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# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Hertford, Perquimans County, N.C., Thursday, January 28, 1993

35 Cents

## Murder Hertford man found dead

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The body of a Perquimans County man was found by law enforcement officers early Monday morning.

Noah Jones, 39, of Route 5, Hertford, was discovered by Perquimans County Sheriff Joe Lothian, deputy Nicky Biselli and Hertford Police officer Tim Bunch in Jones' home on Harvey Point Road.

Lothian said his department received information around 1:30 a.m. Monday that there might have been an altercation involving a firearm at the Jones residence sometime Sunday evening. The three officers responded, and found the residence locked. Family members were contacted and the officers were able to gain entry into the house.

Jones was found in a chair in the living room. It appeared that he had been shot in the head with a small caliber handgun, Lothian said. No autopsy report had been received at press time to confirm the cause of death.

The State Bureau of Investigation was called in, and law enforcement officials spent about four hours combing the crime scene.

Late Monday afternoon, Patricia Ann Spade Hill, 21, also of Route 5, Hertford, turned herself in to law enforcement officials. She was arrested and charged with Jones' murder. She is currently being held at Albemarle District Jail.

Lothian said the investigation is continuing.

## Deaths, DWI arrests down

For the seventh consecutive year, the number of people who died in North Carolina roads of all kinds has declined - despite a concurrent increase in the number of vehicles out on the road.

Tough enforcement, more people wearing seat belts and fewer people driving drunk are three factors saving lives on North Carolina highways, according to the N.C. State Highway Patrol.

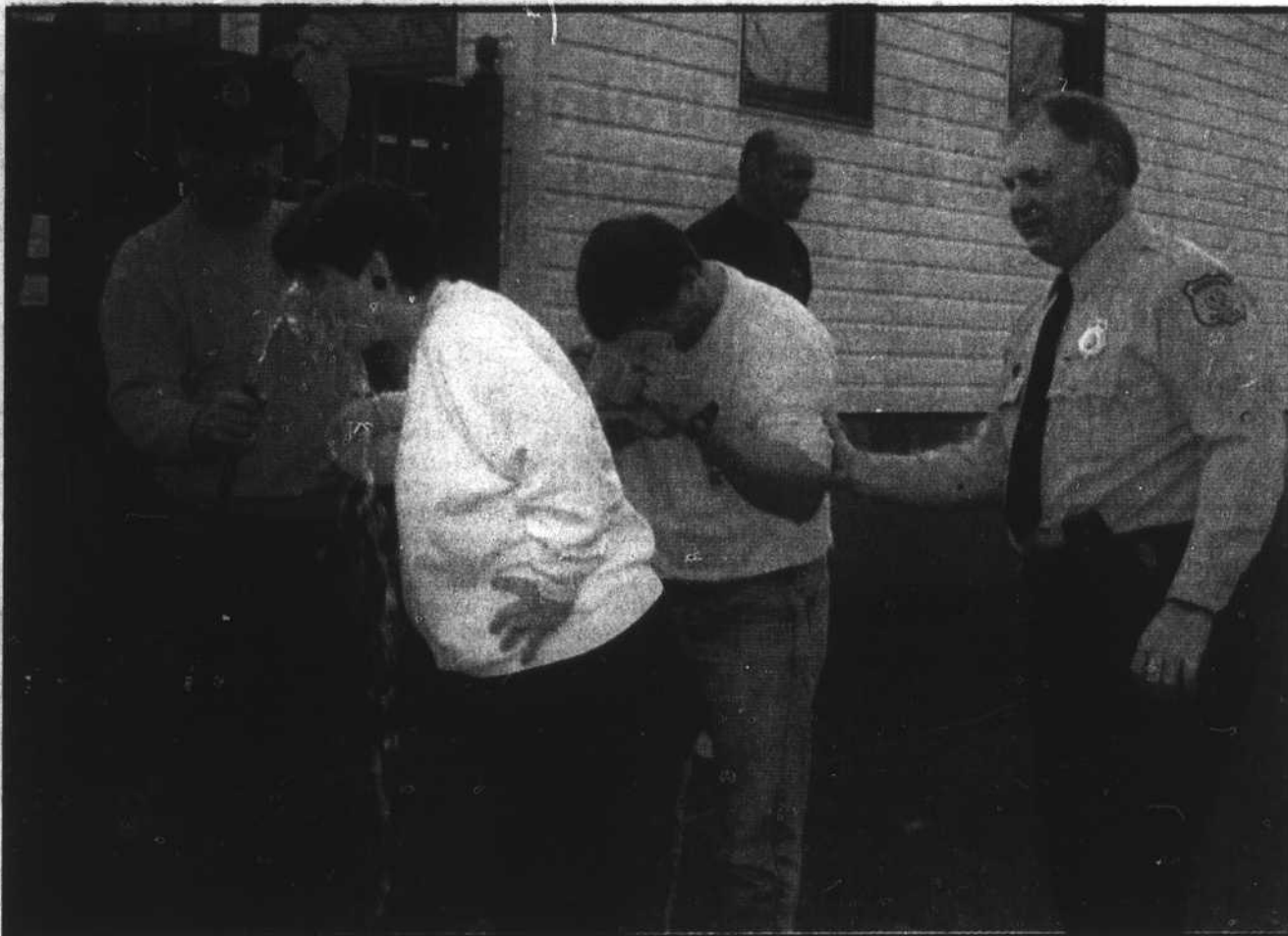
Highway deaths investigated by the Patrol are down almost five percent from 1991. Statewide since 1986, deaths have dropped off sharply - by 24 percent, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles, which cites a 1992 death toll of 1,248 people as of Jan. 20. That total includes people injured in a 1992 crash who died subsequently in the first weeks of 1993.

