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20 CENTS

Chapanoke house fire kills two

An 84 year old man and his handicapped daughter died when a fire destroyed their home Sunday morning in Chapanoke.

George Armstrong and his daughter, Sally Mary Armstrong Barcliff, 48, died in the fire started while Mr. Armstrong was trying to unfreeze pipes with a bucket of burning paper. Along with the home — located on a dirt lane off SR 1225 near Chapanoke — an unoccupied trailer behind the house was also destroyed.

According to Inter-County Fire Department Chief Danny Gregory, the department received a call at 9:12 a.m. Sunday, but by the time they reach the burning house seven minutes later, the roof of the old wood frame house had already collapsed.

According to Mr. Armstrong's son, Dervin Lee, his father was trying to unfreeze pipes underneath the pump house when his clothes caught on fire.

His son and his wife, Josephine, pulled him out and put out the burning clothes. Mr. Armstrong, seeing his house was on fire and his handicapped daughter still inside, raced into the burning house to rescue her.

Gregory said that apparently the man stumbled while inside the house. His body was found in the debris less than three feet from that of his daughter's.

Gregory added that the Armstrongs didn't have a telephone and were almost a mile from the nearest one, which — along with the time spent attending to Mr. Armstrong — accounted for a great deal of time between the moment the fire started and the time the fire trucks reached the scene.

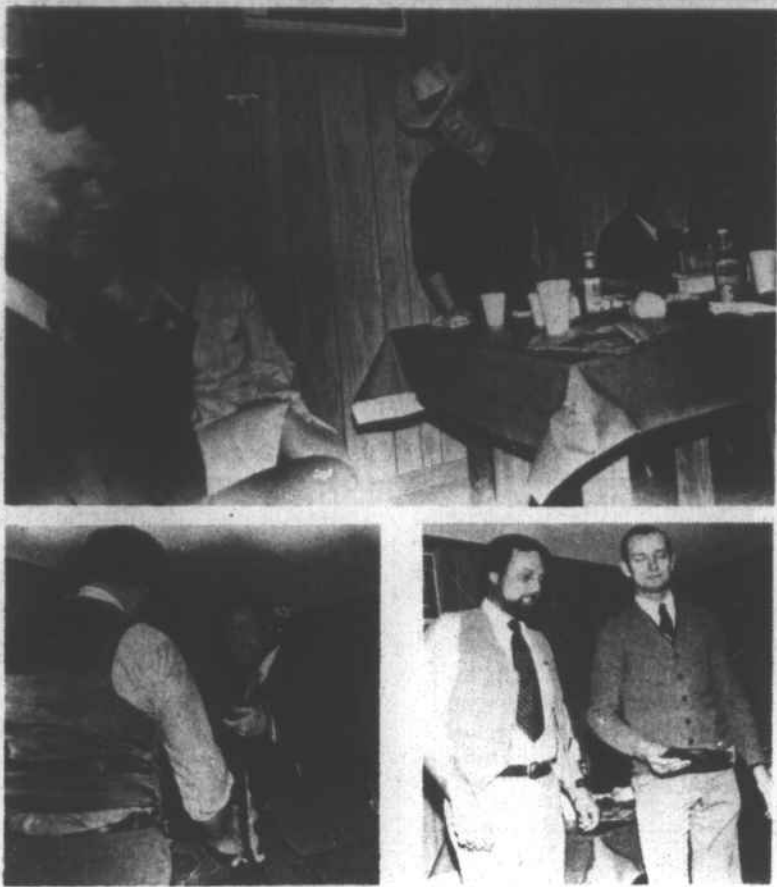
Assisting the Inter-County department were the Hertford Fire Department, the Durants Neck Volunteer Fire Department, the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department, the Perquimans County Rescue Squad, and officials from the Elizabeth City Fire Department.

Funeral services for Mr. Armstrong and Mrs. Barcliff will be held in Melton's Grove Baptist Church at 2:30 today. Rev. J.W. Law will officiate. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

(Continued on page seven)

Someone put out the fire!

Winfall Mayor Lloyd Ray Morgan (far right) looks a bit warm with embarrassment as Douglas Umphlett (center, in drag) razzes him during the Winfall Fire Department's Awards Banquet and Roast at Jimmy's Barbecue on Tuesday of last week. Pictured with Umphlett are Morgan's wife Gloria and Richard Copeland. Copeland was named the Outstanding Young Firefighter (left), and C.D. Barcliff (right), Firefighter of the Year.



Board recommends new tax

By SUSAN HARRIS

The Perquimans County Board of Education voted to recommend that the state legislature raise the sales tax by one cent, earmarking the money for capital expenditures in the schools.

The motion followed a report by School Board Chairman Clifford Winslow on the North Carolina School Board Support Conference.

The main objective of the recent conference was alternative financing for public education, and in particular facility renovation and reconstruction, reported Winslow at the meeting, which was held Monday night at Perquimans Central Grammar School.

