

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Hertford, Perquimans County, N.C., Thursday, DEC. 31, 1981

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## Power agreement, favorable audit highlight Hertford's year

It has been a year of great activity for the town of Hertford. The town made some dramatic changes during 1981, changes that will have a big effect on the town's future.

Perhaps the greatest change was the town council's move to join the North Carolina Municipal Power Agency No. 3, now called the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency.

That development could change

everything from the amount of a Hertford-resident's light bill to the number of new jobs the town generates in the next several years.

The agency's members have agreed to buy a percentage of several generators owned by the Carolina Power and Light Co. The power agency's claim that its members will save as much as 15 percent in future electricity costs was revised to 7-8 percent following the cancellation of

construction of two of the nuclear plants. Nevertheless, the projected savings would still make the town more attractive to businesses considering a move to Hertford.

To make the town more attractive yet, Hertford is on the final leg of construction of Missing Mill Park on Grubb Street. The park, built largely with state and federal money, should be completed by late spring.

Once again this year, Hertford was deemed a Community of Excellence by the N.C. Department of Commerce. That stamp of approval indicates the town has an eye toward its future development.

The town's budget, an embarrassing problem in the last couple of years, took a turn for the better, according to an independent audit made last fall.

A combination of tighter spending

and increased utility revenues cleared up some of the town's red tape, and the auditors believed that the town could be in the black by this time next year.

The town councilmen blamed increases in wholesale electricity from the Virginia Electric Power Co. — increases previously not passed on to Hertford customers — for the budget shortfall, and two VEPCO increases this year, one in January and another

in September, were passed on.

The town adopted a \$450,000 budget last summer, raising the town's taxes by 10 cents, the first increase in 12 years.

And finally, Hertford voters elected a new town councilman. Joe Towe White, Jr., running on a younger-blood-needed platform, surprised two incumbents to take T. Eerie Haste's seat on the council.

### Year in Review

## County makes progress in 1981

By SUSAN HARRIS

Perquimans County saw several changes during the past year: the Newbold-White house opened its doors to the public, the county water system began its expansion, and Winfall extended its boundaries.

Although these changes were not earth-shattering, they will have an impact on the lives of many county residents.

The Newbold-White House opened Friday, July 3 after a decade of planning and two years of construction. Some 175 people attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the house believed by some to be the oldest in the state.

Wilbert Kemp restored the one and one-half story house, which was considered something of a mansion in its day because it had four rooms and several closets.

The Perquimans County Restoration Association also opened a Visitor's Center housing an information desk and slide show. The facility includes restrooms.

Three pieces of period furniture have been procured by PCRA for display in the house. They include two andirons and a chair, both made in the 17th century, and a pre-1690 chair.

The Perquimans County Commissioners wrestled with three major problems during the year: plat changes at Holiday Island, the expansion of the county's present water system, and the approval of federal flood insurance.

The board denied a proposal by Coastland Corporation, the Holiday Island development firm, to change 265 camping sites into 54 residential sites.

According to State Health Department officials, the present sewer system, which has been operating without the approval of the department, is inadequate to handle the increased load that would result from the plat change.

Although the Holiday Island residents were in favor of the Coastland proposal, the commissioners were concerned about being held responsible if the system eventually failed.

Over \$1 million in funding was approved for the expansion of the county's water system, monies which mainly consisted of two grants and an FmHA loan.

With the addition of three new wells, new lines, and a new water treatment plant, the county hoped to be able to serve all residents who had originally signed up for county water, new customers, and the Holiday Island section of the county. More than 400 potential customers signed up for the service.

Holiday Island customers must raise \$100,000 in order to connect with the county system. With the poor quality water the development now has, it was felt that raising the money would not be a problem.

The Winfall Town Council annexed 500 feet on both sides of U.S. 17 and N.C. Highway 37, and 800 feet near Union School.

