

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## Fire guts Beach Springs barn

Sparks from a truck's exhaust set off a blaze which consumed an equipment shelter at the Freeland Elliott farm in the Beach Springs community last Tuesday.

The fire was contained to the burning structure by the Hertford Fire Department, preventing damage to an adjoining barn, and the large equipment stored in the shelter was removed undamaged. The loss was valued at \$15,000 by Elliott.

Elliott said the fire apparently was ignited when he backed a truck into the

barn to get several bales of hay. "I got stuck on wet ground, spun the wheels to get out and then left," he said. "I guess that exhaust caught the hay on fire when I was backed in there."

About 20 minutes later, Elliott said several men on the farm, including himself, saw the smoke. "The Hertford fire department was called and was on the scene in a few minutes," he recalled, crediting the prompt response for prevention of further spread of the fire to other buildings. As soon as the smoke

was discovered, Mack White, Billy Elliott and the owner were successful in removing two peanut combines, a peanut digger, a hammer mill, two trucks and a load of hay.

The fire occurred about 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, and firemen remained on the scene until 5 p.m.

Firemen bringing the fire under control were A-C L.E. Riddick, Capt. Marvin Hunter, Lt. Bob Reed, Walter Edwards, Lloyd Lane, Billy Layden, Roy Perkins and Carlyle Sawyer.

## Local youth injured in crash

Excessive speed on a rain slicked road was reported the cause of an 11:30 p.m. accident Saturday which split a 1978 Ford in half and sent the 17-year-old driver to Norfolk General Hospital with multiple injuries.

Richard Rogerson was reported traveling south on Center Hill Road, about two miles south of Hertford, at an excessive speed when his car apparently ran off the road. According to Trooper J. A. Siles, Rogerson attempted to pull back on the road, but lost control because of a

slippery shoulder. The car then apparently bounced and turned, hitting a large pine at the left quarter panel.

"The momentum of the car was so great on impact, it caused the car to split, the passenger area to go around one side of the tree and the engine around the other side," Siles said.

"Through the spinning movement of the car, the driver was thrown free," the officer reported.

Both the Hertford Fire Department and the Perquimans County Rescue

Squad were reported on the scene in a matter of minutes following the accident. Rogerson was transported to Albemarle Hospital by the rescue squad, but immediately was sent on to Norfolk General Hospital, where he is a patient in the Intensive Care Unit.

The youth's mother, Mrs. LeClaire Rogerson, Route 1, Hertford, said Tuesday that his condition is listed as improved, but serious. Injuries reported were a broken collar bone, jaw, arm and toes on his left side.

## Civil preparedness officials say major hurricane overdue

In the Pacific Ocean, they're called typhoons. In the Indian Ocean, they're cyclones. In the Atlantic, they're known as hurricanes. By any name, the giant whirlwind-type storms that begin over tropical waters are nature's most destructive storms.

With August and September at hand, when hurricanes most frequently form, Talmadge Rose, Hertford civil preparedness coordinator, and Keith Haskett, county coordinator, are joining forces to urge alertness to storm advisories and the need for special preparations and precaution. Both stated that the area is long overdue for a hurricane and are wary of possible apathy of county residents on the Albemarle Sound and for those now living on the Dare Beaches.

Six shelters are designated in the county, Haskett said. These are located at Hertford Grammar School, Winfall Central School, the Belvidere and New Hope community buildings, and the Snug Harbor and Holiday Island club houses. "The last two actually are relocation centers," Haskett pointed out. "Due to the nearness to the Sound and because of the large number of mobile homes, these are centers where people can find out where to go. So many are summer residents or visitors, they would not

know how to find the Hertford grammar school or go to another shelter."

In Hertford, Rose said, "99 percent of the residents stay in their homes. Few will go to a shelter and in this area they will be just as safe." He said the need for town residents was to follow all publicized precautions, "doing the necessary things for safety."

As one of three host counties for the Dare beaches, Rose said, "That's who we are really concerned about. The bridge across Point Harbor to the beach area floods early. So many have lived on the beach so many years, they do not heed the warnings."

"Then there is the other group," he said, "tourists and newcomers, who have never been in a hurricane, have never seen one and would like to be in one. We have been so fortunate for so many years, you know one of these days a hurricane is going to hit. I just hope complacency isn't going to cause any loss of life or unnecessary loss of property."

Everyone in Perquimans County will be involved should there be a hurricane alert for the coast, Haskett said. All county agencies cooperate with the civil preparedness officers.

The most important cooperation must come through the residents of Hertford

and Perquimans County, the preparedness coordinators said, beginning with the following steps as early precautionary measures:

- Trim dead wood from trees around your house since debris can damage a house during a storm.

- If you own a boat, determine the method you will use to protect it in event of a hurricane.

- Check for loose gutters and downspouts.
- Decide how you will board up/ your house and have the necessary materials.

- Obtain and store emergency supplies before the emergency occurs.

- When there is a hurricane warning, stay tuned to radio or TV for official bulletins

- Check supplies of special medicines, drugs and foods for infants and children.
- Stay home if sturdy and on high ground.
- Board up garage and porch doors.
- Move valuables to upper floors.

- Bring in pets.
- Fill containers (bathtub) with several days supply of drinking water.
- Turn up refrigerator to maximum cold and don't open unless necessary.

- Use phone only for emergencies.
- Stay indoors on the downwind side of house away from windows.

- Leave mobile homes.

- Leave areas which may be affected by storm tide or stream flooding.
- Leave early, in daylight if possible.
- Shut off water and electricity at main stations.

- Leave food and water for pets (shelters will not take them).
- Lock up house.

- Drive carefully to nearest designated shelter using recommended evacuation routes.