Winslow said at present there is a renewed effort by public education officials to get the N.C. Legislature to initiate a feasibility study on implementing an additional one cent sales tax state-wide to finance capital expenditures in the face of federal budget cutbacks.

"This was the thrust of the conference," Winslow stated.

An attempt to pass a \$600 million state-wide school bond referendum

has failed due to inflation and a negative bond market.

Citing Harlan Boyles, State Board of Education Treasurer, Winslow said, "A pay as you go proposition is far more acceptable this day and time than selling bonds."

It has been estimated that \$150 million in revenue for public education can be raised through the one cent tax hike.

"The needs are critical in our schools for renovation and replacing old buildings," Winslow said. Winslow mentioned the high school in Perquimans County as a prime example.

The Perquimans County Board voted unanimously to send a letter to the State Board endorsing the tax increase proposal.

In another action, School Superintendent Pat Harrell presented the Board with proposed salary increases for support and professional personnel.

Support personnel will receive a five percent step increase as well as a five percent salary increase. Professional employees will receive only a five percent salary increase, as

they were reviewed for step increases in July.

The Board voted to amend the present 1981-82 school calendar to make up for the day missed due to snow. Students will attend classes on Monday and Tuesday, January 25 and 26, which were originally slated for teacher work days, and will have Friday, January 29 off for the semester break.

In a related matter, the Board reconsidered making up snow days on Saturdays due to the high rate of absenteeism.

The original calendar stipulated that school would be held on the Saturday immediately following the day missed due to inclement weather. The Board voted to add "if possible" to that clause.

In other business the Board:

- approved an \$8,500 Title IV-C Adaptor Grant for media materials.

- heard a presentation by Central School principal Shelton Davis on media facilities and program at Central School.

- agreed to advertise that the farm land owned by the Board is available for rent.

Gregory hits stamp audit

Social Services Director criticizes Governor Hunt

County Social Services Department Director Paul Gregory told the county Board of Commissioners at their meeting Monday night that he believed the county "was given a raw deal" in the results of a federal and state audit of the county's food stamp program.

He also criticized N.C. Governor James Hunt for statements he made to the press following the report of the county's error rate.

"It was idiotic the way the federal government did this," said Gregory about the audit, conducted statewide by officials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the state Department of Human Resources for the period between October, 1980 and March, 1981.

The audit showed Perquimans County to have the highest food stamp error rate in the state, 71.9 percent.

Though Gregory admitted the county Social Services Department made errors, he didn't believe the audit was an accurate indication of the county's error rate. In particular he criticized the methods used in the audit, which pulled only three of the over 500 food stamp cases in the county. "The way they pulled those cases was ridiculous," he said.

Last week's PERQUIMANS WEEKLY reported that a professor of statistics at N.C. State University agreed with Gregory's estimation of the audit methods. "I certainly wouldn't call that an accurate error rate," said Dr. Arnold Grandage of N.C. State.

Gregory also criticized Governor Hunt for not lending support to the county. In a letter Gregory is sending to the governor he states, "Your many statements to the various media concerning the food stamp error rate caused me and others of our county to become very defensive. We have a great deal of pride in our county and of the service we provide our county citizens. I personally felt that you actually believe the error rate in Perquimans County food stamp cases is 71.9 percent; I sincerely hope that I am wrong."

Gregory added to the Board of Commissioners that "this letter is a lot milder than the first couple of copies I tore up." In those earlier letters, Gregory said he "told them what they could do with their food stamps. I was very upset last Friday, but I've cooled down since then."

Commission Chairman Joe Nowell agreed with Gregory's statements. "I was offended by Governor Hunt's statement that if these were state employees he would fire them. I think the governor talked before he thought about it."

Commissioner Lester Simpson noted that only two years ago the county had the lowest error rate in the state according to the audit.

Gregory added that according to the audit for the period between April and September, 1981, the county had no errors in the four files that were reviewed.

Describing what he called the "luck of the draw" audit methods, Gregory said, "The way they pull these cases is ridiculous. The error rate could be zero percent one time and 25 or 30 percent the next."

According to N.C. State professor Grandage, the auditors should have pulled between 16-20 files to get an accurate sampling of the county's error rate. From the three samples taken, Grandage concluded that the county really had only a seven percent error rate or a 33 percent error rate, depending on whether the auditor uses the number of cases in error (one of three), or the amount of money in error (which was \$18 among the three samples).

In another matter, Gregory announced that the county would receive 4,000 pounds of American and processed cheddar cheese which the Department of Agriculture is giving to food stamp recipients.

The cheese will be delivered in five pound blocks sometime in the next few weeks. According to Gregory, the town of Hertford has allowed his department to use the town's ice plant to store the cheese until it can be distributed. Gregory added that his department has enough money in its

budget to cover the costs of storage, which will be about \$8 to \$10 a day.

In other action, the board:

- Heard from Douglas Perry of Bethel, who complained of people hunting on posted property and along road right-of-ways.

