

## Feature:

Perquimans woman fights for unborn children: **Page 7**

## Sports:

Pirate teams fall to Edenton; Lady Tigers win seven straight: **Page 8**

## School:

Lou Holtz gives middle school athletes academic advice: **Page 6**

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## School system rated average

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Perquimans County Schools received average grades on its once-a-year report card issued by the North Carolina State Board of Education earlier this month.

The system earned an overall at-par, average rating.

"We're on the right track," said schools superintendent Dr. Randall L. Henion. "I'd like to see us higher, but I'm not disappointed."

The best news on the report card was an improvement in the reading/language area. The state used thirds, sixth and eighth grade California Achievement Test (CAT) scores; sixth and eighth grade state writing test scores and English I competency to arrive at the system's performance level.

Third graders did not perform as well in 1992 as in 1991, but were over 1990 scores. Sixth graders improved slightly on reading and language on the CAT, and almost doubled their writing test scores. Eighth graders scored about the same in 1991 and 1992 on the CAT, but also improved dramatically on the writing test. English I students have dropped 10 percentage points from 1990 to 1992 scores.

Mathematics performance remained steady in 1992, although still below 1990 levels. The system's grade was determined by third, sixth and eighth grade CAT scores and state algebra I, algebra II and geometry tests scores.

Third graders dropped from the 81st percentile in 1990 to the 77th in 1991 to the 70th in 1992. Sixth graders continued an improvement trend, up 19 percentage points from 1990. Eighth graders remained steady over three years.

Algebra I scores fell 17 percentage points in 1992. Algebra II scores remained level, and geometry showed a slight improvement.

The bad news came in science and social studies, where performance ratings continued to decline.

Science scores have fallen from the high side of the state average to the bottom of the average scale. The system showed improvement on the third grade CAT scores, fell down five percentage points in the sixth grade and remained steady in the eighth grade.

Biology and chemistry scores on the state test continued to decline, while scores were up 12 points in physical science. Physics scores went up 16 points in 1991, but the course is offered on alternate years, and was not offered last year.

In social studies, scores have remained level over three years on the elementary and middle school level. State testing showed a six-point gain in the economic legal political category. A 22-point decline in U.S. history test scores over three years drove the overall performance rating down.



Odessa Harrell, Brenda Holley and Chenelle Moore prepare to decorate the cars participating in the Martin Luther King Jr. motorcade Monday. Twenty-five cars began at Missing Mill Park and traveled to Poole's Grove Church, where 150 gathered for a worship service honoring King's work. (Photo by Susan Harris)

## King Day observed Monday

Over 150 people joined in the Perquimans County NAACP Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration at Poole's Grove Baptist Church.

The observance kicked off with a 25-car motorcade that travelled from Missing Mill Park to the church. Cars continued to join in the motorcade all along the route, said NAACP, Perquimans Chapter, president Fred Yates.

The Rev. J.H. London set the tone for the worship service with his prayer for unity. The Young Adult Choir of Pop-

lar Run A.M.E. Zion Church, under the direction of Karen Moore and Earline Sellers, provided inspirational music.

NAACP youth Chenelle Moore welcomed the worshippers. Perquimans Middle School co-principal Henry Felton explained the importance of Dr. King's work, both past and present.

Speaker for the occasion was Juanita Bailey, a Perquimans County native and a home economics extension agent with the Perquimans Co-



Colorful posters decorated the vehicles in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day motorcade Monday afternoon, each bearing examples of King's teachings. (Photo by Susan Harris)

operative Extension Service.

Ms. Bailey spoke on the topic *The Dream*, a theme taken from Dr. King's memorable *I Have a Dream* speech. Her message interwove biblical scripture and the teachings of Dr. King. The audience was inspired by her words and her challenge to continue realizing

the dream born of Dr. King's dedication to civil rights for all.

Yates said he appreciated the support for the event, especially the Hertford Police Department and the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department for escorting the motorcade.

## Schools maintain high accreditation status

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction provides a lot of information in its report card packet. Accreditation status, school system statistics and community characteristics are compiled for reference.

According to the report, Perquimans County is well above the level of compliance required to meet state accreditation standards. The state requires that school systems meet 75 percent of the 35 standards at a Level I or higher rating. Perquimans County exceeded the Level I rating in 28 of the standards. Another four standards sit at the Level I rating. There were no unmet standards, although one area is in a warning status.

Schools superintendent Dr. Randall L. Henion said he was

very pleased with the high accreditation rating earned by the schools.

Another area that pleased Henion, he said, was the improved performance in the outcome indicators of high school completers.

Thirty-two percent of the 1992 graduates completed North Carolina Scholars Program courses, compared to the state's 22 percent. The number of graduates completing required UNC admissions courses has increased by a percentage point each year for three years.

Students in grades 9-12 earning five or more units towards graduation grew to 92 percent in 1992, up from 87 percent in 1990. The state average is 87 percent.

