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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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35 Cents

Economic development office to open here

Hertford will be the site of a regional economic development commission charged with attracting industry and business to the Northeast. Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. announced last Thursday.

The governor also announced the appointment of Bunny Wilkins Sanders as director of a regional tourism office during his one-day trip to Elizabeth City and Hertford.

Hunt toured industrial facilities in Elizabeth City, College of The Albemarle, the site of a new prison facility, and attended an economic development conference and Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce "state of the state" dinner at the K.E. White Center, and the 50th anniversary of the Albemarle district of the U.S. Soil and Conservation Service at Albemarle Plantation during his whirlwind visit.

Hunt did not announce his appointments to the Northeastern Regional Economic Development Commission, which will include a developer from the Northeast, a banker from the region, and at least two county commissioners from either Pasquotank, Camden, Perquimans, Currituck, Chowan, Beaufort, Bertie or Martin counties. Hunt has five appointments.

The governor did, however, try to drum up support for a constitutional amendment that would allow economic development financing for local governments. The amendment, along with a \$740 million bond package, goes before voters in a Nov. 2 referendum.

The amendment would give local governments the option to finance new sewer lines and other infrastructure improvements as an economic development tool to attract industry. Hunt said the financing would not put an additional burden on taxpayers because industry would pay for the improvements through their property taxes.

The governor said 40 states already allow economic development financing. "They have been getting our jobs with that tool," he said.

Hunt said Proctor and Gamble in need of \$9 million in plant improvements, relocated to Warren County, Ohio because economic development financing is not available here. About 1,700 jobs for North Carolinians were lost in the move, Hunt said.

Accident claims life

A freak accident with a chainsaw Saturday morning claimed the life of a Perquimans County man.

James G. Baccus, 47, was working in woods behind homes on Nixonton Road when the accident occurred around 9:30 a.m., said Tony Stewart of the Pasquotank-Camden Emergency Medical Services. Because the accident was several hundred yards into the woods, an ambulance was unable to reach the scene. A volunteer's pickup truck was used to transport Baccus out of the woods and to Albemarle Hospital, where he reportedly passed away from injuries to the left side of his neck.

Please see page 3 for obituary information.

DEADLINE

NEWS: 12 noon Monday prior publication.

ADVERTISING: 3:00 Monday prior publication.

Aladdin comes to Perquimans



The Perquimans High School Marching Pirates band opened its season Friday evening during halftime of the football game. This year's show theme is Aladdin, and features four costumed characters, an Arabian backdrop and music from the Disney movie Aladdin. (Photo by Susan Harris)

Emily by-passes Perquimans

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Perquimans prepared for the visitor, but Emily by-passed the county, bringing only dark skies and strong breezes last Tuesday.

County Emergency Management Coordinator Todd Tilley called a meeting early Monday morning to plan for the hurricane, which weather forecasters predicted could move into the Albemarle Tuesday. Attending the strategy session were Tilley, interim Winfall mayor Bert Hayes, county manager Paul Gregory, social services director Crystal Towe, county commissioners chairman Leo Higgins and schools superintendent Randall Henion.

Henion decided during the meeting to close the schools on Tuesday.

"We wanted a wide margin of safety," Henion said last Monday

afternoon. "We didn't want to get into a close call in the morning (Tuesday)."

Henion said his decision was based on student safety, the

schools being used as shelters and the possibility of the hurricane spawning tornadoes.

"We called it very cautiously for the safety of our children," Henion said. He added that he hoped the school system's early preparation would encourage parents and the community to also take precautions.

Some business owners took steps to secure their property against impending wind damage. At Smith's Jewelry and Fine Gifts, owner Anna Smith took down her stained glass, removed her window displays and set a lighted hurricane lamp in the front window. John Christensen and Mrs. Willie Ainsley took down their awnings. The Perquimans Weekly went to press at midnight Monday. All across the county, windows were taped and lawn furniture was brought inside.

On Tuesday, Tilley said he decided to open a shelter at Hertford Grammar School. The site opened at 2 p.m. and checked in about 80 people. Tilley said he stayed in contact with the area emergency management office throughout

County schools get off to good start

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

The new school year has had its share of stops and starts already, but Perquimans County Schools superintendent Randall L. Henion said he is pleased with the overall smooth sailing so far.

"It has gone well," Henion said last week of operations in all departments.

Perquimans Middle School's opening was delayed two days by renovation hold-ups, but Henion said things went well last Monday for opening day. He credited the faculty, custodial staff and parent volunteers for helping to get organized and ready for the first

day in the new facilities. Although construction is not yet complete in the gymnasium and teaching theater, most indoor areas are ship-shape. The entire facility should be complete by October, and school officials plan an open house to allow the public to tour the expanded facility as soon as the finishing touches are applied.

