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Candidates speak at Hertford BPW forum

Incumbent sheriff draws fire for deputy vehicle use

By GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Advance

Questions about the operation of the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department by the incumbent sheriff dominated a portion of a candidates forum sponsored by the Hertford Business and Professional Women's Club held here Tuesday evening.

The BPW asked the four sheriff candidates to respond, if they felt comfortable doing so, to a question alleging Perquimans County deputies used patrol cars for personal business. The question's exact wording was, "I read in the paper that the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department doesn't have funds to purchase the required fuel to patrol the county. If this is so why do we see off-duty officers using county

vehicles to attend to personal business?" Questions asked by the BPW came from club members and the public, said Juanita Bailey, forum moderator.

Candidates David Lane and Robert Logan declined comment. However, Tony Perry, the third challenger, did have a comment.

"I disagree with off-duty officers using county vehicles," he said, adding he would implement policies to deal with deputies abusing their patrol car privileges.

Joe Lothian, the incumbent candidate, said he would deal with the situation if a citizen came forward with a specific complaint. He said deputies were assigned patrol cars because citizens were concerned the cars were parked behind the sheriff's

office when deputies were not patrolling.

Lothian took the opportunity to address earlier candidate statements about his deputies uniforms.

"If you have someone with a person in their yard who wants to wait for a deputy to get up and get dress before responding to a call let me know and I can take care of that," he said.

Lothian was apparently responding to statements Lane and Perry made earlier in the three hour forum. Every candidate was asked to list their qualifications, explain what differences they thought they could make and to tell what they considered the area's major problems.

"I like personal appearance to be number one," Lane said. "I want creases, I want spit and shine." Perry said he would put Perquimans deputies in traditional brown uniforms.

"I'm not running against anyone. It's not personal it's profes-

sional," Lane said. "I spent years defending this country. I've come home to defend Perquimans County."

Lane and Perry, in statements apparently directed at Lothian, said they would have their home telephone numbers listed so citizens could reach them 24 hours a day. Lothian's home telephone number is unlisted.

Lane said he would like to establish a volunteer telephone network that would keep check on the county's elderly and homebound population. He also wants to establish an auxiliary force that would handle court protection and prison/commitment transports so deputies could patrol and respond to calls.

"I'm not running because of the job, not running because of the money," Perry, a former Camden County deputy, said. "I'm running because it is a up-most calling from high."

Perry said he wanted "high visibility patrol cars," patrolling the county.

"I will work with the county manager to stop this nonsense of bickering back and forth," Perry said, referring to a recent public dispute Lothian had with Perquimans County Manager Paul Gregory concerning overtime pay for deputies.

"I will work with any law enforcement agency to take care of problems we have," Perry said, adding he wants the sheriff's department to join the Northeast Regional Narcotics Task Force.

"I may be young but I am enthusiastic, energetic, and I have integrity to see these problems through," Perry said.

Candidate James Robert Logan, a Perquimans County deputy, said he wanted to concentrate on the county's drug trade.

"I can sit on my front porch or in my living room and see drug (deals) taking place," he

said, adding he would like to investigate individuals he believed were paying burglars and thieves for stolen property.

"All problems are major," he said. "You should treat all cases the same."

"We try to keep track of everything that goes on but it changes everyday," Lothian said. "There are things I've done that people may not agree (with) but no one can say I've backed down from a challenge."

Drugs are the area's major problem.

"Everything is drug related, it's related to money," he said.

Lothian said the demand for drugs must be stopped and the county's DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program was doing that. He said pressure must be applied to the General Assembly to keep prisoners in prison.

Deputies honored



Deputies Anthony Spellman (left) and Nicky Viselli were honored for meritorious service by the Perquimans County Commissioners for their part in apprehending a fugitive from Portsmouth, Va. recently. Mack Nixon presented the pair certificates of appreciation. (Photo by Susan Harris)

Industrial development leads commissioners' candidate concerns

By GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Advance

The development of an industrial park and environmental concerns will be the issues facing the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners.

These topics were addressed by the four candidates seeking election to the board of commissioners during a candidates forum sponsored by the Hertford Business and Professional Women's Club, here, Tuesday evening.

David Bines Jr., who was appointed to the commission last year under the U.S. Department of Justice's new voting act for Perquimans County, said community involvement motivates him to run.

"I'm not a career politician. I have a career," he said. "I think I'm adequately involved (in community) but I don't spread myself too thin."

