

PERSPECTIVE

Guest editorial

New DWI law is working for NC

By GOVERNOR JIM HUNT

On October 1, North Carolina became the worst place in the country to get caught driving drunk.

That happened because the people of this state demanded it. Members of Mothers Against Drunk Driving and other people who had lost a loved one due to drinking and driving channeled their grief into constructive action.

They brought the tragic consequences of mixing alcohol and motor vehicles into the cold light of day, and forced people to confront it.

Their voices were heard in the legislature, in my office, and in the courthouses of this state. The Safe Roads Act of 1983 is an example of the way democracy is supposed to work. The people spoke and their elected representatives listened.

Our citizens demanded that the worst offenders be put in jail. They demanded an increase in the drinking age. We have now done all of that.

But in my opinion, the most effective provision of the new law is the requirement that anyone who blows a .10 on the Breathalyzer has his license taken away on the spot.

Those people will leave the courthouse on foot and will not drive for 10 days. And that is only the beginning.

A conviction will result in a jail sentence for some, and anyone convicted will have his license suspended, pay a fine and be subject to between 24 and 72 hours of community service work.

There will be no more bargaining for a lesser charge of careless and

reckless driving.

Our law enforcement officers, prosecutors, magistrates and judges are ready to strictly enforce this law. But the real test of its effectiveness will be whether or not drunk drivers begin to disappear from our highways.

That will require that citizens who serve on juries have the courage to convict those who are guilty, to make a determination based on the facts and not someone's social standing in their community.

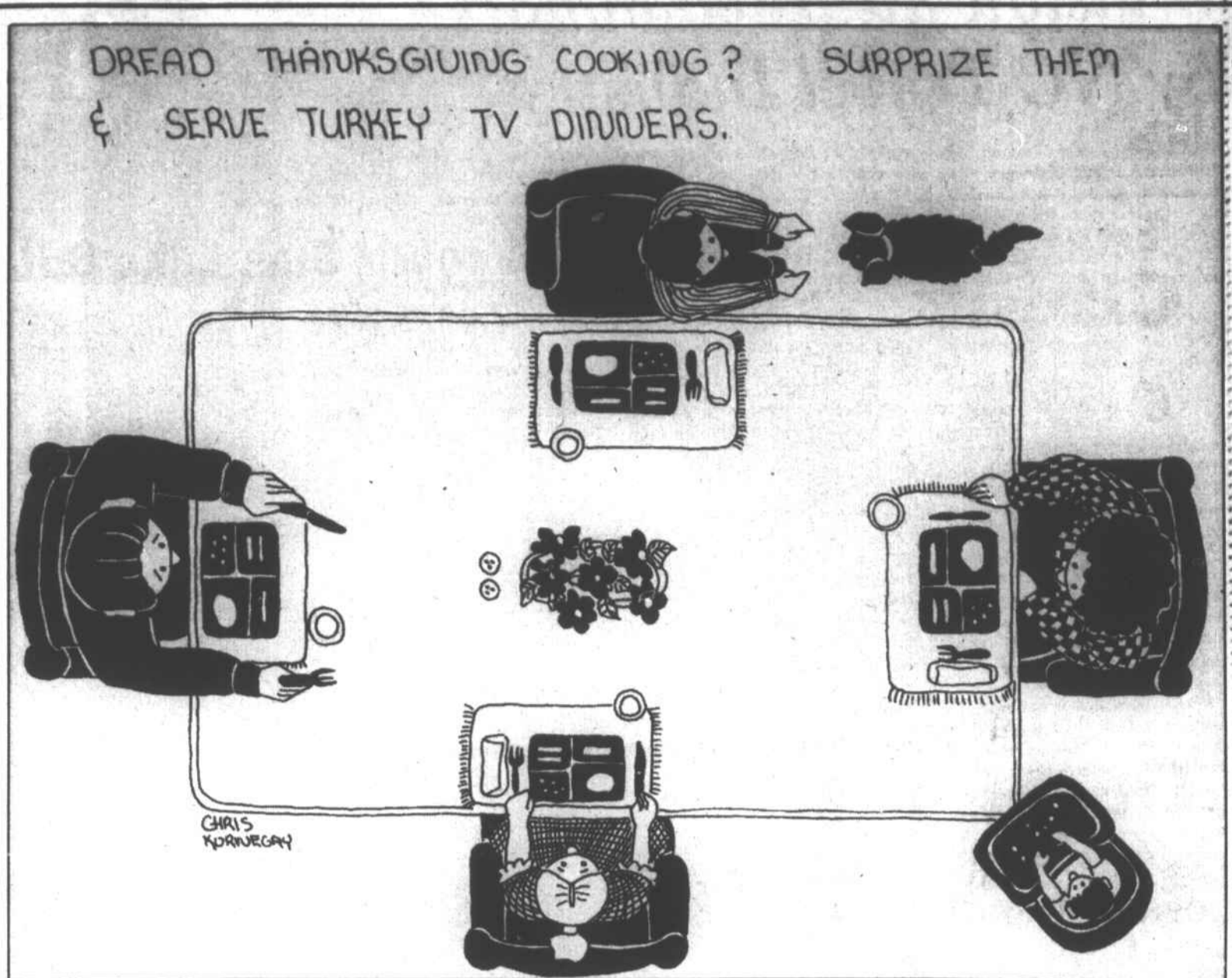
The Safe Roads Act, and the public attention that has been focused on it since it was first introduced in the legislature, began to have a deterrent effect even before it became law.

