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# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## Stemming drug trade may require outside assistance

By TRACY E. GERLACH  
Staff writer

Perquimans County's drug problem may be too big for local law enforcement to handle on its own, one resident pointed out to the board of commissioners Monday.

At the request of Joe Meads, owner of Miller and Meads Mobile Home Park in Hertford, Chairman Mack E. Nixon said he would personally request that Sheriff Joe Lothian ask for outside help to handle the county's drug problem.

"I'll talk with Joe and see what kind of assistance we might try to get in town, but that's as far as we can go with Joe is ask," Nixon said referring to the board's limited authority over an elected official.

Lothian said his department has requested assistance from the State Bureau of Investigation in the past. He said he would be willing to talk to the commissioners about outside help.

"I'll certainly sit down and talk about it. I have no problem with that if that's what they want," he said.

Meads, who's trailer park is one of several areas plagued by drug activity, warned that action needs to be taken to break up the local drug rings before the problem gets out of hand. Residents of his trailer park are fearing for their lives, he said. One resident of his park told him recently she is moving out because of the problem.

"We had people in the last three to four weeks afraid to go to bed," Meads said. "I'll know it. I'm just telling it like it is."

Drug activity goes back and forth between Wynn Fork Trailer Park and Miller and Meads Mobile Home Park, Meads said, adding that area law enforcement knows who is behind the activity.

"I can see it every day going on in my trailer court," he said. "When I talk to the law and they tell me their hands are tied, there's something wrong."

Nixon said he is equally frustrated by the problem.

"The D.A. is aware of it, the law enforcement in the area is aware of it. I was hoping this drug tank force would come in and do something," Nixon said. "I don't know what to do about it. I'll be honest with you."

Meads' comments to the board of commissioners follow on the heels of two community meetings held this summer in two different areas which addressed the same problem.

Residents of the Hertford Housing Authority and a group of Bethel residents each held similar meetings with county and town officials and law enforcement agencies to ask for help in eliminating drug problems in their areas.

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## Comparing platforms



Republican candidate for lieutenant governor Art Pope (center) made a campaign stop in Perquimans last week. He is shown discussing campaign issues with (left) Bert Hayes, a Winfall town councilman, and Charles Woodard, Republican candidate for county commissioner from the first district. (Photo by Susan Harris.)

## Indian Summer Festival 1992 is a success

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The 12th annual Indian Summer Festival brought food, entertainment, crafts, sidewalk sales and food, old-fashioned fun to Perquimans County Friday and Saturday.

Although the number of festival-goers was not as large as had been hoped, Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Mary C. Harrell said she was pleased with the festival.

"I'm positive about everything," Harrell said Saturday evening prior to the street dance.

The festival had a lot of competition. The Elizabeth City Jaycee Six-County Fair, Moth Boat Regatta, Currituck Wildlife Festival, Chicken on the Chowan in Bertie County and the Big Sweep clean-up campaign all claimed a share of the crowd usually seen at the Indian Summer Festival.

Saturday's street dance was delayed from its 7:30 p.m. scheduled starting time due to torrential showers which made the park a virtual ghost town by 6 p.m. But as soon as the rain ended and it appeared that good weather was on the way, residents began to trickle back in for one of the highlights of the festival, featuring the Overtime Band.

The festival kicked off Friday

morning with sidewalk sales downtown. Chamber members not located in the downtown block were invited to set up booths. Harrell said more merchants than ever took advantage of the offer.

New to Friday's offerings was an antique show and sale on Market Street. Antique sale coordinator Pete Perry said Friday he was pleased with the success of the venture, and believes that it will expand for next year's festival.

Entertainment got underway at noon, when the award-winning Perquimans County High School Marching Pirates Band performed. Vocalists Bruce and Sherry Smith, The Detention Hall Jazz Band and the State of Mind Band were hits with downtown crowds.

The younger set was delighted with the 4 p.m. piñata breaking sponsored by Stepping Stones Day Care and Beacon Academy. Children lined up to take a whack at the brightly-colored donkey suspended from a grand oak tree on the courthouse lawn.

Events began early Saturday morning with the Chowan Hospital-sponsored Fun Run/Fun Walk at 8 o'clock.

The Dakota Band kicked off the entertainment at Missing Mill

Park at 10 a.m. in tandem with the booth openings and events at the Children's Reservation.

Bruce and Sherry Smith made their second festival appearance Saturday, along with the Flatland Cloggers and the August Band. Hertford Hardware featured Yamaha Wave Runner demonstrations twice during the afternoon on the waterfront.

Downtown, merchants continued with their sidewalk sales.

Harrell said she received positive comments from festival-goers about the entertainers who appeared throughout the festival.

Rain stymied sales at the pig pickin' which began at 4 p.m., but Harrell said all the barbecued pork cooked on the site was sold.

"The rain hit us at a crucial point," Harrell said. Historically, people have begun filtering in to await the street dance and have eaten dinner at the Chamber-sponsored barbecue.

"Overall, I'm pleased (with the festival)," Harrell said about the two-day event.

