations will be welcomed in order to create a program that will impact the community. Written comments will be accepted until February 23, 2016. Comments may be mailed to:

Sallie Surface, Executive Director
Choanoke Area Development Association of N.C. Inc.
(CADA)
P.O. Box 530, Rich Square, NC 27869
252.539.4155

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