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20 CENTS



Winter produce

Mrs. John White of White's fresh produce fame, is reaping the benefits from their winter garden. The produce stand is located on Edenton Road Street in Hertford. (Photo by NOEL TODD-McLAUGHLIN)

Tri-County

Grant application finally funded

The Tri-County Career Center funding search got an unexpected boost last week when a previously denied \$20,000 grant application was funded.

The grant, awarded at the discretion of Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. by the Coastal Plains Regional Commission, will allow for more face to face contact in the search for funds, according to center director Kenneth Stallings.

Without the grant, Stallings said, much of the correspondence with potential funding sources would have been by telephone or through the mail.

"But if I can get eyeball to eyeball contact," Stallings said, "I think I can convince that man to help us here in North Carolina."

The grant will also help draw more people in the

development of curriculum for the center, he said. Teachers and administrators will be taken to career centers both in state and out of state, to experience the career center concept in reality.

School officials and influential laymen of the community will also be asked to meet with potential funding sources, Stallings said.

The proposed Tri-County Center would offer advanced vocational and academic courses to students of Gates, Chowan and Perquimans High Schools.

The student would spend part of his day at the center, but would retain identity with his county's high school.

The combination of resources and student interest, would allow for an expanded curriculum otherwise impossible in the

sparsely populated counties.

Phase I of the project was a study that determined a need for the center. Phase II, which will include developing a curriculum, as well as determining cost and securing funding sources, is presently underway.

Stallings said the Coastal Resources Commission originally put the center's Phase II funding request in category II, that of projects worthy of funding but not of top priority.

A spokesman for the commission promised that if extra money became available, the grant would be approved. The money did, apparently become available, as Stallings received a phone call last Wednesday from Joe Pell, senior assistant to the

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Youth council president held for embezzlement

The president of the Perquimans County Youth Council has been arrested by the Hertford Police Department and charged with embezzling more than \$400 from the council's savings account.

James Leroy Saunders, 18, of Rt. 1, Belvidere has been arrested and charged with 12 counts of embezzlement of property by virtue of an office, according to Hertford Police Chief Marshall Merritt.

Merritt said that on 12 different occasions, money had been taken from the youth council's savings account, usually in increments of some \$20, but on Dec. 19, some \$120 was removed from the account.

The youth council is sponsored by the Economic Improvement Council and promotes community in-

volvement through various projects.

Saunders was elected to serve a one year term as president of the council by its membership, according to EIC coordinator Grace Dizon.

She said she discovered that money was missing from the council savings account when she got her most recent bank statement, which showed a balance of some \$40. The account was supposed to have held more than \$450, she said.

Most of the money had been awarded to the local council by the state youth council in the form of a \$320 mini-grant to pay for improvements to three community buildings located in the county.

The rest of the money had been raised by the group to pay for attendance at functions on the state level.

Ms. Dizon said she became "physically ill" when she discovered the money missing. She said that Saunders had been an exemplary member of the club.

"He is the one who kept the club going," she said. "I always thought of him as dependable... He seemed trustworthy to me."

She also worried about the impact the incident might have on the youth council's image in the community.

"I don't want people to feel the youth council can't be trusted," she said. "They are good kids."

She said that the youth council would still have to complete improvements to the community buildings, or return the mini-grant monies to the state council.

Insurance commissioner speaks here

In a talk he described as "short but full of meat," North Carolina Insurance Commissioner John Ingram warned members of the Albemarle regional Planning and Development Commission last Thursday of the havoc special interests have played on the pocketbooks of North Carolinians.

"As a result of bad legislation passed in 1977 and made worse in 1979, the people of this state have paid out \$400 million (in excessive insurance rates) in just two years," said Ingram.

As insurance commissioner, Ingram said he has saved North Carolinians "millions and millions" of dollars in insurance rate increases. But despite all that Ingram's office has done to make N.C. a "model" of insurance reform, much of what he has ac-

complished has been "undetermined" by the special interests.

"They (special interests) used their influence on the leadership of this state and our leadership has listened to them rather than listen to the needs and wishes of the people of North Carolina," said Ingram. "And unless this bad law that was passed by the General Assembly is changed, the people of this state will be faced with a mind-boggling \$1 billion in unjustified insurance rate increases before the decade of the 80's is half over."

Ingram offered insurance surcharge as an example of one of the unjustifiable insurance costs plaguing North Carolinians.

In 1973, Ingram said that the only reason an insurance consumer could be sur-

charged was for a bad driving record.

Since then, Ingram said insurance companies have become discriminatory.

