

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## Train collision kills local youth

A 19-year-old Hertford resident was killed Saturday when a train struck his car on Grubb Street in Hertford.

Charles Scott Williams, the son of Howard Jr. and Margaret Williams of Dobbs Street, died at the scene when a loaded freight train hit his 1979 Concord as he attempted to cross the track, pushing the car about a half a mile.

Williams was buried in Cedar Wood Cemetery Monday morning.

An honor graduate of Perquimans County High School and an honor student at the College of the Albemarle, Williams worked a summer job as a pest management scout for the Department of Agriculture. He was traveling alone in route to his job from his home at the time of the accident, according to police.

Hertford Police Chief Marshall Merritt reported that Williams, upon leaving his home, traveled down Dobbs Street toward the center of town, turned left at West Railroad Street, and then right at Grubb Street, where he was hit at approximately 3:45 that afternoon.

Merritt said that according to train engineer Lindell Alan Harris, Harris — traveling north — spotted Williams' car on West Railroad and blew his whistle an extra time to alert Williams. The windows of the car were open at the time.

Williams, according to Harris, turned at West Railroad, paused at the tracks on Grubb, and then attempted to speed across.

The train, traveling at 40 miles per

hour — the authorized speed limit for trains within Hertford — struck the car broadside on the passengers' side and pushed it about a half a mile along the track, over a bridge crossing a creek, and stopping in a section of swampland locally known as Vinegar Valley. Police believe he died upon impact.

Along with the Hertford Police, the Perquimans County Rescue Squad and the Hertford Fire Department reported to the scene. The young man's body was transported from the scene by boat.

Merritt speculated that Williams didn't see the railroad warning light. The light, on a post at the southwest corner of West Railroad and Grubb, facing Grubb Street traffic, is difficult to see, said Merritt, when pulling out from West Railroad. Once on Grubb Street, a driver is only about 12 yards from the track.

Along with his parents, Williams, a member of the Hertford United Methodist Church, is survived by his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Clifford Banks, paternal grandfather, William Howard Williams, Sr., and a brother, William Howard Williams III, all of Hertford.

The funeral was presided over by Rev. Irving Cook, pastor of Williams' church.

Pallbearers were Gary Winslow, Bobby Winslow, Tim Perry, Wally White, Eric Tilley, Douglas Cherrix, Michael Winslow, Melville Williams, Scott Copeland and Jim Underwood.

Swindell Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.



When JoAnn Kirby of Route 2, Hertford and Ava Smith of Route 4, Hertford needed a willing subject for their

photography class, they found a photogenic guinea pig in Smith's son Jason. The above photo is by

Kirby, the two lower ones by Smith. The class, taught by Val Short of Hertford, is

sponsored by the College of the Albemarle's adult education program.

## County hears from election board, ag head

By SUSAN HARRIS

William Tilley, chairman of Perquimans County Board of Elections, addressed the county commissioners at their regular meeting on Tuesday, July 5.

Tilley told the commissioners that a written request for a recount of the June 29 primary election ballots had been received from Walter Leigh, a candidate for the Board of Education in the New Hope township who lost to Mack Nixon by only 10 votes.

The recount was tentatively scheduled for the week of July 12.

In other board of election business, Tilley reported that he had received a complaint of poll violations and was trying to come up with solutions to the problems.

He told the board that two voting booths would be added in each of three precincts: East Hertford, West Hertford and Parkville.

Tilley added that no candidate complaints had been filed, and that the complaint was the first of its kind received in 21 years.

The board approved the funding of the six additional voting facilities.

County Extension Chairman Bill Jester requested in his report that extension secretary Catherine Winslow be named treasurer to handle all extension funds and that she be bonded under the present extension service bonding coverage.

The board approved Jester's request for a mobile radio system at a cost of \$1,700 to replace the inoperational phone system presently owned by his office.

Cheryl Phillips was authorized by the board to do computer programming for the county on her own time at an hourly rate of \$10 for an estimated 20 hours.

District Attorney Tom Watts, who will resign shortly to assume his new role as superior court judge, made an annual report to the county commissioners.

Watts told commissioners he did not know who his successor would be and introduced them to his first assistant, H.B. Williams, Jr., in order that they might be familiar with someone in that office until a new D.A. could be named.



## October drug raid cuts down on related thefts

By TOM OSTROSKY

If readers of this newspaper are wondering why they haven't read many crime stories in recent months — when they were reading them nearly every week at this time last year — there is a reason. There is simply nothing to report.

According to the Hertford Police Department, crime in this town has

gone down considerably over the last six to eight months.