The threat of hurricane Emily shut down the schools last Tuesday and Wednesday, but things were back on schedule last Thursday. Henion said last week that he made the decision to call off classes to ensure the safety of students and staff, and because the schools are used as shelters in emer-

Monday and Tuesday. Officials there told him around 9 p.m. Tuesday evening that the worst of the storm had passed, and residents could safely return to their homes. All those who had sought refuge from the possible hurricane strike decided to leave, so the shelter closed around 9:30 Tuesday evening.

"I wasn't sorry I made the decisions that were made," Tilley said Friday. "You have to be prepared for the worst and hope for the best."

Tilley said no storm damage was reported to his office.

While Emily decided not to visit Perquimans, thunder and lightning boomed on Wednesday evening until early Thursday morning, causing power outages and curtailing sleep for many county residents.

A tree fell on power lines on Great Hope Church Road, leaving many residents in the area without electricity for about 4 1/2 hours. Power was restored soon after 11 p.m.

Tilley said no damage from the storm was reported to his office.

gencies.

"We called it very cautiously for the safety of our children," Henion said about cancelling classes.

The buses ran well, the air conditioning was fixed at Perquimans High School, the new wastewater treatment plant at Perquimans Central School is operational and the new computerized cash registers in the cafeterias are installed.

Henion said he has observed a lot of enthusiasm and optimism on the part of staff members in the schools.

"We are looking forward to a very successful year," Henion said.

Conservation district turns 50

Albemarle Plantation welcomed about 300 guests to its sound-front club house and golf course last Thursday to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Albemarle Soil and Water Conservation District.

The threat of hurricane Emily and Wednesday night's thunder storms blew past Perquimans, offering a perfect late-summer day to recognize the accomplishments of the conservation district.

The celebration swung into action with a 32-team Superball golf tournament, and included tours of some of the conservation projects in the area, boat rides on the Perquimans and Yeopth rivers, awards and appearances by N.C. Senator Marc Basnight, Governor James B. Hunt Jr., U.S. Rep. Eva B. Clayton, state Rep. Vernon James and state Rep. William T. Culpepper III.

Gov. Hunt recognized Chowan Soil and Water Supervisor Lloyd Bunch and inducted him into the Order of the Longleaf Pine. At age 91, Bunch is the oldest soil and water supervisor in the United States. He has served for 48 years.

Also recognized by the governor were G.E. Small and Sons, Jones Lumber Company and Albemarle EMC, district soil and water newsletter sponsors and supporters of other district programs.

The Albemarle Soil and Water Conservation District was established on June 9, 1943 in Perquimans County by state statute. Under the provisions of the act, the district was charged with promoting a voluntary effort by landowners and farmers to implement conservation practices to protect soil and water resources.

Originally established to serve Perquimans and Chowan counties, the district expanded in 1945 to include Currituck, Camden and Pasquotank counties. The district is one of only two multi-county districts in the state and was one of the first district in North Carolina.

An important component of the district's work is the cost-share program which provides funds to landowners who wish to voluntarily implement approved conservation practices on their land.

Through the conservation office, landowners can receive valuable information and assistance implementing such conservation practices as waste management, watersheds and best management practices.

In addition to on-site work, the office uses educational programs to teach children and adults about the important benefits of protecting the environment. Poster contests with conservation themes, environmental field days, teacher workshops, resource conservation workshops, environment and conservation teacher of the year are tools used to promote conservation.

The Perquimans Soil and Water Conservation office is staffed by district conservationist Jeffery Raifsnider and administrative conservationist Ginger O'Neal. Board of supervisors include chairman Floyd Mathews, vice chairman Elmer Laster, secretary Carroll Williams and member George Winslow.

Governor receives local wish lists

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

It appeared that Governor James Hunt was Santa Claus last Thursday, as more than a dozen economic developers, chamber of commerce directors and county officials from across northeastern North Carolina presented wish lists to the governor during the economic development conference at Elizabeth City State University.

John Whitley, director of Perquimans 2020 Vision Coalition Inc., spoke on behalf of Perquimans County. Whitley applauded the governor's efforts to expand U.S. Highway 17.

"The most important benefit of the U.S. 17 expansion is economic development - the increase in jobs and the improvement in the quality of life for the citizens of Perquimans County and our area," Whitley said. "From new and enhanced agricultural programs; to focused industrial development supported by training and development centers; to a broad-based tourism plan highlighted by the Village of Perquimans, farm parks and markets, scenic byways, historic site preservation and recognition, parks and recreational destinations, and other endeavors supported by eco-tourism, the citizens of Perquimans County have the opportunity to seize the accessibility offered by U.S. Highway 17 and other transportation ventures and to prosper."

Whitley said the county will have an opportunity to benefit from the Northeastern North Carolina Regional Economic Development Commission through increased employment opportunities and an improved quality of life.

Requests from across the region included roads, jobs, natural gas, water-sewer improvements, technical expertise, access to day care and funding for water-based tourism.