

# The Perquimans Weekly

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Hertford, North Carolina 27944

## LADY PIRATES ARE NO. 3 IN STATE



PHOTO BY SUSAN R. HARRIS

The Lady Pirates softball team was all smiles as the bus pulled off from the campus of Perquimans High School Saturday. A rainy Sunday afternoon postponed the 1-A state championship double elimination tournament until Monday.

After defeating Surry Central in round 1, the Lady Pirates fell in a nail-biter to Allegheny. Pamlico took advantage of Perquimans' emotional loss to defeat the Lady Pirates in round 3. Please see page 6 for a tournament wrap-up.

## Proposed county budget holds line on tax rate

Fund balance will take hit to keep rate down

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

There is good news and bad news in the proposed 1996-97 budget for Perquimans County.

The good news: The proposal submitted to the county commissioners by county manager Paul Gregory does not call for an increase in the 78 cents per \$100 valuation property tax rate.

The bad news: The county's fund balance will be hit for \$530,066 to keep the rate down.

Gregory presented a general fund budget of over \$6.7 million. Just over \$3.4 million will come from property taxes. Other revenue sources, including sales tax, grants and investment earnings, will cover the other half of the funds needed to operate the county.

"Every Revenue Source has therefore been pushed to the ultimate limit," Gregory's budget message states. "I can only, at this point, hope that all that we do this year will increase the dollars coming in next year to finance the 'Citizen-Requested' Services."

Gregory stated that all items to be paid for from the fund balance appropriation are one-time expenditures and should not impact next fiscal year's budget.

The budget calls for a 3 percent across-the-board raise for county employees. It also adds a provision for up to one-third of the staff, "if found eligible and deserving," to receive a one-step merit increase.

The budget calls for spending \$250,000 to construct a new office building on county property.

"The need for this construction project has existed now for sometime," Gregory stated.

At present, the county is renting space at Apple Tree Mall in Winfall to house part of the Department of Social Services.

The lion's share of the county's budget goes to social services. That department expects to spend \$1.88 million next fiscal year. And Gregory said that figure could increase due to changes in federal Medicaid regulations.

The county does get some help on that budget, however, with a state grant of \$920,950.

If Gregory's budget is approved, the school system will receive over \$1.5 million. Part of the funds for the school system come from local option sales taxes and the land transfer tax.

Law enforcement will take a \$343,425 bite out of the budget. The largest line item in the Sheriff's Department budget is salaries, a \$182,479 expense. The department is also asking for \$4,500 for bailiffs and \$7,416 for the D.A.R.E. program.

The county expects to pay over \$207,000 to Albemarle District Jail.

Industrial development will take \$267,906. That figure includes the \$157,241 payment on the loan to purchase the Perquimans Commerce Centre.

Gregory's proposal also calls for holding the \$60 solid waste fee at \$60 per household, a fee that has not increased since July 1, 1993. He cautioned, however, that holding the fee steady will require that the solid waste fund balance be depleted.

A budget hearing has been set for Monday, June 17 in the courthouse annex at 7:30 p.m.

A copy of the budget is available for review in the county manager's office.

## PCHS graduates 110

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

"Tonight is not a night of the mind, but of the heart," Perquimans County High School class of 1996 valedictorian Alison Boone told her classmates during her farewell address at the school's 71st commencement exercises Friday evening.

"May your every dream become a reality; may your every wish come true; and may the candle of your hope burn eternally throughout your life," Boone said in her conclusion. "Remember those basic rules you learned so long ago in kindergarten and remember to always abide by one of the most important rules of all: No matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together."

Boone took her classmates down memory lane, going back to their first day of school together 13 years ago, and moving through the lessons learned on their journey.

"We have relied on our parents, teachers, and friends to help us get to this point tonight. They have been our safety nets. We are halfway throughout journey. The rest of the journey is now up to us."

Class salutatorian Jackie Downar welcomed the overflow audience to the ceremonies.

"It seems like only yesterday that we began high school, a little nervous, yet very excited," Downar said. "We knew the four years ahead of us were going to be full of fun, but also rough at times. We have made good friends and great memories together...After the graduation ceremony tonight, we will not leave behind these old friends and memories, we



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Perquimans County High School's 110 graduates file into the football stadium Friday night for the school's 71st commencement exercises.

will be adding to them. We will have new goals to reach and new friends with whom we will make more memories."

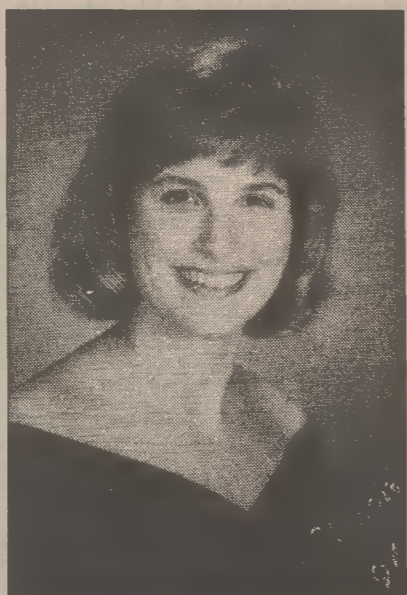
Guest speaker for the evening was Lin Dawson, Assistant Athletic Director for Student Services at N.C. State University. Dawson visited for a Students Against Drunk Driving Campaign earlier in the year.

"Tonight is a night to rejoice, but it is also a time of preparation," the former NFL star told the graduates. "Everything you have learned to this point you will now put to the test."

Dawson used the Bible story of Jesus feeding the multitude with five loaves and two little fishes in his talk.

"Nobody brought food but one little boy," Dawson said, stressing the need for preparation.

Dawson also encouraged the graduates to use their skills and education to the fullest. Among the graduates might have been the young person who will one day cure a disease for which there is presently no cure or help bring about world peace, Dawson said.



Valedictorian Alison Boone



Salutatorian Jackie Downar

"The greatness is among us if we believe it," he said of the futures of the youth he addressed. "It's incumbent upon you to take the challenge. That little boy was willing to give whatever was required. You're going to leave tonight and we're going to trust that you are willing to do the same."

"We're counting on you. America needs you. If you don't do it, who will?"

Dawson continued, "Tonight you need to rise with the eagles. An eagle is not ordi-

nary. We're not calling you to be ordinary tonight. We're calling you to be eagles and I pray that you will. We're counting on you."

In addition to receiving diplomas, recognition was given those students who received scholarships. The names of scholarships recipients will be published in a later edition of The Perquimans Weekly.

A photograph of the class of 1996 appears on page 8; honor students on page 5.

### Inside

- Cancer Awareness Day set.....Page 2
- Student celebrations.....Pages 4, 7
- Youth League update.....Page 6
- Salute to the Class of 1996.....Page 8
- Classifieds.....Page 7

### Outside

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
High: 80s Low: 70s MOSTLY SUNNY	High: 80s Low: 70s MOSTLY SUNNY	High: 80s Low: 70s MOSTLY SUNNY