

Happy Thanksgiving!

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The Perquimans Weekly

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Officials read to HGS students

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Need help with gift ideas? Look for Santa's helpers inside!

Perquimans County an All of Us Community

November's theme: Show a positive attitude.

New DWI law kicks in Dec. 1

North Carolina is putting drunk drivers on notice that tougher anti-impaired driving laws go into effect on Dec. 1.

Lt. Gov. Dennis Wicker, who helped steer passage of the Governor's DWI Initiative through the recent legislative session, and Insurance Commissioner Jim Long will tour the state to inform North Carolinians about the changes in the state's driving while impaired (DWI) laws that include:

- Seizure of vehicle for repeat DWI offenders.
- A prohibition on registering vehicles to DWI offenders with revoked licenses.
- An increase in immediate administrative license revocation from 10 days to 30 days.
- Strengthened sentence for habitual impaired driving.
- Tougher penalties for DWI offenders.

The new law also has implications for local school boards. Local board attorney John Matthews said Monday night that school boards must decide where to store seized vehicles. After the court proceedings for the driver charged under the law, the board may be the recipient of the seized vehicles. The vehicles could be used by the board or sold with the proceeds going to the board.

New public service announcements to educate the public on the new DWI laws and to reinforce the "Booze It & Lose It" message will be debuted. County and city officials, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) members, law enforcement officers and highway safety advocates from across the state will attend several regional events.

Cox resigns Hertford Council seat

Board begins search for replacement

By SUSAN R. HARRIS Editor

A man whose name has been synonymous with politics in Hertford and beyond for decades resigned his seat on

the town's governing board earlier this month.

W.D. "Bill" Cox notified his fellow council members earlier this month that he is no longer able to fulfill the duties of his office and will step down effective Dec. 1.

"It is with deep regret and after much thought and consideration, that I have decided to resign from the Town

Council, effective December 1, 1997," Cox wrote in his letter to council.

"Due to health related difficulties; I do not feel that I can dedicate the necessary time and attention to fulfill my duties as a member of the council. It is my belief that my resignation will best serve the town of Hertford at this time."

Cox sat on council before

being elected mayor. He was the town's first manager, first serving part-time as mayor and part-time as manager. He later served as full-time manager, a position from which he resigned in December 1993.

In 1995, Cox again ran for council.

The Hertford board accepted Cox's resignation with regret, citing the positive

mark Cox's years in politics left on the town.

Under statute, it is up to the members of the council to select a replacement for Cox. The board is accepting applications from town residents to fill the position. The deadline to apply in Dec. 11. Interested persons should contact the town office at 426-1969 for information.

PCHS teacher earns national certification

Robin M. Ward-Dassler, a teacher from Perquimans County High School, has been named by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards as one of 317 teachers nationwide to receive National Board Certification. This brings the nationwide total of National Board Certified Teachers to 911.

A graduate of the University of South Florida and East Carolina, Ward-Dassler has been teaching advanced math courses at Perquimans County High School for the past 15 years. In addition to her classroom duties, she serves as Junior class Advisor, Chairperson of the Math Department and a member of the PCHS Discipline Committee.

To earn National Board Certification, teachers demonstrate their knowledge and skills through an extensive year-long series of performance-based assessments, including portfolios of student work, videotapes and rigorous analyses of their classroom teaching. Teachers also complete assessment center exercises designed to probe the depth of their knowledge.

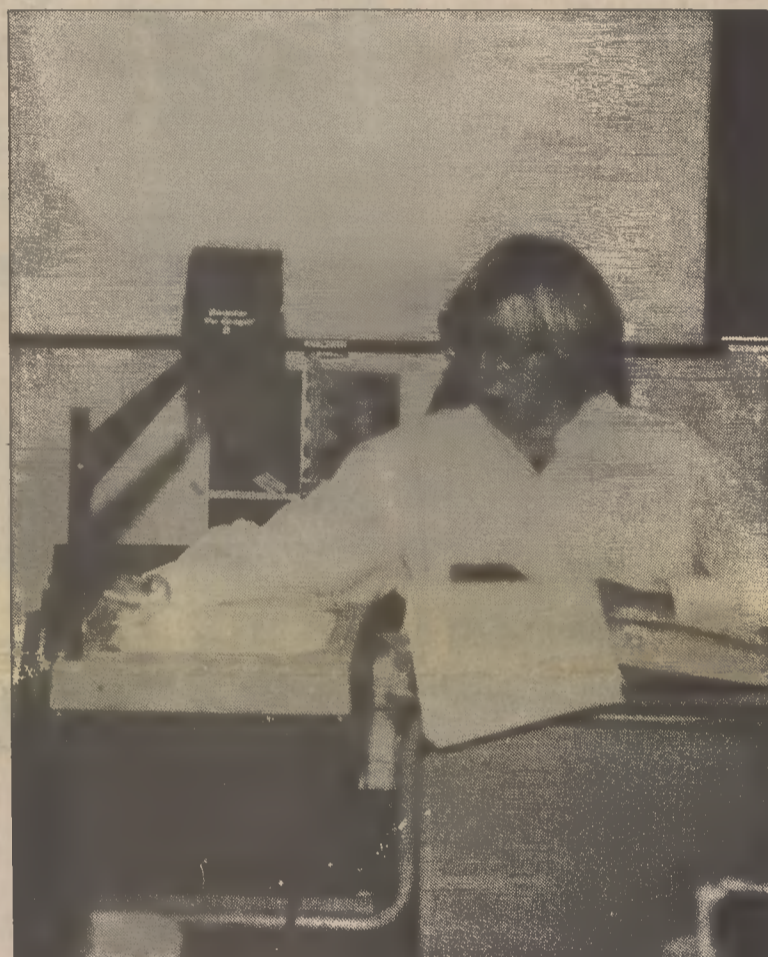
The President of the United States, in his State of the Union address, praised the National Board for Professional Teaching

Standards for "establishing this nationally accepted credential for excellence in teaching."