The Indian Summer Festival is organized and promoted by the Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce.

## Schools perform better than state average in minority hiring

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Perquimans County leads the Albemarle in minority hiring, Schools Personnel Director Paul Ward told the board of education Monday night.

Ward submitted an employee breakdown in all school system departments by race, along with a chart printed in *The Daily Advance* newspaper comparing the racial breakdown among teachers in six northeastern North Carolina counties.

According to Ward's figures, 40 percent of the 240 Perquimans County Schools employees are minorities. Minority teachers account for 35.59 percent of the system's total of 118. In the teacher assistant category, 57.14 percent are minorities.

Ward also distributed a statistical summary of certified applicants interviewed for the 13 certified staff positions filled for the 1992-93 school year. Thirty-seven white and 11 minority applicants were interviewed. Ten, or 27.03 percent, of the white applicants were hired. Three, or 27.27 percent, of the minority applicants were hired.

The chart printed in *The Daily Advance* reflected teachers only. It did not include guidance counselors and media consultants in the "teacher" category, as did the Perquimans County Schools figures.

Using information supplied by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, *The Daily Advance* reported that 37 percent of Perquimans' teachers are minorities, compared to Camden, 18 percent; Currituck, 7 percent; Gates, 28 percent; Pasquotank, 29 percent; and Chowan, 31 percent. Across North Carolina, 17 percent of the 64,838 teachers employed are minorities.

"We are still at the top," Ward said, adding that Perquimans County Schools is proud of its efforts to hire qualified minority teachers.

The system's minority hiring policy was questioned at the board's July 6 meeting by board member Walter Leigh, the board's only Black member.

## Voter registration up

By TRACY E. GERLACH  
The Daily Advance

Board of Election officials here are hoping voter registration over the past few months is an indication of the turnout for the general election in November.

Disappointed by a 30 percent turnout in the May primary, Election Supervisor Ginger O'Neal said she is looking forward to a higher participation in the November election.

"We expect it and we certainly hope for it," O'Neal said. "We have to work just as hard for 30 percent as we do for 70 to 80 percent."

Voter registration has been on the rise, with about 12 new voters signing up each month, she said.

"We're seeing a pretty good increase," she said. "Twelve for one month - that's pretty good for a small county."

A heated presidential race, coupled with specified voter registration hours at the Perquimans County Library have contributed to the increase, O'Neal said. The option to register at local Department of Motor Vehicles offices has also boosted the numbers, she said.

"I think it's the fact that there's such a big debate over

the president and the local congressional seat," O'Neal said.

Another factor affecting voter interest was the first ever Republican primary this spring.

Charles Woodard, a Republican defeated John O. White IV.

Of Perquimans County's 10,447 residents, about 55,365 are registered to vote. That figure does not include the latest count, O'Neal said.

Johnnie Mclean, administrative assistant for the state Board of Elections, said the program to register voters through the Department of Motor Vehicles is probably one of the most successful in the country, however, she said any increases in registration this year are more likely tied to the presidential race.

"That's going to be statewide because it's a presidential year and you routinely have an increase," Mclean said. "A lot of people feel like if they only vote once, it should be for the president."

Statistics compiled in April indicated a 3 percent increase statewide, she said.



Vocalists Bruce and Sherry Smith, vocalists who performed both Friday and Saturday at the Indian Summer Festival, clowned around downtown for the camera during their Friday performance. The couple joined a host of other local talent providing entertainment during the two-day gala. (Photo by Susan Harris.)

## Towns, county to discuss hiring shared building inspector

By TRACY E. GERLACH  
The Daily Advance

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners decided Monday to hold off on hiring additional help for their building inspector until they know whether the Town of Hertford plans to continue using the county service.

Under a current agreement between the town and county, Hertford pays a portion of the cost of the county building inspector and shares his services.

Without the additional work load placed on the county's inspection department to keep up with the town's condemnations, however, the county would not need to hire another inspector, Manager N. Paul Gregory said.

Although the town is expected to hire its own inspector Jan. 1, there is talk that that may never come to pass, Gregory said.

The board asked Gregory to write a letter to both the Town of Hertford and the Town of Winfall to find out what they intend to do regarding inspections.

With new commercial and residential development proposed for the area, Inspector Aubrey Onley said he will need help to complete all the necessary inspections.

"We need to get our ducks in order," said Chairman of the Board Mack E. Nixon. "If they're going in a different direction, we need to know."

A new Food Lion and anticipated commercial development will keep Onley busy this fall and winter, he said. Construction at Albemarle Plantation will also be underway.

Sharing a building inspector has been a touchy subject between the two governments for several years. During budget negotiations this spring, the members of the Hertford Town Council objected to having to pay twice for inspection services. Since residents of the town pay both town and county taxes, they felt it was double taxation.

Chairman of the Board Mack E. Nixon, however, said every city has a separate building inspector and police department.

The Town of Hertford is out of the county's jurisdiction, according to state statutes, Gregory added.

"The jurisdiction of the county commissioners stops at the city line," he said. "The board can't govern inside the municipality unless requested."