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# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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35 Cents

## Hertford names manager

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Two familiar faces will occupy the Hertford town manager's office beginning next Wednesday.

The town council hired John Christensen, 46, a local businessman, to replace present town manager W.D. "Bill" Cox, who will retire Dec. 31. Christensen will work with Cox until that date.

"We are really pleased to have someone with John's abilities and concern for the town in this position," Hertford Mayor John Beers said. "We had some real good candidates (for the position) and we feel we have made a good decision for the citizens of Hertford."

Christensen said several factors prompted him to apply for the town manager's position. His degree in engineering, business management experience and desire to remain in the area were key to his decision to seek the post.

Christensen emphasized that Darden Department Store, owned and operated by he and his family, will remain open.

"The store is still a strong, viable business and it's vital to the town," Christensen said.

Although he did not grow up in Hertford, Christensen said he always looked forward to visiting his grandparents here and spending time with the people he characterizes as warm and friendly. He made Hertford his home 12 years ago when he joined the family business.

Christensen has high hopes for the future of Hertford.

"I think there's a lot of pride in Hertford and I want to build on it," he said. "I want to see the town grow. We've got an opportunity with the four-laning of (U.S. Highway) 17 completed that perhaps we can attract some industry to the area."

Christensen said that plans

for business expansion, new businesses planning to move here and the development of several new subdivisions will enhance the town.

The new manager will undoubtedly have some big shoes to fill when Cox, the town's first manager, leaves.

"Bill's got a tradition not just in Hertford but in all northeastern North Carolina with his civic and political career," Christensen said. "I have a comforting thought that Bill said that he would help me as much as he could even after he's retired."

Christensen said his first order of business will be to talk little and listen a lot to help him learn his new position.

"It's going to be a challenge," he said. "I won't learn everything overnight."

Christensen earned a mechanical engineering degree from N.C. State University and worked as an engineer for 10 years in Charlotte before moving to Hertford. He and his wife, Judy, an income maintenance worker at Perquimans County Department of Social Services, have three children, Amanda, 13, Emily, 9, and Lee, 7.

## Dream vacation



The Harrell family will have a lot to be thankful for when they celebrate Thanksgiving. After a year of living through the nightmare of 11-year-old Jennifer's Hodgkin's disease, her bloodwork is clean, and all five of the clan recently returned from a dream vacation to Disney World courtesy of the Make a

Wish Foundation. Jennifer (center); her sister, Jami (right); brother Ryan (front); mom, Sheila; and dad, Pat, will remember the days spent enjoying the sights of sunny Florida and the Disney characters. (Photo courtesy Pat and Sheila Harrell)

## Family counts health among Thanksgiving blessings

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Pat and Sheila Harrell counted a healthy five-month-old baby girl among their blessings on Thanksgiving Day 1992. Tomorrow, they will give special thanks to God for that baby's continued presence at their Thanksgiving table.

The little girl, Jennifer, has spent the last 11 months of her 11 years fighting Hodgkin's disease. Great strides in medicine, a positive attitude and supportive family and friends are the weapons the Harrell family has used in their battle against the cancer that threatened Jennifer. It appears that the victory bugle is sounding. Doctors expect that the always-smiling Jennifer will one day count her own children among her blessings on Thanksgiving Day.

Jennifer's last scheduled treatment was last Thursday. Sheila said the latest test results look promising and if her daughter's blood count stays up, she will be declared in remission. After being "clean," cancer-free, for five years from the date of diagnosis, Jennifer will be pronounced cured. Hodgkin's disease is 95-100 percent curable, doctors told the Harrells.

The family's ordeal began in the summer of 1992. Pat said Jennifer seemed tired much of the time during her summer break from school, staying inside and watching television a lot. Sheila at first attributed Jennifer's lack of energy to a phase, one of many changes children experience growing up. Around the end of August, Jennifer's lymph nodes started swelling.

"I came home from school one day with a great big red knot in the side of my neck," Jennifer remembered.

Sheila, who was on maternity leave from her job as a legal secretary caring for her infant son, took Jennifer to the doctor. It was suspected that Jennifer had cat scratch fever or some other type of infection. Antibiotics were prescribed. Jennifer's lymph nodes did not respond to any of the drugs.

Deciding a few weeks later that

the problem had gone on too long, Sheila took Jennifer to an ear, nose and throat specialist. The specialist prescribed even stronger antibiotics. There was no improvement. A needle biopsy was performed on the knot in Jennifer's neck, but the doctor could not get enough tissue to analyze. While other children were having visions of sugar plums on Christmas Eve, Jennifer underwent an open biopsy.

Pat and Sheila felt like the ball that falls in Times Square to herald the new year landed squarely on their heads. After waiting a week to hear from Jennifer's biopsy, the couple spent New Year's Eve digesting the results: Jennifer had Hodgkin's disease - cancer.