According to Police Chief Marshall Merritt, the reason is not because the police are doing anything different now, but rather because of what happened last October. A raid of two Hertford residences, coordinated with the State Bureau of Investigation and other local law enforcement officials,

netted several local drug dealers last October.

Merritt is convinced the raid not only dried up much of the supply of illegal drugs — including heroin and cocaine — in this county, but also the market for stolen goods in which to buy these drugs with.

"I have to attribute it to the drug

raid," said Merritt. "I can't see any other reason for it."

The Hertford Police expected this side effect of their October raid: without the fences — criminals who buy stolen goods for cash or drugs — to sell the stolen property to, thieves seem to have lost interest in this area.

The police department's figures seem to bear out this claim. For June of this year, there were two reported larcenies and one breaking and entering and larceny. Last year during June, there were seven larcenies and six B&E&L, along with one larceny of a firearm and one first degree burglary (burglary of an occupied residence).

The same is true for previous months: May '82, eight larcenies, no B&E&L; May '81, seven larcenies, six B&E&L; April '82, no larcenies, no B&E&L; April '81, two larcenies, five B&E&L, along with one shoplifting violation and three drug arrests and an attempted robbery; March '82, no larcenies, one B&E&L; March '81, two larcenies, four B&E&L; February '82, four larcenies, six B&E&L; February '81, four larcenies, 10 B&E&L.

What the raw statistics don't show is the nature of the thefts. Merritt said that most of this year's larcenies and B&E&L's have been petty thefts; taking something of no great value

from someone's back porch, for example.

Last year though, the thefts were larger, involving both residences and local businesses. Along with cash, expensive items and items that can be sold easily — appliances, electronic equipment, guns — were taken.

"We've had our normal share of minor thefts," said Merritt, "but we haven't had many big break-ins."

Local businessmen have been relatively free of crime since last October, and in the last few months there have been no reported break-ins among local merchants, an unusual occurrence, particularly during the summer, when crime usually picks up.

In addition, other crimes — crimes that aren't drug-related but are indicative of the general criminal activity — are also fewer in number and less serious in nature. There was one reported assault in June of this year, four in June of last year. No reports of vandalism this June and one last May; one reported vandalism in June, 1981, two in May, 1981. Though there are no figures for last year, there have been no assaults with a dangerous weapon in the last few months.

Merritt knocks on wood when he talks about the recent trend in crime locally, but it still could be some time before criminal activity increases, as it inevitably will, again in Hertford.

## Town Council receives Fire Chief's report

By SUSAN HARRIS

Hertford fire chief Charlie Skinner presented the Hertford Volunteer Fire Department's annual report to the town council at its regular meeting Monday night.

"I think the town is receiving very adequate fire protection for a small amount of money," Skinner told the board.

The report included the announcement of two openings on the department. Skinner also said that firemen have been offered well beyond the number of hours of training required by fire authorities.

Skinner requested that the board update its fire prevention code as the present one, adopted in 1980, is inadequate. The board approved the adoption of the National Fire Protection Association Fire

Prevention Code of 1975, the most recent edition, as the town's fire code.

Approximately \$2,250 in equipment for the fire department was requested to be purchased throughout the year including a two-way radio for the crew truck, a two and one-half inch nozzle, 10 gallons of foam, turnout gear and replacement hoses.

The money for the items is in the present operating budget and they will be purchased in order of priority.

Fire station maintenance was also brought to the attention of the board. Skinner requested that a part-time maintenance person to clean the station be hired for six hours per week at \$4.50 per hour.

Mayor and City Manager Bill Cox suggested that the board look into assigning a town employee to clean

the fire station to alleviate the additional cost.

Hertford Police Chief Marshall Merritt gave his monthly report and announced that Officer Michael Jasielum has received his intermediate law enforcement certificate.

Captain Robert Morris asked the council to write a letter to North Carolina Attorney General Rufus Edmisten endorsing his efforts to upgrade training for police officers around the state.

The council agreed to have ordinances drawn up to provide a loading zone beside the Broughton building and a handicapped parking space in front of Woodard's Pharmacy.

The purchase of a new radar unit for the police department at a cost of

\$1,995 was approved.

Perquimans County Jaycee representative Lee Tunnell approached the council about contributing to the fireworks display held on the 4th of July. Tunnell told Council that the organization ran over \$800 short of paying for the fireworks.

Councilmen requested that Tunnell seek aid from the county commissioners as that board represented every citizen of Perquimans County, and then come back to the town if any deficit still existed.

The council renewed its resolution of several years ago to do everything in its power to upgrade the railroad crossings in the town.

A resolution to dissolve Power Agency No. 2 was approved.