The decline in highway deaths is especially encouraging when compared to an increase of more than 130,000 registered vehicles in North Carolina over 1991.

Troopers investigated 876 of 1992's fatal accidents claiming the lives of 992 people - 49 fewer deaths than in 1991.

Sadly, alcohol remains a major killer out on the highway, said Colonel S.L. Jennings, Highway Patrol commander.

## Training for real



Perquimans County law enforcement officers certified to carry Cap-Stun weapons last week. The repellent spray is made from a cayane pepper base. In order to become certified, the officers found out what it felt like to be sprayed with the mixture, which causes burning, coughing and sneezing for up to two hours. Immediately after getting sprayed

in the face, Hertford Police officer Tim Bunch (second from right) was led to the water hose by Edenton Police officer Ronnie Stallings to wait behind parole officer Linda Terry for some cooling relief. Hertford Police Chief Aubrey Sample (left) manned the water hose before taking his turn to get sprayed. (Photo by Susan Harris)

## Harrell honored by Chamber Outgoing president is Businessperson of Year

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Monday evening's 30th annual Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce banquet is one Tommy Harrell will not likely forget.

The outgoing Chamber president received the Charles M. Harrell Jr. Businessperson of the Year award, and shortly thereafter turned the presidential gavel over to his wife, Sherry, who will lead the Chamber during the coming year.

"I'm going to do something probably no one else has ever done," Harrell said as he turned over the reins of the organization to Mrs. Harrell.

In his last comments as Chamber president, Harrell looked back over the year highlighted by the annual Indian Summer Festival.

"I really enjoyed it this year," he said. "Mary (Harrell) and myself have really had a lot of fun."

"I've done what these two Harrell women have told me to all year," Harrell quipped.

Harrell reported that 412 tourists registered in the Chamber office during 1992. Over 500 calls requesting information such as local business opportunities and tourist attractions were fielded by office staff during the year.

"We get a lot of traffic in through the office," Harrell said.

The Bear Swamp farmer and co-owner of Bear's Pick Vegetable Farm said businesses have struggled in the county over the past few years, but he has hope for the future of the county economically through the Chamber's efforts.

"We're struggling along and we're going places," he said.

Harrell registered a look of surprise when he realized it was his accomplishments Chamber executive director Mary Harrell was outlining while leading up to the announcement of the Charles M. Harrell Businessperson of the Year Award.

"This really means a lot to me," Harrell said upon accepting the plaque and receiving a standing ovation from those who gathered at the

Albemarle Commission Building for the banquet.

A Perquimans County native, Harrell received a bachelor's degree in horticultural science from N.C. State University. He was named the county's Outstanding Young Farmer in 1978, and was a finalist in the state competition in 1979. He received the N.C. Vegetable Grower's Association Service Award in 1992. He has served in many capacities on farm-related committees locally and statewide, and is past president and zone chairman of the Lions Club.

Mrs. Harrell emphasized teamwork in her remarks to Chamber members.

"We all know that any job that's done is a lot easier when you have teamwork," Mrs. Harrell said. "We need to make Perquimans County better for all of us. Let's all try to make 1993 an outstanding year."

