

Sports:

Varsity Pirates fall in first round state play-off game to North Edgecombe, 20-0. Page 8

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Party hosts: Beware law

Court rules hosts can be liable for drunk drivers

Hosts should think seriously about collecting car keys along with coats when they welcome party guests this holiday season.

A new interpretation of North Carolina law could make hosts liable for damages caused by a guest who drinks too much, drives and gets in an accident, according to the North Carolina Insurance News Service.



In September, the N.C. Supreme Court decided that a social host could be liable for damages caused by a drunk driver. If a host serves a guest alcohol knowing that the guest is intoxicated and may be driving, then the host may be sued for damages.

The case which prompted the ruling was Hart v. Ivey. A group of teens hosted a keg party. A teenager left the party drunk, crossed the center line while driving home and collided with another car, seriously injuring its driver.

The injured person sued the teenage driver, his father (the owner of the car), and the teens who hosted the party. There was no precedent in North Carolina for holding social hosts liable.

The case was first appealed to the state Court of Appeals. That court ruled that since state statute prohibits serving liquor to anyone under 21, the teen hosts were negligent as a matter of law and therefore, liable.

In its next test, the case went to the N.C. Supreme Court. The higher court based its opinion on a broader negligence theory, opening the door for lawsuits against adult social hosts who serve alcohol to adult guests who drive drunk and cause personal injury or property damage.

"Party hosts and people who drive after drinking should be very careful," said Lewis Evans, manager of the Perquimans County office of North Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance. "Hosts should consider their liability in light of the new interpretation of the law. Drivers need to remember that their insurance rate will go up dramatically if they get a DWI."

Evans said the six-month premium for one of his clients jumped from \$200 to \$1,504 as the result of one driving while intoxicated conviction. That premium covered one vehicle and included liability coverage only.

"That (premium increase) will certainly get your attention," Evans said.

Experts say it is best to serve no alcoholic beverages, but offer several recommendations to those who decide to add alcohol to their party menu.

- Serve some non-alcoholic or low-alcohol content beverages;
- Serve plenty of food;
- Don't continue to serve someone who is obviously drunk;
- Collect guests' car keys return them only if a guest is not planning to drive drunk;
- Call a cab or designate a non-driving driver.

Hosts can avoid liability and help keep drunk drivers off the highways by following common sense rules.

HOLIDAY DEADLINE
Friday 3:00
News Advertisement

The Perquimans Weekly Closed Thanksgiving Day
Nov. 26th



Mattie Madrey holds the masterpiece of her 80-plus mother's work adorns baby caps and dresses, pillow cases and handkerchiefs she has given as gifts over the years. (Photo by Susan Harris)

Nimble fingers create tatting masterpiece

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Her nimble fingers move effortlessly, creating delicate, looping designs that draw praise from those entranced by her talent.

Mattie Madrey is tying tatting, a skill appreciated by many, but performed by few. The 91-year-old great-great-grandmother is one of only a handful of county residents who make handmade lace by looping and knotting the thread wound on a hand shuttle.

Mrs. Madrey has tied a sad knot since her grammar school teacher taught her to tat over 80 years ago. Her fine handwork edged the collars and cuffs of many of the outfits her two daughters wore as children. She has trimmed baby caps and dresses, linen handkerchiefs and pillow cases over the years. She also makes bookmarks and Christmas trees.

Mrs. Madrey's tatting masterpiece is an American flag completed this fall. The flag is hung on a white background in a navy blue frame. Each of the 50 white stars that dot the blue square in the corner of the flag were made separately and attached to the flag. The craftsman

worked on and off for six months making the colorful piece.

Family and friends are not the only people who appreciate Mrs. Madrey's talent. Travelers browsing through downtown Hertford saw some of Mrs. Madrey's Christmas trees waiting to be framed on a velvet background by Willie Ainsley. They were impressed, and asked if they could buy one. Ainsley telephoned Mrs. Madrey, and the tourists stopped in Hertford to pick up their heirloom on their return trip.

Tatting is not Mrs. Madrey's only talent. She sewed all her daughters' clothes when they were young, quilted, embroidered and hooked rugs.

"I don't know how in the world I found time to tie tatting with babies, but somehow I did," Mrs. Madrey said.

Hazel Jackson, Mrs. Madrey's daughter, remembers her mother's hours spent sewing.

"Until I was in the first year of high school, I didn't have a dress that I know of that was not handmade," Mrs. Jackson said.

Mrs. Madrey confirmed the statement.

"I made everything my girls wore - two piece suits, coats," she said.

Many examples of Mrs. Madrey's work accent her home, and many others were shared with friends, her three children, eight grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Arthritis stopped Mrs. Madrey's handwork last winter, but bedrest and medicine boosted her back to health. Now she sits with her tatting after supper. Mrs. Madrey said it takes her one evening between suppertime and bedtime to tat a bookmark. In two nights, she can tie a Christmas tree.

