

# The Perquimans Weekly 35¢

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Hertford, North Carolina 27944



Dr. Randall L. Henion

## Board endorses evaluation program

### Superintendent's contract extended until June 1999

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

PRIDE is coming to Perquimans County Schools.

The school board endorsed Project PRIDE, an acronym for Professional Roles In Developing Evaluations, during its January meeting last Tuesday evening.

The program is designed to improve the evaluation system for all professional personnel and to provide staff development for teachers and administrators who need assistance to meet high professional standards.

Dr. Randall Henion said that he believes overall, the Perquimans County School system has a very good staff. What Project PRIDE will do is identify those professional employees who are not meeting the high standards expected by the administration and school board, and provide training to help them to improve and meet those standards.

The primary focus of the program will be on consistent, fair, candid evaluations for employees focused on professional growth. Administrators will be retrained to apply high standards consistently, to identify weaknesses, and to develop and monitor strategies to improve performance.

Henion said the board and administration are committed to improving teaching and learning, and feel that PRIDE is a positive step.

Because the project will take time to implement, the board extended Henion's contract until June 30, 1999 to insure that the goals of Project PRIDE are fully implemented. His former contract expired on June 30, 1997.

# Barnes pleads guilty to murder

## Rocky Mount man gets 19-year prison sentence

By GINGER LIVINGSTON  
The Daily Advance and  
SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

A Rocky Mount man will serve a minimum of 19 years in prison for the March 1995 beating death of his uncle in Winfall.

Christopher Lee Barnes, 20, pleaded guilty to second degree murder and armed robbery charges in Pasquotank County Superior Court last Thursday. Barnes was sentenced to 169 months for the murder charge and 69 months for the robbery charge. He received credit for the 10 months he spent in Albemarle District Jail awaiting trial.

Barnes, who was apprehended in Rocky Mount by Nash County law enforcement officials several days after the murder, confessed to killing Harold Copeland, 77, while under the influence of crack.

Under the state's structured sentencing laws, Barnes will serve all 19 years of his sentence.

Barnes was originally charged with first-degree murder. He was spared a possible death sentence at the request of his aunt, Ann Copeland, wife of the victim.

Assistant District Attorney Robert P. Trivette said Mrs. Copeland asked the district attorney's office to arrange a plea bargain.

"She didn't want to go



PHOTO BY BRIAN VANDERVLIE, THE DAILY ADVANCE

Christopher Lee Barnes, 20, pleaded guilty to killing his uncle in Winfall last March in robbing and killing 77-year-old Harold Copeland.

through the trial," Trivette said. "It would have been difficult. We would have had to put the defendant's father on the stand as a prosecution witness. But it was something we would have done."

Mrs. Copeland and Barnes' father, Charlie, are brother and sister.

Mrs. Copeland did not attend the hearing Thursday. Her son, Richard, and his wife, Diane, did attend the hearing, but chose not to speak during the proceedings.

Trivette read Barnes' confession to Superior Court Judge Jerry Tillett to detail

the crime for the court.

Barnes, an admitted crack cocaine addict, was released from Coastal Plains Rehabilitation Center one day before he attacked his uncle. Upon his release, he traveled to Winfall to visit his uncle. The two went out for pizza that evening.

Barnes said he left his uncle's house to attend a Narcotics Anonymous meeting in Elizabeth City, but was stopped by 'car problems,' Trivette said. Barnes said he found a crack rock in his car, ate it, returned to his uncle's home and passed out.

Barnes said he remembered waking up and being greeted by his uncle in the kitchen, Trivette said. Barnes said he picked up a frying pan to cook eggs. The next thing he knew he had hit his uncle. At some point before he hit his uncle, Barnes, by his own admission, had cut the telephone lines.

Neighbors who cleaned the house did not find a frying pan, Trivette said. Blood was found on a walking stick, but there was too little to determine if the walking stick was the murder weapon, he said.

Barnes said he found over \$460 lying around the house,

but Mrs. Copeland said her husband never left money lying around, Trivette said.

Barnes then took his uncle's truck, drove to Hertford and assaulted a female acquaintance in her home. The teen was able to escape from Barnes and call for help.

After that, Barnes drove back to Rocky Mount, where he spent three days smoking crack before being arrested by Nash County deputies, Trivette said.

When Richard Copeland found his father, he could not call for help because the telephone lines had been cut. Once transported to Albemarle Hospital, Copeland was treated for what Dr. Randall Sherman, a neurologist, said was "as bad a head injury" as he ever had seen, Trivette said. Copeland was put on life support until Mrs. Copeland, who was out out state visiting relatives, could return home.