Although the additional 300 — 500 acres of woodland and farmland will not be taxed by the town, the action clearly delineated the town's boundaries and brought all the town's water lines into the town limits.

Benefits to the town include free trash pick-up and a broader tax base.

The Industrial Development Commission was reorganized and revitalized after a two-year lull in hopes of attracting industry to the county. New members will attempt to draw industry from the Tidewater area, not only to broaden the tax base, but to provide additional jobs for county residents.

County Commissioners and school board officials worked jointly to keep taxes down for county residents in the face of federal budget cuts.

The county budget was trimmed so that the tax rate increased only two cents per \$100 valuation, which increase included 10 percent salary raises for county personnel.

An initial budget of \$1,066,551 submitted by the Perquimans County Board of Education was clipped to \$1,055,951 by requesting revenue sharing funds to supplement the needed monies, rather than raising county taxes.

Labeled a "hold the line" budget by School Superintendent Pat Harrell, the proposed expenditures included critical maintenance work to be performed in the schools, work the school board felt could not be postponed.

Also budgeted were a new weight room at the high school, additional bleachers for the football field, another band bus, improved restrooms at the athletic complex, and turf-building on the football field.

The County Commissioners approved federal flood insurance for Perquimans County, although a footnote was attached denoting their disagreement with the federal flood plane maps.

Federal maps indicated that the county is a flood-prone area during storms. The commissioners sought revision of the maps, and at present are still awaiting results of the revised study.

Students at Perquimans High scored significantly higher than the state average on standard tests administered in the fall. Overall reading and math scores improved, following the trend of the past four years.

The most marked difference in the scores were in the reading skills area, which were up 26.2 percent from the year before.

A token fee of \$1 was approved by the Board of Education for students of parents who work on government owned sites in Elizabeth City and Norfolk, as well as those students who reside in low income housing projects in Hertford.

County merchants felt the pinch of inflation and high interest rates during the year.

Hertford businessman T. Eerie Haste cited three reasons for borrowing: replacing stock, financing customer accounts, and expansion. Although expansion can be postponed, most businesses in the area must maintain stock and customer accounts.

The Perquimans County High School marching band performed in full uniform for all home football games, many away games, and several parades. Highlights of the year included winning several band competitions and performing for Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. in his inaugural parade held in Raleigh.

Farmers enjoyed the highest peanut yield ever, averaging about 500 pounds more per acre than in years past. Soybeans were fair, and the corn crop was disastrous, according to Bill Jester, County Agricultural Agent.

Jester labeled 1981 a year of "close margins." Selling prices on all farm products were low.

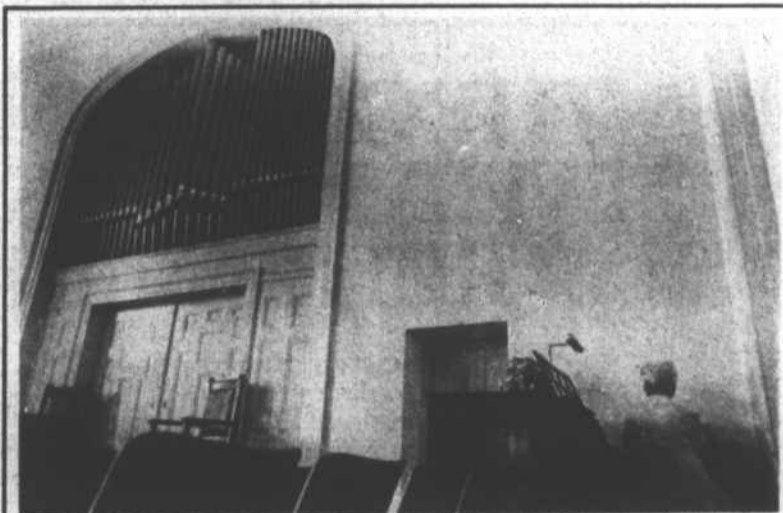
Because of the high price of producing crops and the high cost of borrowing for operating expenses, farmers are becoming more aware of available means for testing soil in an effort to cut down on chemical usage. Jester said that there has been a 34 percent increase in soil sampling.