According to Perry, "I've talked to people in the area, and they're scared the whole fall."

Perry claimed that "caravans" of hunters — a great part of them from out-of-county — would hunt his and others posted property, and hunting from the side of the road.

"A lot of them are rowdy," said Perry. "I don't like to say anything to them....I've been threatened before."

"Sometimes I'll be out chopping wood and I can see them lined up across the field. When I hear gunshots, I don't know whether to duck or what."

The board asked its attorney John Matthews to find out what jurisdiction the board had over state roads and posted property, and to report back to the board at a later date.

- Heard county Tax Collector Keith Haskett's report of collections. As of January 3, the county has collected \$1,302,695.74, 83.87 percent of the total county tax. Haskett added that this about the same pace the county collections were last year.

- Agreed to mow the grass at the Newbold-White House at the county's expense, following a request by Albert Eure, president of the Perquimans County Restoration Association, which runs the historic house.

- Heard a report from county Agricultural Extension Chairman Bill Jester concerning that office's work over the last month and their plans for the coming month.

Jester cited an increase in participation in 4-H as one of the highlights of recent months. A New Hope 4-H group began in early December, and the extension office has 4-H groups in Bay Branch-Joppa and Bethel in the works.

Jester also announced that Donald Ray Stallings of Whinston was the winner of the county corn yield contest, with a yield of 180.26 bushels per acre.

- Was presented the plans for the Woodville Lake subdivision by John Coston, chairman of the county Planning Board, and Floyd Matthews, Planning Board member.

The subdivision consists of 13 lots off SR 1367 near Woodville. Among the plans proposed by owner C.T. White of Woodville were to pave the roads into the subdivision.

The Planning Board has approved the development, and the Board of Commissioners asked attorney Matthews to look over the plans before the board makes its decision.

Schools make-up snow day

The Perquimans County Board of Education has amended the school calendar to make up for the day missed due to snow.

Students will report to classes on Monday, January 25 and Tuesday, January 26. There will be no school on Friday, January 29.

This week

County peanut growers will meet to discuss the new farm bill. Turn to page seven.

Weather

Mild with a chance of rain today and tomorrow, and turning colder over the weekend. Lows in the 40s and highs in the 50s.

County schools work toward accreditation

By TOM OSTROSKY

The Perquimans County school system is going through one of its most ambitious undertakings in many years. After some two years of work, the entire system is on the verge on receiving an accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

If they receive their accreditation — and School Superintendent Pat

Harrell and accreditation coordinator Susan Winslow believe they will — it would go a long way to giving the school more prestige and pride, along with improving the education of county students.

Each school in the county will apply for accreditation, as will the administration as a whole. Over the next few months, the PERQUIMANS WEEKLY will run a series of articles

on the work each school has done toward receiving its accreditation.

The process of accreditation is often misunderstood. Many people are under the impression that being accredited means a school is perfect. That's not true. Though there are objective standards that have to be met, accreditation primarily means that a school has drawn up a plan for improvement, with both short term

and long term goals and methods of meeting those goals.

To make up this plan requires a school to go through a long period of self-study and self-evaluation, finding the good and bad points in each area of the school's work and deciding how to take advantage of the good points and improve on the bad ones.

This work is done by committees of teachers. Each committee is assigned to one area of the school's function. Self-evaluation, particularly in a committee, is a long, hard job, requiring teachers to criticize themselves and their peers, and then recommend ways of improving their work.

Once each committee has made its report, the reports are compiled and reviewed as a whole, keeping in mind the goals the school has made for itself.

The complete report is then reviewed by a group of outside evaluators picked by the school system and approved by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The evaluators are picked from school administrators, business professionals, and concerned citizens.

If after their review, the evaluating team finds the schools goals and plans to be acceptable in terms of comprehensiveness, quality, and objective standards, the school then receives its accreditation.

Superintendent Harrell is pleased with the work the teachers have done so far, most of it after school hours. "I think they've worked hard to get this," he said. "I'm real proud of them, and I think they have a sense of pride in their work also. I feel sure — I know — we will receive our accreditation."

According to Harrell, each school has just completed their self-study, and the system will begin picking evaluators soon. He hopes that by April the evaluators can make their report and the school can receive its accreditation by the end of the school year.



DSA winners

Brenda Dall, far right, stands with the other award winners after the Perquimans County Jaycees DSA Banquet. Dall won both the Distinguished Service Award and the Outstanding Young Woman Award. The other winners

from left, are: Margie Nixon, Outstanding Young Rescuer; Richard Copeland, Outstanding Young Firefighter; Elaine Twine, Outstanding Youth; Hertford Police Capt. Robert Morris, Outstanding

Young Law Enforcement Officer; Emily Harrell, Outstanding Senior Citizen; and Kelvin Roberson, Outstanding Young Farmer. Not shown is Parthenia Hill, Outstanding Young Educator.