

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Briefs

Peoples Bank will acquire Watauga Savings & Loan

Rocky Mount—Peoples Bancorporation announced that it has received final regulatory approval to acquire Watauga Savings and Loan Association, Inc. The acquisition, which was proposed last August, took effect Feb. 28.

Watauga Savings, with headquarters in Boone, and additional offices in West Jefferson and Newland, had assets on Dec. 31, 1989 of approximately \$120 million.

Robert R. Mauldin, Chairman of Peoples Bancorporation, said, "We are pleased to have the opportunity to join with Watauga which is a natural expansion of our franchise from the Triad into the High Country area around Boone. Peoples' affiliation with Watauga allows the bank holding company to continue its commitment to community-oriented service."

George C. King, Watauga's President said, "The management and staff are excited about the merger and the opportunity to broaden the range of financial services we can provide to our customers."

Peoples' first action was to recapitalize Watauga by purchasing 100 percent of the thrift's common stock. Watauga now exceeds the capital requirements imposed by the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act. Watauga will remain as a separate financial institution with its Board of Directors and staff continuing to serve in their present capacities.

Peoples Bancorporation is the state's ninth largest bank holding company with assets on Dec. 31, 1989 of \$1.3 billion. Its subsidiaries are Peoples Bank & Trust Company, Rocky Mount; Mid-South Bank & Trust Company, Sanford; Peoples Bank of the Triad, Winston-Salem; and Watauga Savings.

In January, Peoples agreed to a merger of equals with The Planters Corporation, Rocky Mount, which would form a new bank holding company, Centura Banks, Inc., with assets of \$2.5 billion.

Sheriff's Department makes several arrests in county

The Perquimans County Sheriff's Department reported the following arrests:

On March 4, Lee Ann LaSurre Pritchett, 24, of 38M Chestnut St., Snug Harbor was arrested on a worthless check charge. The warrant was from Pasquotank County.

On March 7, Willie Junior Stanley, 21, of Route 1, Box 313A, Tyner, was arrested and charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana.

On March 7, Daniel Alphonso Hurdle, 21, of Route 1, Box 373, Tyner was arrested and charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana.

On March 8, Ricky Alexander Speller, 26, of Lot 23 Dogwood Trailer Park, Hertford was arrested and charged with communicating threats on a Chowan County warrant.

On March 10, Douglas Paul Coleman, 26, of 38 M Chestnut St., Snug Harbor was arrested on a worthless check charge.

The Hertford Police Department reported no arrests.

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.

426-5728

Perquimans Weekly

119 W. Grubb St.
8 a.m.-5 p.m., Mon.-Fri.

Mistrial declared in Harris murder case

By SUSAN HARRIS and JOE SOUTHERN

HERTFORD—A Superior Court jury failed to reach a verdict after two days of deliberations in what has been described as a racially motivated shooting.

After the jury spent 11 hours Wednesday and Thursday discussing the case without reaching a unanimous decision, Judge Frank R. Brown declared a mistrial.

William Jay Harris, a 22-year-old black man, stood trial for the shooting death of Willard Michael Perry, a 32-year-old white Elizabeth City businessman, as a result of an early-morning confrontation at Hardee's in Hertford.

"I regret that you were unable to reach a verdict," Brown said. "All of the parties in this case...came here expecting you to make a decision."

Brown told the jury that both the Perry and Harris families "deserved to have this matter resolved." He said that each day they must wait for a verdict adds grief to their lives.

"Your verdict would not have ended their suffering," he said, but added that a verdict would allow the families to put the matter to rest, and begin rebuilding their lives.

After being charged at 9:50 Wednesday morning, the jury requested at 11:10 that Brown again spell out the differences in first-degree murder, second-degree murder, manslaughter and not guilty. They were allowed to go home for the night at 5 p.m.

They re-entered the jury room to debate at 9 a.m. Thursday, but announced at 9:35 that they were unable to reach a unanimous decision.



Photo by Joe Southern

William Harris stood trial last week for the murder of Willard Michael Perry last April 30. After 11 hours of deliberation, the jury was deadlocked, and a mistrial was declared by Superior Court Judge Frank R. Brown.

Jurors were instructed to resume their deliberations by Brown. After a lunch break, he encouraged them to try to resolve their differences of opinion.

At 3:10 p.m., the jury filed back into the courtroom and told Brown they did not feel that there was a reasonable chance that a unanimous decision would be reached. Brown subsequently declared a mistrial after denying defense attorney John Halstead's motion for dismissal.

