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William Harris murder trial begins Monday in Hertford

By SUSAN HARRIS

The murder trial of William Jay Harris began Monday in Hertford.

Harris, 22, of Alexandria, Va., was arrested on April 30 for the shooting death of Willard Michael "Mike" Perry of Elizabeth City that occurred the same day.

Jury selection began Monday morning. The prosecution opened its case in the afternoon. Court officials anticipated that the trial may be over by Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning.

Judge Frank Brown is hearing the case. The doors to the courtroom are being secured when court is in session. No one is allowed to enter after sessions begin.

The shooting occurred in the parking lot at Hardee's Restaurant in Hertford. According to police records, an argument between Perry, Harris and others broke out in the parking lot of the fast-food restaurant around 2 a.m. on April 30.

Former Hertford Police Sergeant Timothy Spence told the Perquimans Weekly after the shooting

that Harris was with Annie B. Bouey, Teresa McNeill, James Bouey and Jerome Bouey, all of Elizabeth City, at the Rainbow Lounge in Hertford prior to the incident, according to their statements.

On the same night, Perry and his wife, Debbie, R.P. and Dianne White of Belvidere, Stuart White of Belvidere and Joanne Smith of Suffolk, Va. had been to the Chowan Moose Lodge.

Both parties were in the parking lot at Hardees Restaurant at

around 2 a.m. Spence said that words were allegedly exchanged between the two groups. Racial slurs were hurled by both sides, Spence was told, and someone issued an invitation to fight.

Perry approached the Harris vehicle, according to the report. Harris then produced a handgun and fired two shots in the air, witnesses said. Perry allegedly did not stop proceeding towards Harris, and Harris, said witnesses, fired a third shot, striking Perry in the chest.

Perry died after his 2:15 arrival at Chowan Hospital.

Although the Rainbow Lounge group left the scene, police investigators picked up all involved except Harris soon after the incident.

Harris was found that evening at 6:50 and was arrested and charged with first degree murder.

Annie Bouey, Teresa McNeill, James Bouey and Jerome Bouey were all arrested and charged with being accessories to the crime after the fact for allegedly giving fictitious information to police officers conducting the investigation. They are witnesses in the case, but will probably be tried at a later date.

Briefs

Colson cancels voter registration to withdraw

Perquimans County Commissioner candidate Melvin J. Colson, Jr. is not eligible to seek the third district seat.

Colson canceled his voter registration, and is therefore not entitled to be a candidate for political office. He can, however, register to vote on or before the April 9 filing deadline and be an eligible voter.

Colson was informed that he was not eligible to run for the seat because he is paid from state and federal funds. The Perquimans County native works as a disabled veterans outreach specialist in the Elizabeth City office of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission.

After the filing period for the commissioner's race had expired, Colson found out he was ineligible to run for the office. Since a candidate cannot withdraw from the race after the close of the filing period, Perquimans Board of Elections Supervisor William "Buddy" Tilley wrote to the state board of elections describing Colson's predicament and asking for a ruling.

Tilley said that although a candidate cannot withdraw after the close of the filing period, a cancellation of voter registration voids eligibility to seek office according to the elections handbook.

Colson's ineligibility means no Democratic race between he and candidate Mack Nixon; therefore, Nixon is the automatic candidate and will not appear on the ballot. Nixon will face Republican candidate H.R. "Bobby" Jones in the November general election.

Job Service places employees in jobs

In January the Edenton Job Service office placed 59 individuals in jobs. During the past seven months, the Edenton office has placed a total of 564 individuals in jobs. Area employers have listed 865 openings with the Edenton office and Employment Security Commission staff has filled 736 of these openings.

Statewide totals show that 9,533 North Carolinians found jobs through the 77 Job Service centers and six branch offices operated by the Employment Security Commission of N. C. Employers statewide listed 19,123 job openings with the Agency during January and the ESC staff filled 11,695 of those openings.

Voter registration deadline nearing for primary

April 9 is the deadline to register to vote in the May 8 primary, according to Perquimans Board of Elections supervisor William "Buddy" Tilley. Any person who meets the residency requirements and who wishes to register should visit the elections office between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays. The office is located at the extension building on Edenton Road Street.

Thinking of placing a Classified Ad; but not sure how to do it? Just call our friendly Ad-Visor, Elenora she will be glad to help you.

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Perquimans Weekly

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Photo by Chuck Schroeder

Coach Harrell Thach and senior Anita White, Sonja Wilkins and Tonya Privott accept the Albemarle Conference Tournament trophy from Willie Gilchrist, president of the conference. The Lady Pirates defeated Manteo to take the conference crown.

Lady Pirates scalp 'Skins in final; bring home championship trophy

By SUSAN HARRIS

It must be true, the old saying, "The third time is a charm."

If no one else believes it, the Lady Pirates sure do after their 52-34 scalping of the Manteo Redskins Friday night to take the Albemarle Conference Tournament championship title.

They tried to win it in 1988. They were defeated in the final game. Again in 1989 they tried to win. Again they were defeated in the final game. In 1990, their luck changed. They won their final game.

As in the semi-final game against Currituck, senior point guard Sonja Wilkins directed the game. Her 32 points, seven rebounds and four steals led the Perquimans offense.

"Sonja's on, the team is on," said a beaming coach Harrell Thach after the game.

Seniors Tonya Privott, Anita White and Wilkins especially savored the win. Knowing the agony of defeat the past two years made the thrill of victory even sweeter.

The whole team breathed a sign of relief after the game. With disappointing season losses to Currituck and Manteo, they began to question their ability. Coming out on top in the tournament gave them back their confidence, especially since they defeated both Currituck and Manteo to take the trophy.

