

## The Perquimans Weekly

Established 1932

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Tim Hobbs, Publisher  
Susan R. Harris, Managing Editor  
Shirley Pizzitola, Administrative Assistant  
Anzie Ziemba, Account Executive

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## Are you rich, Miss Gail?

A little girl who was visiting at my place one afternoon walked with me through my yard and gardens while I tried to answer her questions about nature. Later, back in the house, the



Nature in a Nutshell

Gail Roberson

stones in the garden walk and discussed our common "wealth" in great detail that afternoon. And the great responsibility that comes along with it. I told her of the personal sacrifices she must make in order

to be certain her precious treasures last not only her lifetime, but for those of her children's children.

We talked of how others fail to count the wealth of a tree, or bumblebee, and so think they are poor. We spoke of stewardship and caretakers, and how to use our wealth of treasures without using it up and abusing it so that great riches will always be here for others who follow someday. I told her of a man named Thoreau who was the founding father of all naturalists and who loved children best of all humans, taking any occasion that presented itself to open their minds and eyes to all aspects of the natural world surrounding them.

She asked many questions that day. I answered them all as best I could, honestly and simply, and gave her much food for thought. Never talk down to a child. They know right away that you're doing it, and will close down all other communication.

That nine-year-old child was here almost fifteen years ago. This week I received a letter from her. At age twenty-four, she now has her wildlife biology degree, has spent a year with Greenpeace sailing the seas, six months in the tropical rainforest teaching natives how to earn income without sacrificing the trees, six months as personal assistant to a doctor volunteering skills at a village of lepers, and many other hours helping her planet and its people.

Just ask me, "Are you rich, Miss Gail?" You betcha.

timid child looked shyly up at me with her emerald green eyes and asked, "Are you rich, Miss Gail?"

This is a question I often receive from children. They are interested, not being rude. Children are gloriously cut and dried, bless their hearts, and their innocent but personal questions have always been well anticipated by me.

"Yes, I am," I replied to the child that day. "In fact, I'm probably one of the richest people you'll ever meet." Her eyes widened as she gingerly touched one of my inexpensive little table top treasures that all children are drawn to here.

I took her outside with me that very moment where we stood together in my back yard. "Look up there," I instructed her. "Isn't that the most beautiful blue sky you've ever seen?" She smiled and nodded her head. "I own that," I stated. With my outstretched arm I scanned the woods surrounding us. "See all those tall oaks and beeches, and those pines over by the river, but did you know I own that too?" And the rain forests in South America are mine. And the whales in the oceans and the zebras in Africa. I own them all. And so do you, child."

At first the little girl's eyes were as wide and round as the peaches ripening on my kitchen counter. Then, as children do so well, she smiled a huge grin in common understanding.

We sat on the stepping

### Letter to the editor policy

The Perquimans Weekly welcomes the opinion of its readers. Letters should include the name, address and telephone number of the writer. Letters without signatures or telephone numbers will not be printed. Only the name and city of residence will be published with the letter.

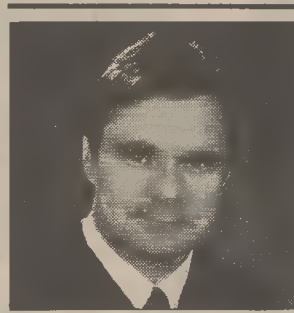
The subject matter should be of interest to the community, not a personal gripe. Letters may be edited for clarity and space limitations.

Submit your letters to The Perquimans Weekly, P.O. Box 277, Hertford, N.C. 27944, or drop them off at our office at 199 W. Grubb Street. Call 426-5728 for more information.

## Jury duty

Judge, I just got a summons in the mail. How do I get out of jury duty? This is probably the most frequent question I am asked as a judge. And I'm sure what most of you mean when you ask this question is: Judge, I am honored to be

called to participate in this most equitable of all instruments of justice, but due to health reasons I am unable to serve, or the date you called me to serve is the most inconvenient time of the year. Right? I thought so. As our Pattern Jury Instructions reflect, "Jury service is one of the highest duties that can be imposed on any citizen, and that is to sit in judgment on facts which will settle disputes among your fellow citizens and to ascertain the truth."



View from the Bench

District Court Judge Edgar Barnes

It is the cornerstone of our American Justice System.

The (3) ways to "avoid" jury duty are: (1) to be physically ill or mentally impaired to the point that you could not sit and comprehend all the evidence during the trial. This would also include the taking of prescribed medicine that would impair your ability to perceive or understand the evidence; (2) If you are ineligible by law, you cannot serve. To be eligible, you must be at least 18 years old; a United States citizen; a resident of the county for which you've been called to serve; not a convicted felon (unless your citizenship has been restored); you must be able to understand the

English language and you must not have served as a regular juror or grand juror within the past 2 years; and (3) Ask for the continuance of your service to a more convenient time.