## Ten-year-old Tracy Peckham eagerly awaits 18th birthday to volunteer with Rescue unit

Ten-year-old Tracy Peckham can't wait to be 18, when she can qualify as a volunteer with the Perquimans County Rescue Squad.

"If there is a rescue squad when Tracy is 18," countered Ralph Barr, squad captain, when found last week with Annice Peckham, squad lieutenant, attempting to complete a calendar of assignments for the month of August. Large blue question marks filled spaces scattered over the calendar, indicating the lack of volunteers without calling on those whose names already were repeated across the face of the calendar.

"There are 37 members right now," Barr said, "and most of those are in their 40s or older. The squad has deteriorated over the last three years from a peak of 70 members. Quite a few have dropped out due to moving out of the county. Others have retired. Some have quit for personal reasons-work conflicts, interfering with family time."

The big need is for young volunteers "especially those 25 to 35 years of age," Annice said. "We are completely at a loss to know how to encourage new



### After the blaze

Only debris and smoldering ashes, shown above, remained after fire destroyed this equipment shelter at the Elliott farm last

week. Hertford firemen were able to contain the fire within the single

building, preventing spread to adjoining structures.

### Token tuition

## School board skirts law with dollar fee

A token tuition fee of \$1 was approved last Monday by the Perquimans County Board of Education to circumvent a new state law which requires the local board to charge tuition to students of parents who work on government-owned sites in Elizabeth City and Norfolk, or who live in federal low income housing projects here.

In past years these students have been the source of federal impact funds, "which added about \$12,000 in revenue for the local schools last year," according to school superintendent Pat Harrell.

The law, sponsored by Rep. Lura S. Tally, D-Cumberland, requires local school boards to collect a tuition fee from out-of-state students, students whose domicile is outside the school system's administrative unit and students who live in federal housing complexes.

Earlier this year, the Reagan administration discussed the possible abolition of impact aid funds, which were designed primarily to help local school boards with the cost of educating students who lived on military reservations or other federal properties, whose parents did not pay property taxes in the local community. Since that time there has been a cut in the funds, but not altogether eliminated.

"We do not anticipate receiving any impact funds," Superintendent Harrell said, indicating any available funds

would be given systems where military installations are located and impact funds form a major source of revenue.

"We have children of parents who work in Norfolk at the Navy shipyards and at the air station there, at the Coast Guard base in Elizabeth City, and at Harvey Point," Harrell explained. "We also have received funds because we have children who live in low rent housing projects. We were aware of the possibility of the funds being eliminated, so it was not budgeted as revenue (for this fiscal year)."

Harrell said he reviewed the requirements of the Act with the board. "The board decided not to over-react at this time, and in order to comply with the Act, the board approved the \$1 tuition charge," he reported.

In Camden, Chowan and Currituck counties, school boards have taken similar action, setting up token tuition fees to fulfill the law without creating financial burdens for the persons involved. In Elizabeth City, impact funds have been allocated and the school board is faced with generating funds where funds already exist.

A report from the state department of public instruction indicates the new state law may be challenged. Under the state constitution, the legislature must provide "a uniform system of free schools...wherein equal opportunities

shall be provided for all students."

A parent told to pay tuition might maintain in court that his right to that education has been abridged by the tuition requirement.

Because of the absence of board members Clifford Towe and Clifford Winslow, the superintendent reported numerous agenda items post-poned for later action by the full board. In other business, the board

- Accepted \$55,000 as fiscal agent for the Tri-County (Chowan-Gates-Perquimans) Title IV-C Project for career education of handicapped students.

- Accepted the resignation of Jessie Fitch, ESCA Title I remedial math teacher, who will return home to teach in the Duplin County schools.

- Eliminated two aide positions in the K-3 area due and transferred one teacher position to that area.

- Accepted a report of repairs and replacement of equipment by Coastal Roofing Company at Perquimans High School, eliminating need for action through the bonding company.

- Agreed to hold one board meeting each month at a local school to enable a tour of facilities and identification of facility needs.



Laura Brewis, 10 year old granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Almsley, feels she is a very lucky person to have access to all the comic books and magazines sold in their five and ten cent store.

Gregory's. Above, she takes advantage of a free moment to read and enjoy herself, oblivious to the traffic in and out of the popular store.

To become a member of the squad, a person must be 18 years of age, have a drivers license and have a good moral character. But in spite of the enthusiasm of young Tracy Peckham and other youngsters not yet of qualifying age, "for some strange reason, none have shown interest who are 18 or older," Annice commented. "That is where we are now."

With quite a few on the squad since its inception, with over 10 years service, "at the present time we get nothing. There is no pay incentive, no retirement benefits like the volunteer firemen, who get \$50 monthly after 20 years," she said, citing the strenuous demands of rescue service without compensation as a possible reason for the strain in membership.

"A bill is before the legislature now, to be voted on in October, combining all emergency services together. If passed, the rescue squads will receive retirement benefits, and the benefits will be increased for all services to \$75 monthly after 20 years service," she added hopefully. This would help

retention of the present membership and possibly provide incentive for new and younger volunteers.

Barr and Annice commented on the "consistent and generous support" of county officials. "The commissioners give us the money to govern its spending ourselves," Barr said. "We now are operating on a \$22,000 budget, raised from \$18,000 last year. We have a nice building for live-in quarters and to house our vehicles and equipment. The county never has turned us down."

All that is needed are volunteers to assure the future of volunteer emergency medical services for Perquimans County.

"There is no doubt that we will have emergency medical services in the future," Annice states emphatically. "What is in doubt is whether we will have volunteer services or, like Pasquotank County, go to paid services, \$35 from the person served, and possible additional costs to the county."

To volunteer, call 426-8581.