

# PERSPECTIVE

## Other Views

### Health was never better

By JOHN SLEDGE  
N. C. Farm Bureau  
Federation

In spite of all the bad news we're almost continuously bombarded with about new threats to our health, Americans are doing quite well. In fact, the American Council on Science and Health gathered statistics that show just how well we are doing, and the stats show Americans are healthier than ever before in our history.

An American born today should live 27 years longer than an American born at the turn of the century. In fact, 10 percent of the infants born in 1900 didn't live until their first birthday, compared to a death rate of 12 out of every 1,000 infants born today, 1.2 percent.

Yes, medicines and drugs are helping us survive infectious diseases that were responsible for many deaths before this century, but we're doing much

better on other health fronts, too.

Death rates from heart disease and stroke have declined significantly in the past 30 years, and age adjusted death rates for most forms of cancer have been declining gradually since the 1930's according to the Council on Science and Health.

Many Americans feel the public health is declining due to poor dietary habits, food additives, pesticides and pollutants, but the statistics don't substantiate the fears.

### Early history of Methodism in the county is obscure

The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was formally organized in 1784. Within 25 years the church was sufficiently active in Perquimans County to begin constructing church buildings, but the early history of Methodism in the county is quite obscure.



Bishop Francis Asbury preached in Hertford in 1783, in Durants Neck in 1799, and in Yeopim and Durants Neck in 1804. His journal refers to George Sutton, the Whedbees and the Mullens, who were obviously among the earliest Methodists in Perquimans.

It seems that the original home of local Methodism was the Durants Neck area, from which it spread up Little River and toward Hertford. Over the years the church would be more active north of Perquimans River than in the Baptist-dominated area south of the river.

The primary records concerning the formation of Methodist congregations in Perquimans are the deeds by

which those congregations acquired land. How old any congregation was when it bought a meeting house site cannot now be determined.

The first Methodist church in Perquimans, so far as land deeds show, was that at New Hope. Methodists had apparently begun using the old Nags Head Chapel (Anglican) before the end of the eighteenth century. In June 1809 they purchased the site from John and Martha Sutton.

The trustees named in the deed were John Russell, George Sutton, Joseph Sutton, Henry Raper, and Lemuel Whedbee.

The second church was at Oak Grove, built on land purchased from William and Pharyby Perry in February 1814. The original trustees were Robert Perry, Daniel Perry, John Perry, Nathan Sanders, Benjamin White, George White, Malachi McCoy and Joshua Small.

The third was Concord Church, for which Lemuel Sutton conveyed land to trustees Joseph Sutton, William R. Sutton, William Reed, James Williams and Tulle Williams in June 1815. Serving the lower end of Durants Neck, this church was discounted about a century after its formation.

The fourth church was Cedar Grove, standing on land conveyed by James Collins in June 1818. The first trustees were Henry Hollowell, William Perry, Robert Perry, Nathan Sanders,

Robert Harrell and William Reed.