If you are ineligible, have a valid excuse not to serve or would like to ask to serve at a more convenient date, you can come to District Court in your county on the date set for jury excuses to be heard (which is stated on your summons). This date is usually scheduled (2-4) weeks prior to the actual trial date. At this time the District Court Judge will hear your request individually and confidentially and give you an answer at that time, ruling you to be ineligible, excusing you outright or continuing your service until a future session. Please be aware that if you are (65) years old or older, you are not automatically excused from jury service. But if you have an accompa-

nying debilitating medical condition you may be excused. Furthermore the law does not allow us to excuse you outright because you don't have a babysitter, you can't find someone to keep the store or shop open or because you can't afford it.

If you are willing to serve on the actual date set forth in your summons, but an emergency or unexpected contingency develops after your opportunity to be heard in District Court, you will be allowed to address the judge concerning those matters at the start of the actual trial session for which you've been called to serve.

And if you do serve, for all this duty, honor and enlightenment you will be paid the generous sum of \$12 per day.

God save this State and this Honorable Court. Courts adjourned.

## Addresses

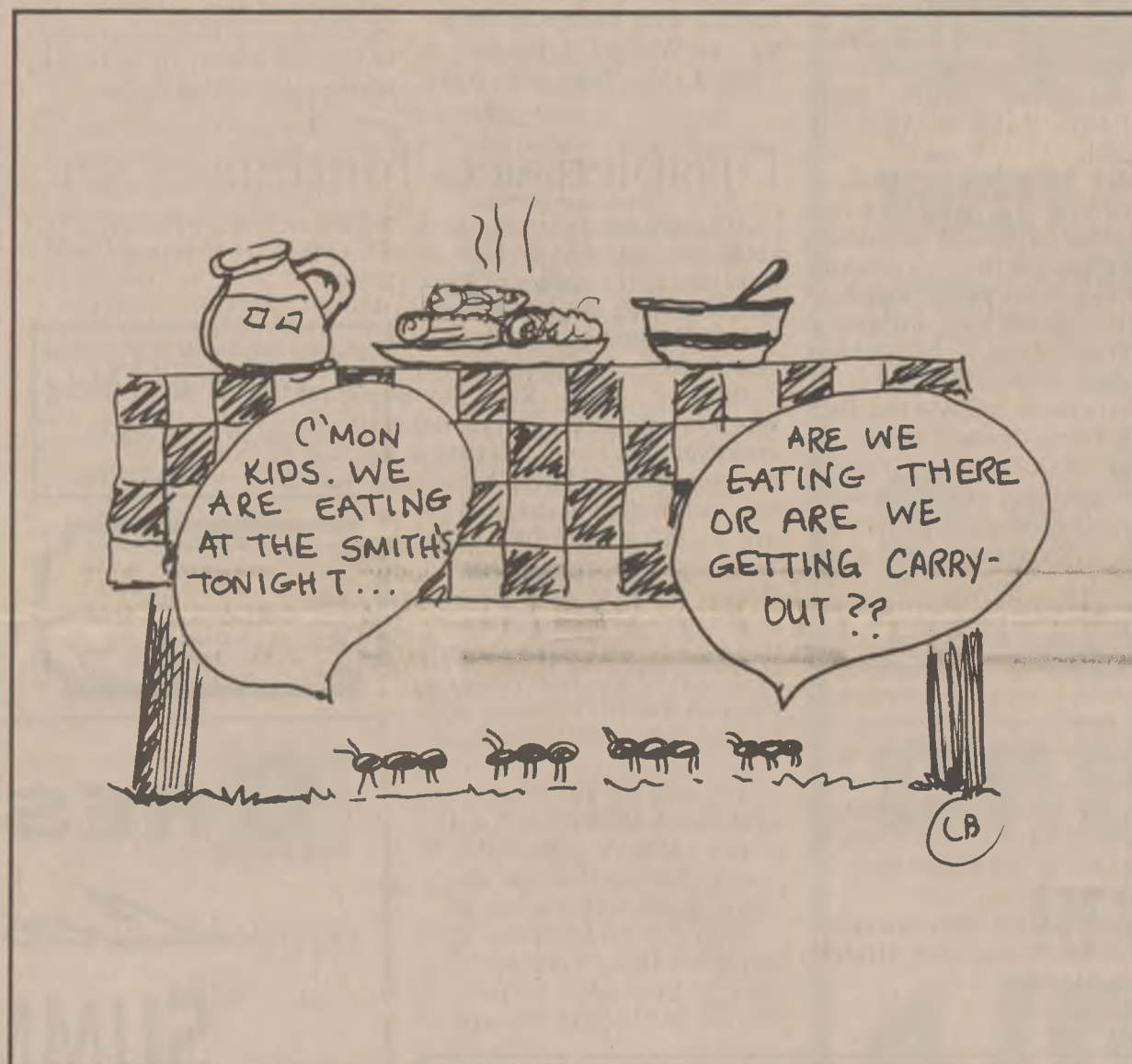
Your local officials need to hear from you if you have concerns. Here is a list of municipal, county and school officials in Perquimans County.