Jester's wish is "to have good yields and high prices in the same year," a feeling echoed by county farmers.



Winter scene

Clouds cast a somber winter scene near Winfall.



### Caroling

Maude Tucker plays Christmas carols for Hertford at the Hertford Baptist Church Tuesday of last week. Her music was amplified and broadcasted from the church steeple.



## U.S. 17 group meets

The Highway 17 Transportation Association in North Carolina is winding up its most successful year and is getting ready for its third annual effort.

Thomas H. Campbell of Elizabeth City, Chairman of the Association's Nominations, announced the annual election of officers today. They will serve during 1982. Reelected President of the Association was William H. (Bill) Page of Washington. Mayor William D. Cox of Hertford was elected Vice-President, and Mayor W. Bruce Teachey of Jacksonville was reelected Secretary and Treasurer.

Named to head the various boards and support councils of the Association were: W.P. Jones of Edenton, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mayor Cox, Chairman of the Governmental Leadership Council, Dick Paul of Washington, President of Television Station WITN-TV, Chairman of the Executive Advisory Council, J.A. Stafford of Williamston, official with VEPCO, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Advisory Council.

### This week

County residents make New Year's resolutions. Turn to page three.

### Weather

Fair Thursday and Friday, with a chance of precipitation Saturday. Highs in the upper 40s and lows in the upper teens.



## Board accepts bids, adopts tax schedule

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners approved a low bid on repairs to the courthouse at their regular meeting Monday of last week.

Donald Riddick of Rte. 3, Edenton was granted the contract to make several minor improvements to the courthouse: painting, sanding and tiling some floors, panelling some walls. Riddick's low bid was for \$6,475.

The board also approved a property tax assessment schedule presented by Keith Haskett, county tax collector.

According to Haskett, the schedule — which is used to assess property for tax purposes — is "very, very close" to last year's schedule. Haskett noted that property will be assessed according to its market value at the time in which the board adopted the schedule.

In other action, the board:

• Accepted bids for leasing county farm property in Winfall. The board approved a high bid of \$1,361.51 per year for the next three years, granting a joint lease to William R. Miller and George Roach.

• Heard a report by Thomas Nixon of the state Forestry Service, who requested that the board hire a part time inspector to approve burning permits.

The state's new burning law requires an on-site inspection of the area to be burned before granting the permit, and Nixon said the extra work required another employee. The board tabled its decision until its next meeting.

• Heard a proposed noise ordinance, presented by board attorney John Matthews. The board took no action on the proposal.

## Filing dates set

The Perquimans County Board of Elections announced filing dates for six county positions up for election in 1982.

Filing for those positions will begin at noon, January 4, 1982, and end at noon, February 1.

The positions up for election this year are:

• Two seats on the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners; one

in the Belvidere district, now held by W.W. White, and one in the New Hope district, now held by Marshall Caddy.

• Two seats on the Perquimans County Board of Education, now held by Lloyd Dail and Clifford Winslow.

• The position of Clerk of Court, now held by Jarvis Ward.

• The position of Perquimans County Sheriff, now held by Julian Broughton.

## Chamber sponsors trip to the World's Fair

The Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce will sponsor a trip to the World's Fair in Knoxville, Tenn. this coming October.

The Chamber has reserved 40 seats for the trip, which is open to members of the Chamber and residents of Perquimans County.

The trip will last from October 18 to 21. The cost will include bus transportation to and from the fair, motel rooms for three nights, one meal, and

tickets to the fair. The cost is \$325 for a single room, \$265 for a double, \$250 for three or more occupancy, and \$175 for children.

Reservations must be made by January 15. A \$100 deposit is required, and the deposit can be refunded up to 60 days before departure.

To reserve a seat, contact Ed Miller at 426-5761.