While honoring Mrs. Copeland's wishes, Trivette said he wanted to take the case to trial.

"It was a bad crime. I think the jury should of had the right to decide if he received the death penalty," Trivette said.

Barnes expressed remorse at what he had done, but could only blame his actions on his drug use.

"I don't know why I did it, I had no reason to," Barnes told Perquimans County sheriff's officers and SBI agents, Trivette said.

Barnes said he wants to complete his college degree in prison and join a counseling group that works with youth.



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Former New England Patriots tight end Lin Dawson spent a lot of time during his visit to Perquimans County last Wednesday signing autographs for students and staff alike. Dawson spoke at both the middle and high schools, as well as to the community at large, courtesy of the SADD Club and school system.

## Former NFL star visits schools

### Dawson pushes responsibility, self-respect

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Lin Dawson scored big Wednesday as he brought his message of responsibility and self respect to students at Perquimans High School.

The former New England Patriots tight end drew on the similarities between his hometown, Kinston, and Hertford, immediately letting his audience know that he knows what it's like to grow up poor in a small town. More importantly, he knows how to beat the odds and be successful.

"Every goal I've ever set, I reached it," Dawson said. He said he accomplished his goals by taking the risk of being tagged "not cool" by his classmates and teammates.

"I've never been high on drugs, alcohol or steroids in my life," he said.

He did get called names, but

Dawson said he always wanted to find a way to move his mother out of the projects, and he found that avenue through athletics and education.

After a successful high school football career at Kinston High School, Dawson was awarded a football scholarship at N.C. State University in 1977. In 1981, he was drafted by the Patriots. He played 10 years as the starting tight-end. He was a key player in the Patriots' AFC championship and visit to Super Bowl XX. During his tenure as a player, he served as team chapel leader and player representative.

Dawson is now the Assistant Athletic Director for Student Services at N.C. State. He directs ImPACK, a life skills program that focuses on the total development of student-athletes - academic, athletic, personal, career and leadership development. He is also an ordained minister.

He won several national awards for programs he directed at Northeastern University prior to joining the Wolfpack

staff. Dawson poked fun at a society where self-esteem is based on clothes, namely expensive athletic shoes and low-slung pants.

He told the students that the athletic shoes they pay \$125 for actually cost less than \$6 to manufacture.

"So here you are walking around like you're bad and you're wearing \$5 sneakers!" he told the students. "Who's selling who what?"

Dawson acknowledged that it's much easier to be a follower, but challenged the youth to become leaders and stay away from alcohol, drugs, violence and promiscuity.

Dawson was busy during his one-day stay in Perquimans, speaking at both the high and middle schools, then during a community session at the high school Wednesday night.

The program was sponsored by the P.C.H.S. Students Against Drunk Driving Club and the Perquimans County Schools Alcohol/Drug Defense Program.

## Judge J.C. Cole appointed to state committee

From staff reports

The Honorable J.C. Cole of Hertford has been appointed to the Criminal Laws, Procedures, and Sentencing Committee by North Carolina Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight. The Criminal Laws, Procedures, and Sentencing Committee has been established to study issues surrounding criminal offenses, criminal penalties, criminal process procedure, sentencing, and related mat-

ters. The committee is directed to submit its final report to the 1996 General Assembly.

"Judge Cole's expertise in the judicial branch of our system of government will be a great asset to this committee. Specifically, I expect that his first hand experience in criminal justice procedures will prove beneficial to the decisions facing the committee," Basnight said.

Cole, a 1987 graduate of the North Carolina Central

University School of Law, is currently a District Court Judge in the First Judicial District. Prior to his appointment as a justice, Judge Cole was the sole practitioner in his private law practice. In addition to his legal experience, Cole served as a United States Postal Inspector in New York. Judge Cole also serves on many boards and commissions including the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention committee of the Governor's

Crime Commission, member and trustee for Stevens Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, and as a member of the Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce.

Senator Frank Ballance (D-Warren) will serve as Co-Chair for the Criminal Laws, Procedures, and Sentencing Committee. Other Senate appointments include Sen. Roy Cooper (D-Nash), Ronnie Meekins of Manteo, Patrick Matus of Charlotte, and W.E. Smith of Deep Run.

### Outside

THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
High: 40s	Low: 30s	High: 40s	Low: 30s	High: 40s	Low: 30s
CHANCE OF RAIN		CHANCE OF RAIN		CHANCE OF RAIN	