"I've told several people since then, on December 31st of 1992 when I got out of bed I was 35 years old. When I went back to bed that night I was 95 and I've aged every day since," Pat said, recalling the events of the day.

Sheila got the call from the doctor with the news.

"I just started crying," she said. "I had a cousin with Hodgkin's. I knew what it could mean."

Pat called Sheila at her job from Chowan County, where he was working, to see if she had heard from the tests. Sheila told him to come to her office. Pat, who is self-employed, told his wife he was really busy and needed to see some customers.

"She said, 'They can wait. I knew then something was wrong, but not what it was,'" Pat said. "It was a very long ride from Chowan County to Hertford."

Like Sheila, Pat said he also broke down when he heard the devastating news.

Jennifer, unlike her parents,

seemed to take the news in stride, reacting with an "Ok, so now what do we do" attitude, according to her dad. Jennifer said she was never afraid of dying, and her doctor explained to her exactly what her illness meant and what her treatment entailed.

When her classmates dressed in the new outfits Santa brought, went back to school and took spelling tests, Jennifer got dresses, traveled to King's Daughter Hospital in Norfolk and took medical tests to determine the best course of treatment.

Since January, the spunky young lady has undergone two surgeries, including one to remove her spleen, 17 radiation treatments and too many chemotherapy series to count. She has lost her hair, had bad reactions to the chemotherapy drugs and antibiotics (her whole body has actually turned pink and purple), and had to be put to sleep to take chemotherapy because the treatments made her so sick. She will undergo one more surgery to remove the porta-cath, the device inserted into her chest through which the chemotherapy drugs enter her body.

Although she was unable to return to school last year, she earned honors at her school's spring academic awards program for maintaining an "A" average through homebound study. She was able to accept her award on stage with her classmates.

In September, Jennifer started back to school with her peers. She's adjusted well to the step from elementary to middle school. Her body and hair are a little thinner than her classmates remember, but Jennifer

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## Cole named U.S. attorney

By JULIAN EURE  
The Daily Advance

Janice Cole will soon be trading in her judge's robes for prosecutors' garb. The 46-year-old district court judge was named U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District by President Clinton Saturday.

Cole hadn't officially been notified of the appointment by the Clinton White House at press time. But she did receive a call from 1st District Congresswoman Eva Clayton on Saturday, informing her of the appointment.

"Your guess is as good as mine," when



Janice Cole

the White House will call, Cole said Saturday night. "President Clinton is out of town, so I don't know if it will be him or someone else who will call."

As U.S. Attorney, Cole will be the federal government's chief law enforcement officer in the Eastern District, headquartered in Raleigh. It will be her job to prosecute civil and criminal cases that come before the federal courts.

"I'm terribly excited about the appointment and looking forward to getting in there and doing a good job," she said.

"I have very much enjoyed my time on the district court. But it's always nice to take that next step. I see this as a challenge."

Cole said she doesn't know yet when she will start the new job. She's got to be approved by the Senate first. She hopes that might be accomplished before Thanksgiving.

"They couldn't have a chosen a better person," said Clara Boswell, Clayton's district representative.

Cole, a native of Harlem, N.Y., graduated from Fordham Law School. A former New York City police officer, she also served as an Associate U.S. Attorney for the state of New York.

## Ground broken for apartments Albemarle Commission gets new neighbors

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The county-owned office building on Church Street is getting some new neighbors.

A ground-breaking ceremony was held earlier this month for the 36-unit Albemarle Village Apartment complex. Developed by DTH Associates of Dunn, the units are designed for elderly, handicapped and disabled tenants.

"This will be a development the town of Hertford and Perquimans County will be proud of," said DTH general partner Larry W. Godwin. "It's a real enhancement to the area."

The development was made possible through a public/private partnership in which the developers and owners, Albemarle Village Limited Partnership, and the lender, Farmers Home Administration, worked together to meet a specific housing need in the community under FmHA's 515 Housing Program.

Godwin, one of three general partners in the project, said DTH is excited about offering quality housing in Hertford.

"It will be a beautiful complex," Godwin said. "This is something everybody would like for their own mother to stay in. I know I would."

Godwin said the complex will feature 32 one-bedroom units and four two-bedroom apartments. The development will also include an on-site manager, a center courtyard, common areas, a security system and emergency call system.

"The building is a unique concept in that it's totally self-contained," Godwin said. "The security aspects of it are really unique."

Godwin said the village is not a nursing care or rest home facility, but an apartment building for those who meet the income and/or age requirements set forth by the FmHA 515 program.

DTH chose Hertford, Godwin said, because the partnership felt that there is a need in the area and the reception the group received from local officials was so positive.

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## THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

### DEADLINES:

- NEWS RELEASE  
Monday - 3:00 p.m.
- ADVERTISING  
Monday - 3:00 p.m.