The bill was introduced in January of this year. Since that time, we have seen a steady decline in the number of drunk driving arrests by the North Carolina Highway Patrol.

That tells me that people are being much more careful about drinking and driving. Public attitudes have changed. Drunk driving is no longer acceptable behavior among the people of this state.

The bottom line is this: We as a people must do everything in our power to stop that late-night phone call which tells someone that a child, a wife, a husband, or a parent is never coming home again.

You can help. It's old advice but it's still the best there is. For the sake of your family and friends, don't drink and drive. And don't let somebody else drive drunk.



Getting ready for the holidays

It seems like only a few weeks ago I was griping because department stores were pushing the holiday season on us so fast, but this week I think I have finally accepted the fact that the season is rapidly approaching.

I have even managed to purchase a few little Christmas gifts during the past week. Considering the fact that I usually wait until Christmas week, this was quite an accomplishment for me.

There is one thing I always do in preparation for the hectic holiday season, and this year was no exception. During the first week of November, I always do a trial run on cooking a turkey to make sure that I'll get it right when Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day roll around.

On Thursday afternoon, I took the big bird out of the freezer and stuck it in the fridge to start the thawing process.

On Friday morning I took a peak at the bird and decided that with a little luck I just might get him thawed in time for Sunday dinner.

On Saturday morning I was beginning to wonder if he'd thaw out by spring. My original plan was to cook him Saturday afternoon and then just have the trimmings to prepare on Sunday morning. Unfortunately fate wasn't with me.

Saturday afternoon brought little change in the temperature of the bird, so I did the no-no...I took him out of the refrigerator and sat him on the counter,

hoping that room temperature would bring him around for me.

Saturday night came and he was still chilly. I got out all the ingredients that would be needed for an early morning preparation time and sat the alarm clock for 5:00 a.m.

A Chat With Jane

By Jane Williams



When the alarm went off at the appointed hour, I grudgingly crawled out of bed to head for the kitchen.

Alas, when I got into the kitchen the bird had finally given in and thawed. I was feeling pretty good about that and figured that it would be smooth sailing the rest of the way.

I guess I must have relaxed too soon.

I went to get my roasting pan out of the cabinet and couldn't find it. I looked everywhere before I finally remembered that I had loaned my pan to a friend. Normally you could call a friend and explain the situation, but at 5 o'clock in the morning she probably wouldn't be your friend anymore, not to mention the fact that her family moved six months ago, and they're a good eight hour drive from my house.

That was just the beginning.

I improvised with a large baking pan and some aluminum foil, that I had to borrow from a neighbor. (She wasn't exactly overjoyed to loan aluminum foil at six o'clock in morning either.) I got the bird properly prepared and stuck him in the oven an hour behind schedule. By putting him on to cook at 6:30 it would mean that he'd be ready at about 10:30... a full 30 minutes after I'd left the house to take the kids to Sunday School.

After all the trouble I'd had getting the turkey into the oven, I figured that things had to get better....

They got worse. I was out of several of the spices I needed to make the sweet potato souffle that I had promised my kids, so again I had to improvise. (It did turn out okay, not fantastic, but okay.) My pot of collards boiled over every five minutes and I dropped a carton of eggs on the floor. My dough for homemade rolls absolutely refused to rise so now the kids have a new set of building blocks, a full month before Christmas gets here.

As the appointed hour for Sunday School approached I hastily got the kids and myself ready to go. I figured I could cut the turkey off on my way out of the door and it would finish cooking with the heat that was left in the oven.

My adorable husband second guessed me on that one and opened the oven door so the turkey wouldn't dry out while we were away. Thanks honey!

When I arrived home after church, I discovered my half

cooked turkey...I wasn't thrilled.

I cut the oven back on and started preparing the ingredients for my dressing. It was going pretty good, except for the fact that my turkey would not under any circumstances get brown. I turned up the temperature and waited and waited but to no avail. Finally in desperation, I cut the broiler unit on and finally got results. (Please don't tell my mother about this.)

I took the turkey giblets out of the pan and chopped them up for the dressing and gravy, stuck my dressing and the sweet potato souffle into the oven and sat down.

When I went back to the oven to check on the souffle, I pulled the oven rack out too far and the pan of dressing fell upside down on the floor.

I should have given up then, but I didn't.

I made a fresh pan of dressing, without the benefit of giblets, and went on to try and prepare gravy. That was my downfall.

I have never been one of the world's great gravy makers, and Sunday I think I became the world's worst. At least the kids had fun making paper mache animals out of it.