Mrs. Jackson lives with Mrs. Madrey on Swamp Road, where they are looking forward to the holidays, a time when all the extended family will gather, including Mrs. Madrey's other daughter, Reba Sigmon, and son, Bill Madrey, both of Portsmouth, and as many of the grandchildren as can make the trip to Winfall.

And in the middle of all the commotion, Mrs. Madrey will probably sit, shuttle and thread in hand, creating yet another treasure.

Two big trials will drain sheriff's staff

By TRACY E. GERLACH
The Daily Advance

Two high profile trials scheduled to be held in Perquimans County this month will leave the sheriff's department with virtually no men to patrol the streets, Sheriff Joe Lothian said Monday.

The situation, brought about by the scheduling of the Little Rascals Day Care child sex abuse trial in Hertford and the Vivian Darvis Burke first degree murder trial set to begin Nov. 30, is the second time in six months court dates have hampered the department.

"There's not going to be anyone on the streets to answer calls," Lothian said.

Lothian and two deputies will be required to be present during the Burke murder trial - a death penalty case - because the defendant is dangerous, Lothian said.



The Chowan County Sheriff's Department will provide one of the two required deputies for the trial of former Little Rascals Day Care worker Kathryn Dawn Wilson. The case originated in Chowan County.

Perquimans County will also have a deputy in the court room four days-a-week during the trial which began Monday and is expected to last as long as three months.

The situation underscores a staffing shortage in the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department.

If deputies aren't tied up in court, they're transporting prisoners or serving warrants, Lothian said. He said there are "more nights than I care to let the public know" that he can't have a deputy on the street.

Eric V. Tilley, a deputy of five years, will resign from the department Nov. 18 to take a job with the Elizabeth City Police Department, leaving Perquimans County with three deputies and Lothian. Tilley had to ask the Board of Commissioners Monday to be paid for more than 300 vacation hours that he was unable to take when he wanted this year due to the short staff.

Youth petitions for cable TV

By TRACY E. GERLACH
The Daily Advance

PARKSVILLE - A Perquimans County youth, fed up with limited television selection in the area, has taken to the streets in a one-man petition drive for cable services.

He showed up before the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners Monday with 295 signatures and a convincing speech on why cable should be extended into the outer areas in the county. He has been working on the petition drive for about two months.

"This is a small county and you want it to grow," said Walker, a junior at Elizabeth City State University and a resident of Hurdletown Road.

Commissioners voted to write another letter to Multi-Vision Cable out of Williamston and include Walker's petitions.

Other attempts to bring cable into the more rural areas of the county have been unsuccessful.

Earlier this year, commissioners met with the cable company but were told that the service could not be extended to areas with less than 25 houses per mile.

"We should still bombard them with letters," said Commissioner Leo A. Higgins. If the company doesn't respond, the county can look to other franchises, he said.

Some of the people who signed Walker's petitions already had cable but wanted to see others have the same opportunity, he said. Others who signed, receive only a few limited channels.

"There are more people in this county than in the city limits," he said referring to the Towns of Hertford and Winfall, both of which have cable services.

Snug Harbor also receives cable.

Walker also expressed concerns that residents of the newest development, Albemarle Plantation, will receive cable services before others in the county who have been asking for the service for years.

Tech prep prepares students for high-tech jobs

Educators are passing the word along: A high school diploma is no longer the ticket to a good job.

Today's jobs require scientific and technical skills, and that trend is expected to escalate in the 21st century, said Carnell Lamm, coordinator of the Northeast Albemarle Tech Prep Consortium organized by College of The Albemarle and seven Albemarle area school systems, including Perquimans.

Tech Prep is a course of study designed to serve high school students who may not pursue a four-year college degree, but who could benefit from a two-year community college like COA.

"Society needs to consider the idea that a person's education should span at least 14 years - high school plus two years at a good community college," Lamm said.

Lamm said employers demand workers who can solve technical problems and operate high-tech machinery. Skilled laborers can move more easily into the job market.

Perquimans County High School is building a course of study in its Tech Prep program that will help students develop a firm foundation both academically and technically. Courses offered in the Tech Prep area presently are computerized accounting, keyboarding, algebra I, algebra II, trigonometry and health occupations. Students who earn at least a "B" in those course, except for health occupations, can get credit at COA toward a two-year degree.

Perquimans County Schools Vocational Director Ann White said applied mathematics and principles of technology will be added to the high school curriculum within the



Students check the vital signs and comfort this "patient" in Mary Woodell's health occupations class at Perquimans High School. Health occupations is one of the Tech Prep courses designed to prepare students to enter a workforce which demands technical skills. (Photo courtesy COA.)

next two years.

Students are preparing for jobs in the growing health care field through the health occupations classes. Health occupations I and II introduce students to the many career choices in the medical field, and offer hands-on learning through classroom exercises and internships.