"People have been surcharged because they were young, old, black, nicknamed 'Shorty', or drove a red car," said Ingram.

Ingram noted that North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt had "finally" joined with his fight against surcharge. "If he (Hunt) had joined with me last spring, we would not have to go through a lawsuit," said Ingram.

Better government is Ingram's answer to the poor legislation that has cost North Carolina residents billions of dollars in undue tax amounts and unfair insurance rates.

"An eastern tobacco farmer told me that the way to change bad laws is to change the

people who make bad laws. Together we can bring about the changes we need here in North Carolina to put government back in the hands of the people rather than in the pockets of the special interests," concluded Ingram.

Following Ingram's speech, the ARPDC held a regular business session.

Among items discussed it was noted that Aging Program Funds amounting to \$3,600 had been appropriated for legal services for the elderly in the counties of Perquimans, Pasquotank, and Chowan. This money would pay the regular lawyer's fee of \$45-\$50 an hour for a session of group counseling in designated places where seniors gather.

In another matter, Hertford Mayor Bill Cox was

nominated to represent the 10-county region as a Joint Regional Forum member for a second year. The Joint Regional Forum is an advisory board to regional governments which consists of members appointed by the League of Municipalities and the Association of County Commissioners.



John Ingram

Addition will cost a little extra

The Perquimans County School System will have to pay some \$7,500 more than had been anticipated for the addition to the county high school, apparently because of an oversight on the part of the architect.

Schools superintendent Pat Harrell told the school board at a Monday morning meeting that the wiring of the administrative area of the addition had not been included in the contract.

The wiring had initially been deleted due to cost considerations, but was to have been put back in, Harrell said. He said that the omission appeared to be an oversight on the part of the architect.

In another matter, the board approved the acceptance of an \$8,000 federal grant to finance a study of the roles and responsibilities of central office personnel in the school system.

An unrelated report showed Perquimans County's per student expenditure to be slightly beneath state averages, but taking into account state and federal per student expenditures in the county, slightly above state averages.

Harrell said that socio-economic factors cause state

and federal contributions to be higher here than in other areas of the state.

It was also noted that the school board has requested an additional \$16,000 for the operation of school buses in the county during the remainder of the school year.

The state had attempted to cut gasoline allocations of school systems across the state to 80 percent of last year's allotments. The Perquimans County School Board has joined other counties in informing the state that 80 percent just isn't enough.

"They'll just have to find some more money in Raleigh somewhere," Harrell said.

An energy audit report covering all county school buildings has been completed, and Harrell produced a thick manual of recommended improvements that resulted.

The board has already gotten three quotes on the cost of lowering ceilings at Central Grammar School, and energy saving steps will range as far as checking the caulking in windows.

With the completion of the audit, the county is now eligible for federal funds to pay for energy saving improvements.

In another energy related

matter, Harrell told the board that school-owned gyms could

no longer be heated for non-school activities because of a

change in state school board policy.

Coach may be replaced

Perquimans High School head football coach Celvin Webster will apparently be replaced because of a perceived lack of community support for the team.

Webster said he had been told by schools superintendent Pat Harrell and principal William Byrum he would be replaced.

Harrell, however, stated that no official action had been taken by the school board in replacing Webster.

"We've had conferences with the coaches," Harrell said, but would not comment further on what was discussed at the conferences.

Harrell did say, though, that the coaching situation had been discussed in an executive session at the school board meeting on Monday.

But Webster said that as far as he is concerned his ouster is already final.

"It's hard to understand," he said. "We've had some super crowds, we've made money. That's what support is all about, isn't it?"

By his own standards, Webster's seven years at

Perquimans High School have been a success.

"I thought we were one of the better 2-A schools around," Webster said. "We played some much larger schools and beat 'em."

Webster said that 22 of his former players had received grant-in-aids to play football in college.

Also head coach in basketball and track, as well as a teacher, Webster said his other positions were not mentioned in the conference and appear to be intact.

Still, his anticipated

intention to seek re-election to that office.

Charles Ward and Billy Pierce have filed for the two District II commissioners' seats, as has incumbent chairman Joe Nowell.

Janice Y. Boyce of Parkville Township has filed for election to the Board of Education.

The filing deadline is Feb. 4 at 12 noon.

Vernon Hinton, (l), of Gates County, and Ken Dail of Perquimans County are putting down curbing and guttering on a portion of Edenton Road Street in Hertford.



Road work

Vernon Hinton, (l), of Gates County, and Ken Dail of Perquimans County are putting down curbing and guttering on a portion of Edenton Road Street in Hertford.