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 WEDNESDAY • MARCH 11, 2020



Williams heads to Ferrum

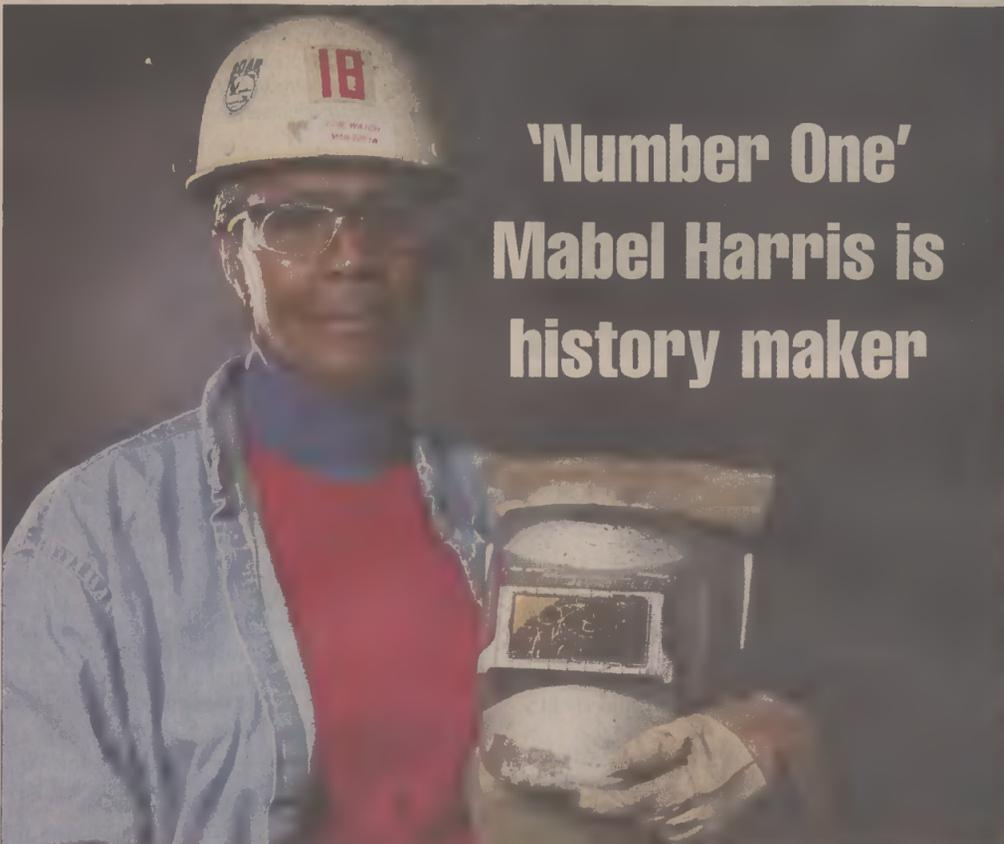
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NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



'Number One' Mabel Harris is history maker

Mabel Harris of Roxobel blazed a trail for women at Newport News Shipbuilding.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO / Huntington Ingalls Industries

Roxobel resident was first female to be nuclear pipe welder at NNS

THADD WHITE
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NEWPORT NEWS, VA. – Nearly one year ago, Mabel Harris decided to call it a career.

But, before she did, the Bertie County woman blazed a trail at the Newport News Shipbuilding.

During her long career, Harris became the first woman at the shipyard to be qualified as a nuclear pipe welder and the first woman to be inducted into the "Top Gun" welding club, Component Fabrication and Assembly's most elite group of welders.

Harris began her career shortly after graduating, despite the fact she hadn't intended to do so that quickly.

"I had just graduated from



Mabel Harris was a welder by day and a home-school teacher by night.

school and was looking forward to spending downtime with

friends before beginning the job search," she told Yardlines, a publication from the Newport News Shipbuilding. "However, my mother wanted me to apply at the shipyard, so I did."

Harris interviewed, and 24 hours later had a job.

She began as a shiftpitter before being promoted to crane operator. It was during her time as a crane operator she became interested in welding.

She told Yardlines, "Between crane moves, I would watch the welders below. The preciseness and attention to detail really sparked my interest. So, when the department asked for volunteers interested in learning how to weld, I was the first to raise my hand."

See HARRIS, 5

Charges filed in dirt bike chase Mon.

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WINDSOR – A dirt bike chase landed two men behind bars Monday.

Windsor Police Chief Justin Jackson said the driver of the bike and a bystander ended up in jail after a short chase.

Windsor Police Officer Jessie Mizelle was patrolling on U.S. 13/17 near County Farm Road when he observed a male riding on a dirt bike in the south bound lane of the highway.

Officer Mizelle turned around into the south

bound lane to attempt to speak to the person on the dirt bike, but when he attempted to stop the suspect, the man sped off down Bud's Lane at a high rate of speed.

The suspect took the bike through people's yards and a wooded area toward New Hope Road. Officer Mizelle made the circle back, and was joined by Chief Jackson.

After returning to Bud's Lane to find the suspect, Officer Mizelle

See CHASE, 5

Bertie County prepared for Coronavirus

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WINDSOR – As North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper announced the state's first Coronavirus patient, Bertie County offered its citizens assurances.

Last week, Gov. Cooper announced the first confirmed case of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) was a Wake County person who had recently traveled to the state of Washington, and was exposed at a long-term care facility in which

there is an outbreak of the virus.

"I know that people are worried about this virus, and I want to assure North Carolinians our state is prepared," Gov. Cooper said. "Our task force and state agencies are working closely with local health departments, health care providers and others to quickly identify and respond to cases that might occur."

Shortly thereafter, Bertie County officials

See CORONAVIRUS, 5

Bertie schools 'on board' with justice partnership

BY AMANDA BUNCH
 Bertie County Schools

WINDSOR — According to Sixth Judicial District Chief Judge Brenda Branch, "This MOU is a mindset."

Judge Branch shared information on the Judicial District 6 School Justice Partnership with the Bertie

County Board of Education on Feb. 12.

The School Justice Partnership (SJP) is a group of community stakeholders who work together to establish specific guidelines for school discipline in a way that minimizes suspensions, expulsions and school-based referrals to court for minor

misconduct.

The main goal of the SJP is to keep kids in school and out of court for routine misconduct at school. SJPs are being developed throughout North Carolina as a result of the state's recently enacted "Raise the Age law."

The said "mindset" of the Memorandum of Under-

standing (MOU) is to understand the "why" of a child's behavior — underlying issues and circumstances that might influence a decision — and "to not turn our children into criminals just because of one lapse in judgement," said Branch.

"We will ask, 'What happened? Why? and How can

we help? Before we bring in the courts,'" said Branch.

It is a problem-solving approach, and one of the stipulations in the MOU states, "At each level of intervention, the person handling the intervention should consider whether the student mis-

See PARTNERSHIP, 5

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GOOD MORNING, WILLIAM FREEMAN OF MERRY HILL

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