

The Perquimans Weekly

35¢

Vol. 65, No. 28

The only newspaper for and about Perquimans County people

Hertford, North Carolina 27944

Inside

Town still moving on Keel building



Izell Jackson
What DO you do? by Sean Jackson

Page 3



NAACP
passes up integration discussion

Page 4



Two county All-Start teams win district-tournaments

Pages 6,7

Worship in Perquimans returns next week.

Perquimans County

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Community

July's theme:

GET INVOLVED
focusing on

Citizenship
Helpfulness
Patriotism
Bravery

Incorporate these Healthy HABITS into your daily life and help make our community a better place to live!

For All of Us Care information, contact Sandra Williams Smith Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce 426-5657

By **SUSAN R. HARRIS**
Editor

Town of Hertford attorney Walter Edward detailed the eight-year saga of the town's attempts to deal with the deteriorating Keel building at the town's council meeting Monday night.

Edwards said the General Assembly established strict, straight-forward procedures for condemning private dwellings, but the statutes for condemning commercial property are not detailed in the same manner. He said he has consulted the Institute of Government on several occasions for their assistance in moving through the condemnation process.

The first step, the condemnation, is complete Edwards said. The building, which sits on the corner of Edenton Road and Grubb streets, was condemned and the owners, heirs of Lester Keel, notified.

Edwards was told by the Institute of Government that

the next step was to file for abatement of a nuisance, he said.

At that point, Edwards said he was made aware of developments that caused the town to change its direction in the case. The attorney said apparently several of the nine heirs, Keel's widow and eight children, don't want to own the property, and conveyed their shares to Keel's widow, Janet Keel. She, in turn, conveyed it back. Some heirs then conveyed their shares to Keel's son, Tommy, who now owns about half the property, Edwards said.

The town decided to try to get the heirs to deed their shares to the town, rather than file for an abatement of nuisance, Edwards said.

To date, one heir has deeded her share to the town. Edwards said he expects a deed from Tommy Keel giving his shares to the town. Janet Keel said she would sign a deed, although it is unclear

whether or not she still has an interest in the property, Edwards said.

Patricia Blackwell, and heir and administrator of the Keel estate, told Edwards she believes she can get two other heirs to deed their shares to the town, he said. When all these deeds are signed, Edwards said the town will own 8/9 of the property.

Edwards said Keel's daughter, Terry, will not execute a deed giving the remaining 1/9 to the town.

Once all the deeds are properly executed giving Hertford all interest in the commercial building except Terry's, Edwards said he will file a partition proceeding with the Perquimans County Clerk of Court. If the clerk determines that the property cannot be divided, Edwards said the clerk can order a sale of the property at the courthouse door. Because the single commercial building cannot be sectioned and deeded in sepa-



The disposition of the condemned commercial building on the corner of Edenton Road and Grubb streets owned by the heirs of Lester Keel was discussed by Hertford attorney Walter Edwards during Monday's town council meeting.

rate parcels, Edwards indicated he expects the clerk to order the sale.

At the sale, the town will bid on Terry's share of the property. If no other bids are received during the mandated

waiting period after the sale, the town will pay its bid price — Edwards mentioned \$1 — and take 100 percent ownership of the property. The town would then decide the fate of the building.

LITTLE FARMER



Two-year-old Ashley Phelps shows her cousin, Ryan Onley, what a good gardener she is. Ashley was helping her grandmother, Nellie Harrell, to plant flowers this spring. A handful of old popcorn thrown in with the fertilizer was planted by Ashley as she scooped the fertilizer into flower beds. No one thought the old corn would sprout.

County won't pave way for Island road repair

By **SUSAN R. HARRIS**
Editor

Holiday Island will get no help from the county to solve its road woes.

Subdivision resident Stan Busted asked the county commissioners last week to use the county's statutory powers to assess and collect funds to improve the subdivision's roads if necessary.

"We appreciate you coming, but I don't think the county is interested in taking on your roads," commissioners chairman Charles Ward told Busted.

Busted told commissioners last month that most of the roads in Holiday Island are in extremely poor condition, and that he and other residents want the roads brought up to state standards so they can be taken into the state's secondary road system. Five of the subdivision's roads have already been taken in by the state, but the other 17 don't meet state standards. The problem is that there is no state money available to bring the private roads up to par, and the Holiday Island Property Owners Association has no authority to assess property owners to fund road maintenance.

That is where the county comes in, Busted said. The county has the authority under state statute to assess and collect funds to pay for upgrading the roads.

Busted said he wants to start the road repair project

with Tranquility Lane, one of the most-used streets in Holiday Island. He said the state transportation department estimated the cost of bringing that road in line its minimum standards at \$12,000. With 83 lots fronting Tranquility Lane, the cost per lot would be around \$145.

He brought to the commissioners' meeting a sample letter he said he was prepared to send to the property owners of the 83 lots on Tranquility Lane, asking each to give \$145 per lot voluntarily to fund repairs that would bring the road up to state standards.

Busted said the letter also contained information that stated that if lot owners were not willing to fund the repairs on a voluntary basis, the county could assess and collect the necessary funds under its statutory powers if 75 percent of the owners of the 83 lots signed a petition requesting the county's assistance. The county's involvement, however, would raise the cost by approximately 8 percent due to administrative costs. Busted said he had acquired a list of the 83 property owners and was waiting for the county to indicate its willingness to assess and collect the monies before mailing the letters.

None of the commissioners except Bert Hayes indicated any willingness to explore county involvement in the Holiday Island project.

But Busted said later he and those who support the measure will not give up yet.

Centura to acquire NationsBank branch here

Centura has agreed to purchase NationsBank's Hertford branch, one of five financial centers Centura will acquire from the Charlotte-based bank, according to a news release faxed by Centura Bank to media outlets Tuesday.

The purchases are expected to be completed by the end of the year.

Steven Goldstein, chief financial officer for Centura, said Tuesday that the employ-

ees at Hertford's NationsBank branch will become employees of Centura at the time of the acquisition.

"The employees are an important part of the branch," Goldstein said.

The officer said Centura will look closely at the account offerings of NationsBank and try to match customers with services very similar to the accounts they now have with NationsBank.

Centura already has a Hertford office, located at 400 W. Grubb Street. Goldstein said the decision about whether to maintain two branches in Hertford or to close one branch will be made during the next few months.

Centura said the acquisition will expand its presence in the Hertford community.

Information about Centura is available on its web site at www.centura.com.

Outside

THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
High: 90	Low: 70	High: 90	Low: 70	High: 90	Low: 70
CHANCE OF STORMS		CHANCE OF STORMS		CHANCE OF STORMS	