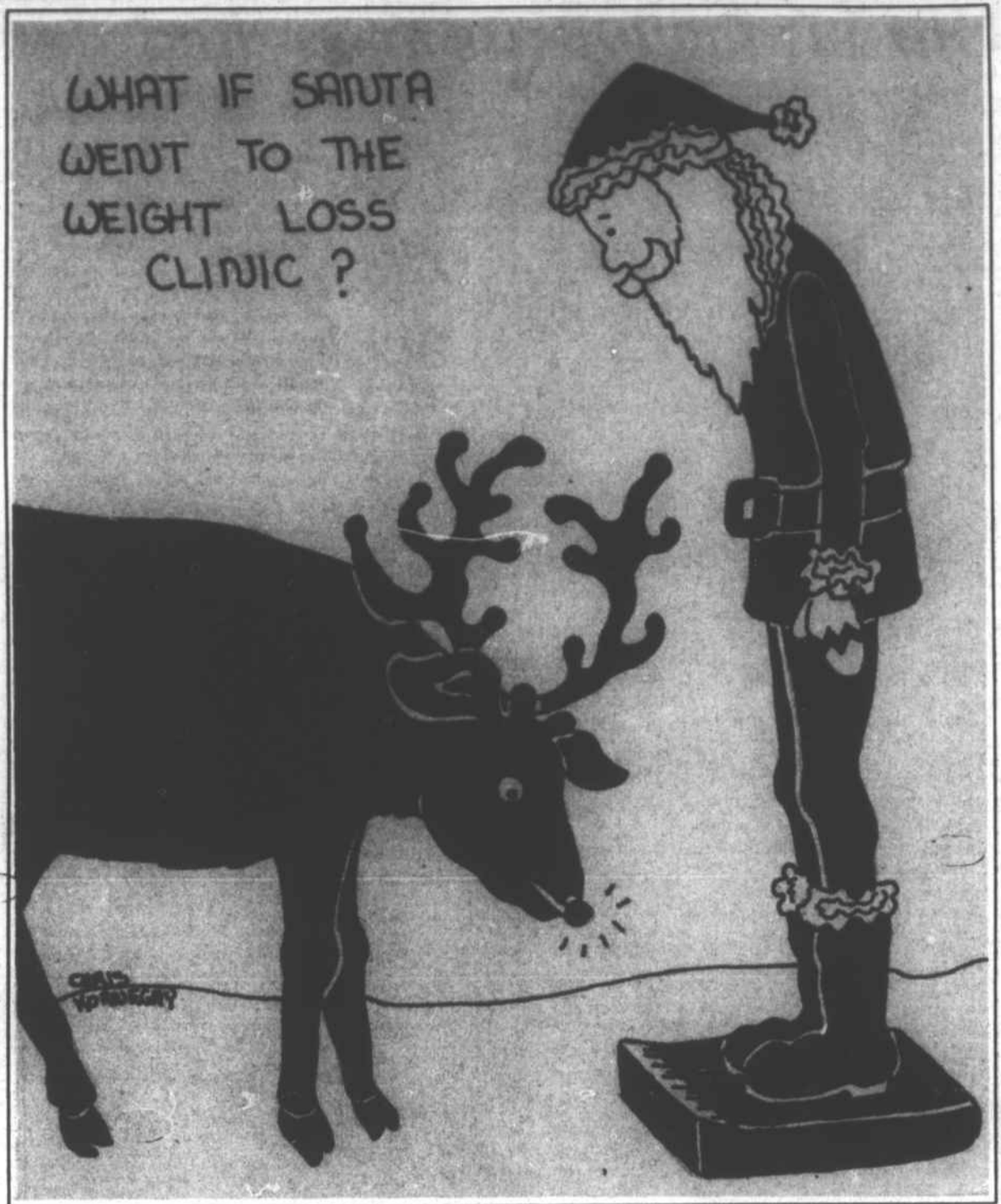
The fifth church, in Hertford, began about 1822, but it did not acquire land until July 1838 when Robert A. Gordon conveyed two town lots to Joseph Gordon, Henry B. C. Walker, Josiah Perry, Cader Felton, William Skinner, William Reed, George W. Reed, Thomas Costen and Edmond Smith.

(The last four of those trustees did not live in Perquimans. The appearance of some names as trustees for more than one church indicates they were not necessarily members of a particular church, but representatives of the larger body of Methodists.)

The sixth church was Hickory Cross, begun before 1843 by Kader Felton, whose son-in-law Ellsberry W. Riddick sold land (for 10 cents) in September 1857 to trustees Joseph R. Billups, Joseph Smith, Reuben Nixon, William Hurdle and Willis Whitehead.

This church moved to another site and changed its name to Bethany, taking advantage of an October 1886 conveyance by John R. Jolliff and wife Mary E. to John B. Perry and Reuben Nixon.

From these earliest congregations in Perquimans sprang several later churches (including Andersons, Epworth and Woodland), but the first six established Methodism locally.



## Other Views

### Computers in the schools disguise education problems

(Editor's note: The following is an article submitted by Western Carolina University Office of Public Information, Doug Reed, Director.)

The move to put computers in the nation's primary and secondary schools disguises the fundamental, serious problems facing education today, a pioneer in the field of computer science said at Western Carolina University.

"Our primary and secondary schools are in a terrible mess, and we need to find out why and do something about it," said Joseph Weizenbaum, professor of computer science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He spoke at Western under the Visiting Scholars Program November 19 and 20.

Computers are not the solution, Weizenbaum said. "Giving the schools computers creates the illusion that something is being done but nothing is." Previous "technological fixes" — educational television, the new math, audiovisual devices — have not worked.

"They come and go and the schools get worse and worse," Weizenbaum said. "Computers are not a magic wand that will make it easier to learn or teach."

Weizenbaum, recently named visiting professor in the graduate school of education at Harvard University, said part of the reason for the schools' catastrophic state is that parents are alienated from their children, although there are enormous and important exceptions.

"They see school as a baby-sitting service. And for many American kids, school is a minimum security prison to which they are sentenced for a period of their lives. Parents give them that feeling in a sense," he said.

Other "baby-sitting" services include television, which presents children with a picture world and substitutes reality with the abstract, and video games, which are a practice in the disassociation of one's actions from the consequences of one's action, Weizenbaum said.

Similarly, in front of a computer, a child is taken another step away from reality, he said. "By responding to Johnny can't read by putting a computer in front of him and never asking the question, 'Why

doesn't Johnny read?' one is never going to find out how to fix the schools," Weizenbaum said.

"For example, in many instances, he's hungry and that's important."

Weizenbaum offered dissenting views on the advertised "advantages" of computers that they motivate children, that without them children won't be prepared for the technological future.

"American marketing genius has a talent for inventing disorders after the cure has been manufactured. For example, there's a physical disorder known as 'tired blood,' invented after Geritol was invented. I think computer literacy is something like that," he said.