Bines said environmental issues needed addressing. Plastics recycling should be offered in the county along with programs to manage the waste flow into the landfill, he said while answering a question posed by the forum's moderator.

"You know what I've been up to the last four years," incumbent candidate Leo Higgins said. "Tonight I want to talk about my passion."

Higgins said the county's tax burden needed to be shifted from the citizen taxpayer, to industrial taxpayer. Recruiting industry and establishing an industrial park is the only way this can be accomplished, he said.

"We've got to put in place a full-time, no nonsense industrial developer," he said.

Higgins said the county could pay for the industrial park development through

a slight tax increase.

Mack Nixon echoed Higgins' call for industrial development. "We can't continue spending all our earnings on ad valorem taxes. We need industry," he said.

Jobs would also allow the county to exploit its best resource - its children, Nixon said.

"It's important to provide jobs to give them a decent income so they can stay in the county," he said.

Charles H. Ward thinks there should be more community involvement in government.

"I wish we could get the folks at cable TV to broadcast our meetings on public access," he said.

Different points of view make up the board of commissioners and Ward thinks his point of view may be helpful.

"I think in the long range, I think for too many years we've thought in the short-range," Ward said. "A lot of times I don't feel we're getting our money's worth for the taxes we're charged."

Ward said he is also committed to and involved in developing a Perquimans County industrial park. Tourism development should also be promoted.

The Perquimans County Primary election is May 3. It will be the first time Perquimans residents vote under the new U.S. Department of Justice plan. County residents can only choose one of the four commission candidates, said Ginger O'Neal, Perquimans County Board of Elections supervisor. Any ballots with two or more marked choices will be declared invalid and will be set aside. The top three vote getters will be seated on the commission.

School board candidates address goals for building strong education system

By GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Advance

Candidates for the Perquimans County Board of Education think Perquimans schools can be the foundation for one of the region's top school systems.

Candidates talked about their goals for the school system during a forum sponsored by the Hertford Business and Professional Women's Club Tuesday evening in the old Perquimans County Courthouse.

The county should be open to state auditing so it can receive funds to implement "home rule," which will give the local system greater self-control, said Charles Cheezum.

"I would like more parents to get

involved and speak to school board matters," he said.

Helen O. Hunter thinks the board of education should do more to publicize its meetings and work.

"Maybe a week before the meeting we should publish an agenda," she said.

Hunter said her work as a parent volunteer and chaperone gave her insight into the challenges facing teachers and students.

"We parents can not let the teachers do it all," she said. She thinks the board should look at ways of judging student achievement instead of relying on traditional testing methods.

Walter Leigh, the only incumbent candidate, said work to upgrade the schools, especially the renovation of Perquimans County Middle School, should make the county proud. He said he would continue offering experience to the broad of education. He also wanted to work on increasing teacher qualifications.

Marjorie Rayburn said her three oldest children have attended school at Appalachian State University, Duke University and the N.C. School of Mathematics and Science.

"I think that shows Perquimans County Schools produce quality students," she said.

Rayburn said her job as a pest control management specialist gave her an educator's background.

Cathy Terranova said residents need to be tuned into the education process and the proper education environment. She also wants to board of education to address the needs of above average students.

"We do a good job with the students in the elementary grades but that (waned) in junior high and high school," she said, adding she would also like the board of education to purchase more educational equipment.

Board of Education candidate Clifford P. Towe was not at the forum.

Basnight to visit school

On Monday, April 18 Senator Marc Basnight will visit Perquimans County Middle School in Winfall. At 11:45 a.m. a brief reception honoring Senator Basnight will be held in the front lobby. After a few brief comments, the Senator will be available to answer questions for approximately 30 minutes. Prior to the reception

he will be addressing a class at the Middle School.

The reception is open to the public. Any questions concerning this event should be directed to Brenda Lassiter, Perquimans County Schools Board of Education, at 426-5741.

Daddy's Dying



Bootstrap Acting Company opened its spring production, *Daddy's Dying*, *Who's Got the Will?* Friday night at Angler's Cove Dinner Theater. The play takes audiences back to Lowake, Texas, home of the Turnovers and *Cheatin'* fame. For reservations, call Angler's Cove. The play runs weekends through April.

DEADLINES

- Advertising Mon. 3:00 p.m.
- News Mon. 3:00 p.m.

The Perquimans Weekly