The state asked the jury to convict Harris of first degree murder in the case. The defense argued that Harris, much smaller than Perry, thought that Perry intended to kill him, and that he shot

Stuart White, a member of the Perry entourage, made a comment as he passed the vehicles. When White walked in front of the Harris car, it lunged forward, almost hitting White. Harris said in court that his foot had slipped off of the break pedal.

Upset by the incident, White and R.P. White, also with the Perry group, admitted on the stand that they had made comments which included calling Harris and his friends "niggers." They also admitted that they had heavily consumed alcohol earlier that night.

After receiving his food at the drive-up window, Harris said he drove to the back of the restaurant, got out of his car and went to speak with his girlfriend.

He said that Perry had followed him and tried to start a fight, but Harris said he told Perry he did not want to fight.

Harris told the court that he then got a gun and shot twice at the ground, but that Perry did not stop advancing toward him. Harris said he was afraid that Perry was about to pull a gun because Perry's hands were behind his back, so Harris shot, striking Perry in the chest.

Perry seemed to be drunk, Harris said, and he was certain that the man much larger than himself wanted to kill him. Perry, according to a coroner, had a 0.23 blood alcohol level at his death.

Perry did not threaten Harris and walked in Harris' direction with his arms by his sides, said those with Perry on the night of the murder.

Harris is being held awaiting a second trial.

Council votes to enforce tag ordinance

By SUSAN HARRIS

Hertford Town Councilman John Beers said at the board's Monday night meeting that he felt the town should enforce the ordinance requiring residents to purchase city tags for their vehicles.

Beers said that he had noticed that fewer residents were purchasing the tags, and that there seemed to be no penalty for those who did not comply with the city ordinance.

Hertford Police Chief Aubrey Sample was asked if he could recommend ways to handle the problem. Sample said that his department could set up spot checks. He also told the council that Elizabeth City had added the fee for their town tags to the registered owner's property tax bill.

Councilman Eric Haste suggested that Chief Sample be asked to establish a policy to deal with the problem. The penalty for failure to purchase a tag is a \$10 fine plus the \$5 cost of the tag.

Councilman Jesse Harris said that he felt the residents should be warned that the town intended to strictly enforce the policy before issuing citations.

"You can do it cold-bloodedly or you can do it with some common sense decency," Harris said.

Haste countered that the ordinance is not new, and that people are deliberately failing to purchase tags.

Mayor W.D. "Bill" Cox recommended that city attorney Walter Edwards look into the legality of adding the fee to property taxes.

Sample said he will probably direct his department to run spot checks. Haste asked for an update at the next council meeting.

Local conservation poster winners are announced

By GINGER O'NEAL
Conservation Secretary

Once again the Albemarle Soil & Water Conservation District and the Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation sponsored the annual poster contest in Perquimans County for students in grades four through six. The local contest got underway January 29 and ended February 16.

The topic for this year's contest was Soil & Water Conservation in North Carolina. Students were asked to reflect this in their drawings. Posters were judged on the local level on February 21 by Grace Coston, Brenda Hollowell and Aubrey Onley, Jr. The first place winners were: Fourth Grade - Cristin Harrell, Central Grammar, Ms. Holley; Fifth Grade - Korey Moore, Ms. Ralph; and Sixth Grade - Mark Swindell, Ms. Geouge. Earning Second Place honors were: Fourth Grade - Tiffany Baker, Central Grammar, Ms. Holley; Fifth Grade - Torrey Bailey, Ms. Parker; and Sixth Grade - Alison Boone, Ms. Geouge.

These students won cash prizes and went on to compete at the district level of competition with award-winning posters from Chowan, Pasquotank and Currituck counties. The district contest and luncheon was held at the Albemarle Commission building in Hertford on March 6 with approximately 100 in attendance.

Winning students from this contest will now go on to compete at the 16-county area contest in Bertie County. Winners from that round will go to the state competition in Raleigh in April.

Winners of the Albemarle District contest were: First Place, Fourth Grade - Matthew Dixon, Griggs Elem., Currituck; Fifth Grade - Amanda Beasley, Griggs Elem., Currituck; Sixth Grade - Nykoll Williams, Chowan Middle School; Second Place, Fourth Grade - David Jethro, White Oak, Chowan; Fifth Grade - Todd Merrell, Griggs Elem., Currituck; Sixth Grade - Traci Mutzabaugh, Weeksville Elem., Pasquotank.

Junk car ordinance

Beers also asked what had been done regarding the junk car ordinance passed by the town last month. Sample said that he had had some questions regarding the implementation of the ordinance, but had discussed them with Edwards earlier and gotten clarification.