It's a "Cruel fairy tale" that students will be disqualified from any position in the future without computer knowledge at an early age, he said.

Computers erode our society and will continue to do so, perhaps in invisible ways such as inside microwave ovens, watches or sewing machines. Simulations in schools are appropriate in many cases, but often they make things too neat, and "the world isn't that way," Weizenbaum said.

"The computer is extremely seductive," he said. "In primary and secondary grades, it's more important to resist things that come by way of the computer

simply because it might be fun or spectacular. Things ought to be brought by way of reality," Weizenbaum said. "You ought not take away from kids."

For example, people watched a total eclipse of the moon a few years ago on television, instead of watching it for themselves outside, he said.

College students who have an interest in computers should be encouraged to major in the humanities, such as history, linguistics or mathematics, while taking as many computer courses as they can, he said. "They'll come out far richer in four years."

He predicted that in the next 20 to 25 years the labor market for people with bachelor's degrees in computer science will be saturated. "It will go from the bottom up. Technical school graduates will be the first to feel it," he said.

"I also worry that the computer market itself will saturate," he said, because computer manufacturers keep selling "more powerful" and "less expensive" models all the time, before buyers understand and use the capabilities of the ones they have.

## Note

Our editor, Jane Williams, is on vacation this week. Therefore, "A Chat With Jane" will not be in this week's edition. However, it will return next week.

### Child's Thanksgiving drawing depicts his teacher's love

To many, Thanksgiving has already become a memory. And to too many, it was no more than another holiday rather than a day of thanks. It's doubtful very few stopped this past Thursday to say thanks for the many blessings we realize as Americans.

given her class a fun assignment — to draw a picture of something for which they were thankful.

Most of the class might be considered economically disadvantaged, but still many would celebrate the holiday with turkey and other traditional goodies, just as so many of us did.

These associations, she thought, would be the subjects of most of their art. They were.

But Douglas made a different kind of picture. Douglas was a different kind of boy. He was the teacher's true child of misery, frail and unhappy.

As the other children played at recess, Douglas was likely to be found standing by the teacher's side, afraid to take part in the activity surrounding him. One could only guess the pain felt behind those sad eyes.

Douglas drew a different picture. His drawing consisted of a hand. Nothing else.

His abstract image captured the imagination of the children. Whose hand could it be? Was it a farmer's hand? Farmers grow turkeys. Maybe a policeman, since they protect and care for us. Still another guessed it was the hand of God.

When the children had gone on to other assignments, the teacher paused at Douglas' desk, bent down, and asked him whose hand it was. "It's yours, teacher."

She recalled the times she had taken his hand and walked with him here or there, how often she had said, "Take my hand, Douglas, we'll go outside." Or, "Let's do this together." Douglas was most thankful for his teacher's hand.

Brushing aside a tear, she went on with her work.

This story speaks of more than thankfulness. It says something about teachers teaching, preachers preaching, friends loving. It says how much little things can mean to the Douglases of the world.

Occasionally, we find out, and we realize there is more to be thankful for than what is most obvious. At least, for Douglas.

Thanksgiving should be a part of our lives throughout the year. It must be more than a holiday. It must become a daily practice. In reality, by saying "thank-you" we are saying we know we are not self-sufficient.

It curbs our egos and brings us down to size. It makes us dependent without abdicating our own responsibility, and most of all, it gives us joy. We learn to be thankful for nothing less nor greater than the privilege of living. That should be enough.

## Point of View

by: BILL NIXON

Here's the story of one child that did remember things to be thankful for.

The first grade teacher had

### Looking back

20 Years Ago  
By VIRGINIA WHITE  
TRANSEAU

PARKING SPACES ARE RECOMMENDED IN BUSINESS AREA: The Planning Board of the Town of Hertford held its regular meeting and members present were Jack Kanoy, chairman, Emory White, J. Moody Mathews and Julian Broughton. Other present were Robert (Bobby) Elliott, Town Clerk, and Robert I. Gould, Division of Community Planning.

It was recommended to the Mayor and Town Council that the area behind the stores along Church Street be developed into a large parking lot. The two properties adjacent to the Post

Office be also for parking at this time.

The Board also recommended that the vacant property at the corner of Punch Alley and Church Street be developed for boat trailer parking.

TOWN AGREES TO SELL PROPERTY: The Hertford Town Board, meeting here, agreed to sell the municipally owned property at the south end of Church to the Hertford Housing Authorities for the sum of \$1,000. The site is one and one-half acres and has been used for some time as a trash dump.

This site will be added to other property owned in the section for part of the low rent public housing units to be constructed.

**THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY**

119 West Grubb Street  
P.O. Box 277  
Hertford, North Carolina 27944

Published Every Thursday  
By Advance Publications, Elizabeth City, N.C.  
Second Class Matter

Jane B. Williams  
Managing Editor

Ken Castellon  
Advertising Manager

Cindy Leicester  
Circulation Manager

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Annual — In-County — \$8.50  
Annual — Out-of-County — \$9.50