Perquimans tied the score 7-7 with 3:54 to go in the first quarter when Wilkins yanked down a defensive

rebound and drove to the other end of the court to sink a lay-up. Privott nailed a three-pointer on the Pirates' next possession to take a 10-7 lead. They never trailed after that.

Up by only three after one period, Thach knew he wasn't home free. The squad led by five at halftime - too close for any early celebration.

The Pirates held the Redskins to a trio of third quarter points, and ended the period at 33-24. Tracy Elliott put the first two fourth quarter points on the Pirate scoreboard, triggering a 19-point last-period effort by Perquimans. Manteo scored 10.

Elliott scored 10 and grabbed 12 rebounds. Privott scored four. Darlene Walton shot for four. Tammy Lee added two.

Wilkins led the pack by far in points, but was helped by the aggressive play and all-out hustle of her teammates, who opened up the path to the basket.

Thach was disappointed that Manteo star Veronica McMurrin was allowed to score 15 points and that Manteo's zone held off some Perquimans shots. But the team effort and intensity of the Pirates overcame the technical problems.

Substitutions were few in the contest, as Manteo played too solid to take any chances. "I couldn't afford to take my first string out," Thach said after the game.

The win set up the Pirates' first game of the state championships Monday night in Hertford against Roanoke.

Perquimans superintendent presents lofty wish list

By JOE SOUTHERN
Daily Advance Staff Writer

Perquimans County school superintendent Mary Jo Martin reported to her board Monday night that a recent meeting of the Small Schools Consortium, of which Perquimans is a member, with State Superintendent Bobby Etheridge had gone well, though the group is still in a fight for better funding of small, rural schools.

At the meeting, each of the member superintendents were asked to bring a wish list of items they needed to run an effective program. The bulk of Martin's wish list called for more personnel - about 18 more.

"They laughed at mine because it was too expensive," Martin said to the Perquimans board. "That was okay. They had asked me what I needed to run an effective program, and I told them."

Her proposal called for 18 additional employees ranging from teachers to administrators, assistants and specialists. That, with addi-

onal funds for instructional materials, came to \$490,251.

"We're getting attention that we weren't getting a year ago," Martin said. She added that support of the parents through a letter writing campaign was very important. "We need the parents to stay on top of it."

What Martin is looking for is the addition of nine more teachers K-12, two more exceptional children instructors, seven more administrators, \$50,000 in additional funds for instructional technology, and a hold harmless clause for the vocational education program. The clause would allow the school system to keep personnel at times when there are temporary reductions of numbers.

Martin told the board that in about three years the school system's population should reach a point where a part-time position for an assistant superintendent would open up. She is asking that the school system be granted permission to round up half positions to full positions.

Parents, officials discuss funding for rural schools

By SUSAN HARRIS

Over 60 parents, school personnel and interested citizens turned out last Wednesday night to learn how they could arm themselves for the fight for equal educational opportunities for all North Carolina children.

Dr. Mary Jo Martin, schools superintendent, told those gathered about the inequities in programs, supplies and buildings in public schools across the state.

"Those of us who have the most need are furthest away from Raleigh and have less representation in the legislature," Martin said.

Martin said that the three legislators from this district, Marc Basnight, R.M. "Pete" Thompson and Vernon James, are aware of the problems of small school systems and are supportive of measures to equalize education.

But, she cautioned, it will take more than the three to make changes on the state level.

"I'm asking all of you tonight to become politicians," Dr. Martin said. She said it will take a barrage of letters from parents and community leaders to legislators throughout the state to make lawmakers sit up and take notice.

"I think it would help if you contacted your aunts, uncles and cousins and asked them to write their legislators," she said. "I believe in what people can do when they work together."

Dr. Martin and Camden Superintendent Rick Denning are both on committees working to remove educational disparity. Because they feel that a united stand will be beneficial, they have organized a joint effort between the two school systems.

Groups from both systems have met individually and have had one joint meeting. Another is scheduled for tonight at 7 p.m. at Camden Middle School.

Perquimans cannot generate the monies internally, Martin said, to fund the needed renovation and construction projects that are needed now. If the school enrollment increases by the state's pro-

jected 17 percent over the next five years, the strain on local dollars will be even greater.

The Small Schools Consortium, composed of educators from the state's smallest, poorest school systems, is working to help alleviate inequity. Both Martin and Denning are consortium members.

Members of the consortium believe that some proration of state funds is necessary to provide all children with equal public educational opportunities. In some instances, poorer counties hardly provide the basics, and in all poorer systems, there are many programs not available that are offered to those students from more affluent systems.

Studies have shown that funding has a direct effect on student performance. Thus, the student from a poorer school system is hard pressed to compete after high school with the student from a system with access to more local dollars.

"To listen to you talk tonight, it sounds like we're about to lose a whole generation," said Tildon Whitehurst, Jr. The father of four students in the county school system. Whitehurst is seeking a seat on the school board in the May election.

"I think we are at a crossroads. We're at a point where we need to take a long, hard look at what we're going to do about education," Martin said. She believes that the planned letter-writing campaign is the best offensive move available now.

"They're sure going to listen to the people who vote for them," she said of the legislators.

Prior to Wednesday's session, Martin called together the schools' three PTA presidents to introduce the Small Schools Consortium and discuss local funding problems.

"If we do not get money from the outside, our children are the losers," Martin told Arthur Mitchell, Nancy Harrell and Susan Harris. "Everything we talk about doing is contingent on funding."



Photo by Susan Harris

New business opens

The Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce sponsored a ribbon cutting for Marta Colson's new beauty shop in downtown Hertford. On hand were County Commissioner chairman Lester Simpson Janie Proctor from Peoples Bank; Carolyn Chappell, stylist; Marta Colson, owner; Nancy Newbern Chamber vice president; John Christensen, Chamber board member; and Hertford Mayor Bill Cox.