He told the councilmen that both he and Captain Brad Krause have issued spoken warnings. One written warning has also been issued. If some of the problem vehicles are not removed by Friday morning, Sample expects to have them towed Friday afternoon.

Beers said that he felt the people were ready to see the town move on the ordinance.

Retirement study

Cox asked the board to consider allowing the state to review the town's retirement plan at a cost of \$740. He said that Hertford is one of the few towns not on the state retirement system, and that it has hampered efforts to hire experienced employees when they are presently on the system and will lose their benefits because Hertford has a private retirement package.

Council voted to go ahead with the study.

Acquired property

Cox told the council that the property at 100 Railroad Ave. owned by the Bertha Lane Estate has been purchased with monies from the block grant the town received last year. He said that the town will solicit bids to tear down the partially-burned dwelling on the property.

He also told the town that Edwards had spoken with Edgar Lane regarding two other abandoned houses owned by the Bertha Lane Estate against which the town has initiated condemnation proceedings.

Edwards told Cox that Lane had requested information on allowing the Hertford Fire Department to burn the houses for training purposes. Chief Edgar Roberson is working with Lane to get the proper forms signed to allow the department to burn the structures.

Cox announced that there will be a zoning hearing on March 19 at 7 p.m. at the municipal building to discuss the placement of mobile homes in the city limits.

The council went into executive session at the request of Harris to discuss personnel matters.

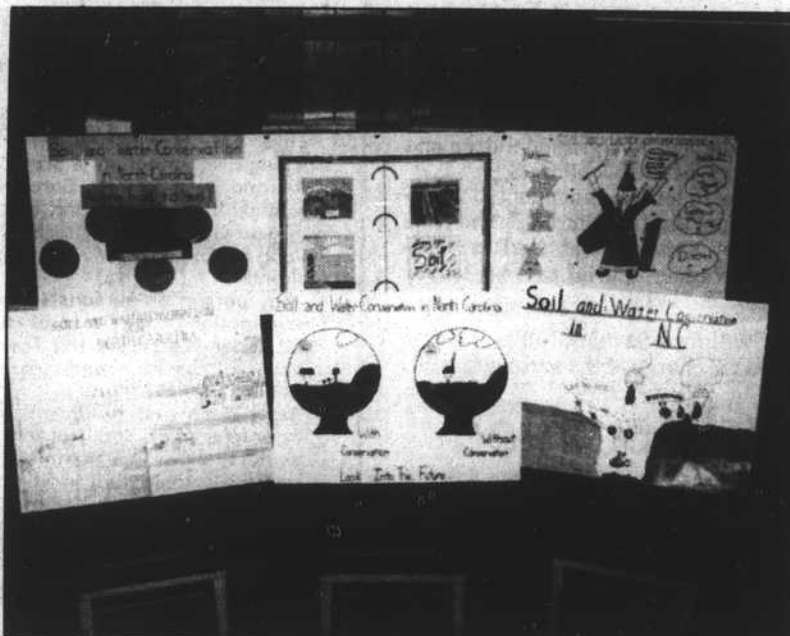


Photo by Susan Harris

The winning conservation posters in the Perquimans County competition are on display at the Conservation Office on Edenton Road Street. Secretary Ginger O'Neal said the judges were very pleased with student creativity in the contest.

4-Hers to attend Mitchell Camp

This year Perquimans County 4-Hers ages 8-13 will be camping at Mitchell 4-H Camp during the week of July 1-6. Mitchell is located on Queen's Creek in Swansboro. At Mitchell you will enjoy learning about our coastal adventure. You will learn a craft, learn to canoe, learn archery, sail a boat, study fiddler crabs and blue crabs, explore an island, sing, dance, play volleyball and softball, study marine science and have lots of fun.

The cost of the camp is \$115, and includes three meals a day, snacks, lodging and transportation to camp. This year Perquimans, Gates and Camden counties will charter a bus to camp. To help keep transportation cost low (\$25) for campers, the Perquimans County Extension Homemakers Council makes an annual donation of \$100 in support of our camping program.

Youth attending camp must have an immunization record and a health exam. The deadline for the \$25 nonrefundable deposit is May 1. Due to the fact that we have only 15 spaces for summer camp, reservations will be taken on a first-come basis. If you have any questions, call Juanita T. Bailey, Home Economics Extension Agent at 426-5428. Plan now to join us for a week of adventure and fun.



Hertford Mayor Bill Cox signed a proclamation declaring March 12-17 as Employ the Older Worker Week in Hertford. The document stated that older workers bring extensive experience and high job qualifications to the work force, and that they should be seriously considered when jobs are available.