After all the trouble I'd had with my "trial turkey run", I have decided that Chris, our cartoonist, came up with an excellent idea....there's not much the average person can do to botch up a Turkey T.V. Dinner...you don't even have to thaw them; so I think that's what I'll be serving come Thanksgiving Day.

Murder infrequent in Perquimans

Death sometimes comes by the agency of another person. It can be passively induced, as in cases of neglect. Old Will's death in January 1827, for example, came "purely from the ill treatment of his Master" so that "he perished for the want of food and raiment."



Mistreatment led to death in another contemporary case. In April 1828, a body was found in Perquimans River. It was believed to be that of a sailor from the schooner "Mary" of Portland. As the remains had been in the water for ten days, it was not possible to determine whether "there was any marks of violence upon it."

A coroner's jury (including physicians James L. Freer and Edmund B. Harvey) suspected death resulted from "the want of humanity" in the vessel's captain.

Death can also be actively induced, as in cases of murder. Murder has been an infrequent occurrence in Perquimans County.

Most of the murders recorded in Perquimans climaxed arguments between relatives or friends. Ugly words passed between Charles T. and his stepbrother Micajah B. in November 1866, for instance, and led to Charles' striking Micajah with an ax.

In an earlier incident, Simeon F., Virgil F., Mills F., Tom F. and Jacob F. were together late on the night of

October 9, 1832. Simeon and Virgil fell to quarrelling over something, and the argument became bitter.

Virgil's passion rose and he made several offers to fight, attempting to goad Simeon. He declared he could kill Simeon.

However, Simeon refused to fight unless Virgil "did something very great to him as they were both in one family." Virgil reiterated "Simeon might kill him if he could and he would kill Simeon if he could."

When Simeon eventually walked away from the argument, Virgil followed him down the path. Simeon might have been breaking off the dispute, although Jacob thought he heard him say he would satisfy Virgil if the latter followed him.

Mills went after the arguers to see if they would fight after all. Tom and Jacob soon went along, too.

Meanwhile, Virgil caught up with Simeon and stabbed him "with some weapon made like a Knife...upon the breast in three different places below the Chin."

Then Virgil bashed his victim in the forehead with a "blow with a brick" and left him. Face down, Simeon struggled for breath. Jacob came up and turned him upon his back, but Simeon died immediately thereafter.

Some murders were especially vicious. In August 1830, a nine-year-old girl, who had suffered inhuman treatment for some time, was kicked to death by her stepfather. Her body was "brutally mangled and the neck broken."

It was reported of the stepfather: "The cause which is supposed to have moved this monster in human shape, was the hope of inheriting the child's property." The lust for gain has ever been a temptation to murder.

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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

On numerous occasions articles and pictures have been sent to your publication from Headstart. Yet, it appears that no one seems to find them newsworthy enough to find their way into the paper.

I'm concerned that you aren't concerned about a federal program here in our county that has been endorsed nationally by the President of the United States. It is also one of the few federal programs that hasn't felt the federal hatchet called "budget cutting."

Since 1965 Headstart has helped put more than 15 million children on the road to success. That is a success story within itself. Some of those same young men and women you write about under service news were headstart children.

I'm quite sure that you have been made aware of some of the misconceptions concerning Headstart. But just for the record,

Headstart's purpose and goal is helping children and building families regardless to race, creed or color.

I really would appreciate it if you could possibly give us a small bit of coverage every now and then.

Thank you so much.

Sharon E. Gordon
Social Service/
Parent Inv. Worker
Perquimans County Headstart

Looking back

20 Years Ago

By VIRGINIA WHITE TRANSEAU
PERQUIMANS COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION IN FAVOR BIG SCHOOL BOND ISSUE: The Perquimans County Board of Education met here Monday and voted to be in favor of the bond issue, after discussing it they set to authorize \$100,000,000 in bonds for school improvement in North Carolina, of which Perquimans County would receive \$214,329.39.

NIXON NAMED IN COLLEGE WHO'S WHO: William Preston Nixon Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Preston Nixon of Route 2, Hertford, has been

listed among the 12 students from Atlantic Christian College, who have been named to Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities.

This according to an announcement made today by Dr. Lewis H. Swindell Jr., dean of the college.

Recipients were chosen by a vote of the college's faculty and administration on the basis of scholarship, participation and leadership in academic and extra-curricular activities, citizenship and service to the school and promise for future usefulness.

SUPERLATIVES FOR PCHS SELECTED: The Senior Class of Perquimans County High School completed its election of superlatives. They are as follows:

Most Popular, Judy Reed and Charles Woodard; Most Intelligent, Gloria Miller and Wayne Chappel; Best All Round, Susan Cox and John Stallings; Most Friendly, Nell Overton and Gene Nixon; Best Personality, Linda Sutton and Tommy Harrell; Wittiest, Ann White and Frances Combs; Most Athletic, Beth Hurdle and Freddie Combs; Best Looking, Susan Nixon and Jimmy Hunter.