"These new National Board Certified Teachers embody the professionalism and dedication that is so important to their profession," said James A. Kelly, president of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. "They are dedicated to continuing the development of their careers, to improving the way their students learn and to strengthening the teaching profession as a whole. We are extremely gratified that President Clinton has given the national Board such high visibility. This will help us meet our goal of certifying hundreds of thousands of teachers."

The National Board will eventually offer more than 30 different certificates covering K-12 student ages and subject areas, enabling hundreds of thousands of teachers to seek National Board Certification each year.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a no profit, independent organization whose mission is to establish high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do, to develop and operate a national, voluntary system to



Robin Ward-Dassler, a mathematics teacher at Perquimans County High School, is the first teacher in the district to complete the steps for national teacher certification.

assess and certify teachers who meet these standards, and to advance related education reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in American schools.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is governed by a 63

member board of directors, the majority of whom are classroom teachers.

For more information on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, please call Ryan McDay at (202)667-0901.

School board tables policy

By SUSAN R. HARRIS Editor

The Perquimans County Board of Education tabled indefinitely a proposed addendum to its public comment policy in regular session Monday night.

Board chairman Wallace Nelson said that after hearing discussion regarding public comment at last week's North Carolina School Board Association meeting, he had some concerns about amending the board's present policy. Other board members agreed.

The proposed addendum read, "Discussions regarding particular individual employees, litigation, student records, or other matters which may be required to be kept confidential may not be discussed in the open forum setting. It is not the purpose or intent of this policy to allow for or to provide a forum to air repetitive complaints, or complaints about individual school employees. The Chairman will have the responsibility to determine matters of discussion that may be inappropriate and to rule the speaker out of order, if necessary."

Both Gill Underwood and Roy Murray spoke during the public comments portion of Monday's meeting about the proposed addendum. Underwood urged the board to consider the policy again before voting to pass it.

"I think the public sees this as trying to put a gag order on them," Underwood said. He said he thought he understood the purpose of the policy, but questioned its wording and the way it would be perceived.

The addendum was proposed to protect employees from being mentioned by name in open session. Under state statute, discussion of individual employees is allowed in closed session to protect the employee. A lawsuit stemming from personnel discussion in open session in Durham County prompted the board to review its policy.

Daycare operator earns Reynolds award

By ANGELA FOREST The Daily Advance

Nothing pleases Valerie Chenay Costen more than the smiles of children who greet her at the Perquimans Learning Center every week-day.

Her joy comes not only from seeing them have fun. It also comes from knowing that she's helping these children and their families overcome poverty, illiteracy and homelessness.

Costen, 42, operates two daycare centers and an unaffiliated non-profit organization for low-income families in Pasquotank, Chowan, Perquimans and Gates counties.

She works hard at what she does. And on Saturday, Costen was honored for her efforts.

She was named one of three recipients of the prestigious 1997 Nancy Susan Reynolds Award. The awards are funded by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, a trust set up in 1936 to support projects that focus on community/economic development, education and the environment, or women and minorities.

Winners are presented with \$5,000 for their personal use and \$20,000 for use by their

non-profit organizations.

Costen said she plans to use her organization's \$20,000 expanding a housing assistance program. The money will be added to a \$30,000 grant the program received in January from the state Rural Economic Development Center, she said.

So far, Costen's housing program has resulted in the construction of two homes in Chowan County and the planned construction of a third.

The affordable housing assistance program is one of many services available through United Family Support Services, the non-profit organization Costen created in 1993.

UFSS offers low-income families help in juvenile crime prevention, justice system education and parental training. One program provides families transportation to various social services agencies.

"Not only do we provide transportation to other agencies, we will go with them (clients) on social service interviews and set up hearings for them if they are denied public assistance," Costen said.

"We teach them about the

appeal process and help them obtain Social Security Supplemental Income if their children have medical problems."

One of UFSS's most important functions, according to Costen, is helping those in poverty improve their educations. The agency's primary resource is College of The Albemarle's Adult Basic Education and GED programs.

Costen also is committed to upgrading the work skills of professional child care givers. She's currently working with Elizabeth City State University officials to develop a licensing program for those who work with newborns and pre-kindergartners.

Students would be child care workers at area day-care centers, including ones Costen owns in Elizabeth City and Winfall. Classes are tentatively scheduled to begin during the 1998-99 school year, she said.

At the same time, Costen is trying to help children who don't get child care because of their parents' job or educational status. The state Smart Start program only offers child care for parents who are employed or enrolled in educational or job training classes.

Outside

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
High: 50s Low: 30s DRY	High: 50s Low: 30s PARTLY CLOUDY	High: 50s Low: 30s PARTLY CLOUDY