Membership chairman W.D. "Bill" Cox announced that the Chamber has 113 members, many of them new members.

"I'd like to tell you I'm satisfied with that," Cox said. "I'm not."

Cox presented Sherry Harrell with a turtle pin for



Outgoing Chamber president Tommy Harrell turns over the reins of the organization to his wife, Sherry, who will serve as president during 1993. Monday was a big night for the Bear Swamp farmer, who was named the Charles M. Harrell Jr. Businessperson of the Year during the 30th annual Chamber banquet. (Photo by Susan Harris)

bringing in the most new members to the group.

Also recognized during the evening was Centura Bank, sponsor of the new Walking Tour sign at the intersection of U.S. 17 By-pass and Church Street.

In addition to Mrs. Harrell, 1993 board members include vice president Elliott G. "Pete" Overman, treasurer Marie Ayscue, and directors Cox, Julian E. Winalow Jr., Dan Nixon, Sharon Lane, Betty Waters, Homeria Jennette, Charles H. Ward and Joseph France. Ex-Officio members are Hertford Mayor John Beers, Winalow Mayor C.W. Bartlett, Leo Higgins and Harrell. Information about Chamber membership and activities can be obtained at the Chamber office located in the Hertford Town Hall Annex.

## Tax group fights land use values

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

State officials met Saturday with county residents concerned about the property tax break farmland owners are getting.

Senator Marc Basnight, Representatives Vernon James and R.M. "Pete" Thompson, Farm Bureau representatives Julian Philpott and Charles Deal, and Bill Conley from the state ad valorem tax division came at the request of the Perquimans County Tax Committee and the Perquimans County Commissioners to discuss the land use values applied to farmland. About 75 county residents, most of them farmers, attended the session held at the Albemarle Commission building.

At issue is a state statute which requires that counties adopt a uniform schedule of values, standards and rules to be used in appraising real property at its true value and at its present-use value. State statutes also require that counties re-evaluate real property at its market value every eight years.

Following the statute, the Perquimans County Commissioners last year voted to adopt farmland values to be used under the land-use application in conjunction with the county's eight-year revaluation process.

The state provides a table of land use values for farmland based on soil type and productivity of the land. County Commissioners Chairman Leo Higgins said most of the soil in Perquimans County is Class II soil. Using that Class and the state's \$735 per acre value, the county adopted a rate of \$700 per acre for its farmland use value. The land use value must be requested by the landowner.

The land use application knocked \$54 million in property values off the tax books, representing about \$388,000 in lost tax revenues. Members of the Tax Committee, Jesse P. Perry, Charles Ward, Eldon Winslow, William Sawyer and Roy L. Reed, contend that homeowners are having to make up for the lost revenue.

"Basically, we don't really think that farmland and farmers should really get a break like that as a tax break and other people not get it," Perry said Monday.

Sawyer said that the average property tax increase in 1992 for county homeowners was 42 percent, a big jump for a small community. While he attributed part of that increase to higher values of property resulting from the revaluation, he said part of it came as a result of lost revenues on farmland. Sawyer added that the county budget increased only 11.4 percent in 1992.

The Tax Committee said that land use values were originally intended to help farmland owners whose farms bordered towns or commercial property, resulting in appraisals higher than the actual value of the farmland. But amendments to the state statutes have been expanded to include almost all farmland, Sawyer said, and he does not think that is fair.

"We as a group support land use as it was originally designed," Sawyer said.

Properties in the county were revaluated using the latest sales prices in each neighborhood. Sawyer said farmland should be valued using the same method.

The committee members said they appreciated the state officials traveling to Hertford to discuss the issue, but left the meeting feeling that nothing would change. Perry said farm groups pay lobbyists to push legislators to pass laws favorable to farmers. He said his committee has no lobbyists to fight for homeowners.

What do you think about land use values? Call *The Perquimans Weekly* at 426-5728 before Monday at 5 p.m. and tell us. You do not have to give your name. Results of readers call-ins will be printed next week.

## Newspaper will explore regional landfill issue

Perquimans County may be the home of a high-tech landfill to be used by several northeastern North Carolina counties.

Discussion are heated here, especially in the Belvidere township, home to a possible site for the regional landfill.

The subject has been hotly debated at public hearings and "coffee clubs" throughout the county.

Next week, *The Perquimans Weekly* will explore the issue - pro and con. Call us and let us know how you feel about this controversial subject.

### ATTENTION!!

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