**Hertford Mayor**  
John G. Beers  
P.O. Box 32  
Hertford, N.C. 27944  
Telephone: 426-7805 (City Hall)

**Winfall Mayor**  
Fred Yates  
P.O. Box 275  
Winfall, N.C. 27985  
Telephone: 426-5015 (City Hall)

**Perquimans Commissioners**  
Charles H. Ward, Chairman  
Perquimans County Courthouse  
Hertford, N.C. 27944  
Telephone: 426-8484 (county manager's office)

**Perquimans School Board**  
Wallace Nelson, Chairman  
Perquimans County Schools  
Administration Building  
Edenton Road Street  
Hertford, N.C. 27944  
Telephone: 426-5741 (central office)



## Sportsmanship: practice what you preach

(Editor's note: My 15-year-old daughter told me Saturday night that she wished she could write a column in this newspaper because an issue was troubling her. She could have written a letter to the editor, but I chose to allow her to use my space this week. Today, it's Courtney's Turn.)



Courtney's Turn

Courtney Harris

Before I begin expressing my feelings, I would just like to say I'm sorry if this article offends anyone; however, if what I have to say offends you, you should be ashamed of yourself.

From the very first time I picked up a bat and glove in tee-ball until now, I have always been told you should not sling bats, down the other team, fuss at an umpire, or disrespect a coach. I was told that those things were highly uncalled for, unnecessary and just plain old bad sportsmanship. The main people who taught me about sportsmanship were adults such as my parents and others I looked up to. And I must say, I always thought Perquimans County had the best sportsmanship and most class.

Now I know better.

Never in my life have I been more embarrassed to be from this county than I was Saturday at the Babe Ruth All-Star Tournament in Currituck. Our 11 and 12-year-old All-Star team played a good game

against Currituck that afternoon; however, certain fans, whose names I will exclude, made the game awful. Those fans not only fussed at the coaches, which happens from time to time, but they also yelled at the officials during the whole game. If you remember my earlier statement, fussing at an umpire is one of the no-nos we're taught from tee-ball on. The way those fans yelled and screamed made some look like, for lack of better terminology, idiots. Not only did some fans have no clue what the calls should have been because they seemed not to know the rules, they didn't even know that you cannot file a protest over a call.

One situation that sticks out in my mind as a good example of this was when a player from Perquimans was stealing second and got

called out. Although she was probably safe by half a second, she didn't slide. The rule book clearly states that she had to slide because of the way the ball was coming to the play at the base. Many fans yelled to the tops of their lungs at the official for his call, some even suggesting that he must have been paid off by the other team to call their way and other such nonsense. The fans should remember that some rules, including the must-slide rule, is in the book as a safety measure to protect all the players from injury.

Now on to the main point of my article, "Do we practice what we preach?"

We as children are supposed to look up to our parents and other adults from whom we learn what is right and wrong. Some parents wonder why their children throw helmets, fuss at umpires, argue with their coaches and make snide remarks about other teams.

I come to you as parents and other adults with this thought: Where do they get it from? The answer is you yourselves.

You may now be thinking, "Courtney's not talking about me because I always TELL my children to be good sports." What you should ask yourselves is,

"Do I SHOW my children how to have good sportsmanship?"

Before we play any more games in this county, our parents and fans need to make sure they SHOW us what good sportsmanship means. They need to "practice what they preach."

While you're at it, read a rule book or two and think about how you would feel if you were that umpire. Remember, they're human, too!

(A note from Susan: I attended this game with Courtney. She is correct that there was a tremendous lack of sportsmanship.

There were those fans from Perquimans, those without daughters on the team who stayed for the game just to lend support, who opted to leave before the game was over because of the poor sportsmanship displayed by other fans.

This was a 9-inning game that could have gone either way with a timely hit or out.

On the positive side, the coaches, Jule Fleetwood, Jeff Proctor and John Hurdle, were not a part of the yelling fest. They maintained their decorum on the field, as did most of the players. The players' reactions were basically a result of mistakes they made.)