The report card also shows an increase in the number of students attending Perquimans

County Schools. In 1990, the enrollment was 1830. By 1992, enrollment stood at 1891.

Teachers are also working for more education in the local system. The number of teachers with graduate degrees is up 2 percent over 1990. The average local supplement for classroom teachers has remained the same.

White students account for 57 percent of the school population, black students, 42.8 percent.

Almost 2 percent of the students have been identified as gifted, 11.6 as handicapped. Fifteen percent of the student body is enrolled in compensatory education.

## Henion said report card is planning tool

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Schools superintendent Dr. Randall L. Henion said the state's report card will help administrators and teachers focus on academic improvement.

"We want to use it as a tool," Henion said. "We want to improve our academic outcomes."

Henion pointed to programs already implemented and/or in the planning stages as efforts to improve performance.

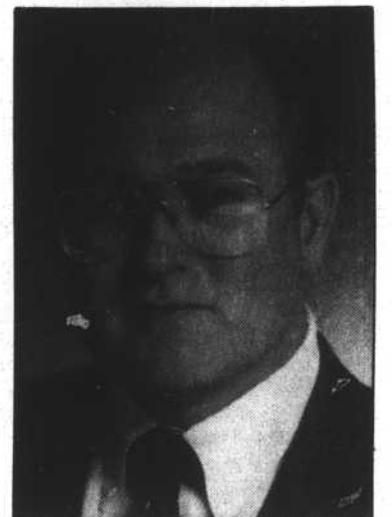
The board of education is preparing to formulate a performance-based accountability plan. The board will set measurable performance goals. Teachers, principals and parents will

be involved in the process, Henion said.

Once the plan is finalized, personnel at each school will begin to develop strategies to improve results. Henion said the plan will intensify programs already in place.

Progress on the pre-kindergarten through second grade levels is being made. Henion said positive outcomes at the elementary levels should improve test scores down the line as the students move through the system.

The move toward outcome-based education has forced school officials to look into performance in specific areas, Henion said. While standardized tests traditionally have been



Dr. Randall L. Henion

based on national norms for what students knew at each grade level, the move is to curriculum-based tests which access what the students are actually learning. These outcomes allow administrators to focus on problem areas.

Henion said overall he is pleased with the school system's performance and the positive changes he has seen during his tenure. He said the commitment he has seen from administrators, teachers, parents and community leaders gives him reason to believe the system will continue to grow and improve.

## Remodeled school will look better, smell better

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Perquimans Middle School is getting more than just a facelift and better work areas in its renovation project.

According to schools superintendent Randall L. Henion, a new septic tank in a different location will improve the school's fragrance.

The present septic tank is located behind the cafeteria, between two of the school's three wings. Odors from the tank drift through the school, and are especially smelly when rainy weather sets in.

The new tank will be buried

about 150 feet behind the building near the athletic fields, Henion said. The present tank will be removed.

District health officials have checked the present tank, the restrooms and the cafeteria, and sent a letter to Henion stating that the tank is not a health hazard.

A new wastewater drainage distribution field is in place and working at the middle school, Henion said. The \$100,000 project was required by the state.

Removing the present septic tank and installing a new one accounts for \$60,000 of the \$2.6 million renovation project underway at the middle school.

## Food Lion to open

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Walls of boxes are being emptied as shelves fill at the new Food Lion in Hertford.

An army of employees is preparing for opening day, set for Wednesday, Jan. 27 at 8 a.m.

On Monday, customer service representatives attended training sessions, while managers, even vice presidents, wiped down refrigerator cases and stocked shelves with thousands of boxes, cans and bottles of grocery items.

Store manager M.W. Coates

of Hertford said later this week representatives of national food companies will travel to Hertford to set up displays.

Coates' management team includes assistant store manager C.D. Forward of Edenton, formerly with an Elizabeth City Food Lion store, and customer service manager Bridget Allen of Hertford. The store will employ about 50 people, Coates said.

The 29,000 square foot store is one of Food Lion's 1,012 grocery stores spread across 14 states. It is located on U.S. 17 Bypass in Perquimans Centre.

## Museum plans program on Civil War soldiers

The Museum of the Albemarle will present a program on Black Soldiers in the Civil War on Saturday, Feb. 6 at 2:00 p.m. Thomas Sledge, a social studies teacher at Great Bridge High School in Chesapeake, Va., will present the program. He will be affixed in a reproduction uniform of a Union soldier.

Sledge is retired from the U.S. Navy. His area of expertise is military history and he has done extensive research into the

role of black soldiers in the Civil War, and World Wars I and II.

The program is part of a series being held in conjunction with the exhibit "Civil War Sketches" currently on display at the museum. The program is being funded by the North Carolina Museum of History Associates. It is free and open to the public but reservations are required. Call the museum at 335-1453 to reserve a place or for more information.

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