

RECEIVED
AUG 12 1998

12 013165 10/09/1998 *C20
PERQUIMANS COUNTY LIBRARY
110 W ACADEMY ST
HERTFORD NC 27944

The Perquimans Weekly

35¢

Vol. 66, No. 33 The only newspaper for and about Perquimans County people Hertford, North Carolina 27944

School bus changes overturned Friday

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Planned changes in school bus transportation for the upcoming school year were overturned by administrators during a school board retreat Friday.

Letters went out to parents from schools superintendent Gregory Todd on Aug. 3 stating that for the 1998-99 school year, students in pre-kindergarten through second grade at Central School and students

in grades 6-8 at Perquimans Middle School would be assigned to ride the buses together. The plan also called for Hertford Grammar School students, grades 3-5, and Perquimans County High School students to ride the same buses.

But that plan was nixed on Friday during the school board retreat when administrators decided not to make the changes during this school year. Board chairman Wallace Nelson issued a statement fol-

lowing Friday's meeting that the board would spend additional time investigating the pros and cons of any changes, and would seek parental involvement in the planning process for any changes.

As in the past, middle school and high school students will ride together, and students from Central and Hertford Grammar schools will ride together.

In his letter to parents, Todd outlined the reasons for implementing a new transportation

plan.

"This transportation change will produce the following benefits:

- will decrease 'wait' time for students after boarding buses (Last year some elementary students waited in excess of thirty minutes on the bus before departing for home.)
- only one-half of the bus fleet will have to travel over S-shaped bridge, which will decrease town traffic and traffic back-up due to buses

- will allow all schools to dismiss by 3:00 p.m. (last year PCMS dismissed at 3:20 p.m.)
- will decrease transportation cost for our school system."

Todd stated in the letter that the administration realized there might have been some concerns about elementary and high school students riding buses together, but that student safety would be the school system's primary concern. Administrators at both

the middle and high schools had planned to meet with those students to discuss the older students' responsibility as role models and caring for younger students.

Under the new plan, the time between drop-offs and pick-ups at each school would have been reduced to 10 minutes. Todd said Tuesday that transportation and administrative staff are in the process of realigning the schedules to accommodate the reversion to the old bus plan.

STRIKE UP THE BAND!



The Marching Pirates are enduring the dog days of August to prepare the 1998-99 band show. This year's band features the talents of over 120 students. As is the tradition, the band will allow the public a sneak preview of this year's show at the end of band camp week this Friday at 2 p.m. on the band practice field. The band is directed by David Ziemba. Kim Stallings is this year's drum major.



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Brian Center Health and Rehabilitative Services/Hertford administrator Joe France accepts a check from Hertford Town Manager John Christensen representing Brian Center's electric savings through the peak generation program.

Chimney Masters celebrates expansion

Friday ribbon cutting held for grand opening

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

It's sweltering in Perquimans now, but Roy and Gay Murray know that soon, the crisp, cool air of fall will arrive and air conditioning will be replaced with heat.

And that's when people call on the Murrays, who do business as Chimney Masters, Inc. to service chimneys or stoves, or even install a new one.



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Christopher Murray cuts the ribbon signifying the grand opening of his parents' business, Chimney Masters Hearth and Home Shop, Friday. The business is located on U.S. Highway 17 Bypass south of Hertford. The ribbon cutting was sponsored jointly by the Perquimans and Elizabeth City Area chambers of commerce.

So many people are calling on Chimney Masters these days that the Murrays opened a new shop, Chimney Masters Hearth and Home Shop, on U.S. Highway 17 South of Hertford, last week.

A ribbon cutting was held Friday by the Perquimans and Elizabeth City Area chambers of commerce to mark the occasion.

According to Roy Murray, the couple got into the chimney sweep business seven years ago when he was in the U.S. Coast Guard stationed in Alaska. They were looking ahead to what career path Roy would take when he retired from the Coast Guard when Gay saw an advertisement for getting into the chimney sweep business.

"We figured we could probably do that," Roy said. "We ordered the equipment."

While Roy said the advertisement somewhat overstated the amount of equipment needed to operate the business and the expected income, the part-time business in Alaska did prove to be successful.

About a year and a half

later when the couple moved back to Gay's native county, they looked through the yellow pages and saw very few ads for chimney sweeps.

"We decided to start again here," Roy said. "We started out just cleaning and we gradually got into repairs and relining. Then customers started switching from wood to other things."

The Murrays continued to purchase additional equipment and expand their service. The demand for their services continued to grow.

"It's progressively built over the years," Roy said. "We've got a customer base right now that's over a thousand. And we get new customers every year."

The demand for service was so strong that Roy retired last year to operate the business fulltime.

"We couldn't keep up with it any more (on a parttime

basis)," he said.

With homeowners interested in installing alternative, auxiliary or more modern heating, the Murrays expanded their business to include the sale of stoves.

"We started off with just a few stoves in the garage, turned the garage into a showroom," Roy said. "We were there for a couple of years and we needed to expand."

Now the Murrays have the space to display 18 units in a home-like setting. Roy said Gay had worked hard to set up the showroom so that customers could get a feel for what a stove would look like installed in their homes.

Chimney Masters carries gas, pellet and wood stoves. In addition to selling the units, the Murrays also provide service.

A licensed fuel plumbing contractor and certified chimney sweep, Roy said when cus-

tomers buy stoves from Chimney Masters, all they need to do is call a gas company and ask for service. Everything else is included with the sale.

Roy said Gay is already booking service calls for the last week in August. By mid-September, Chimney Masters will be booked through Thanksgiving, and by the first of October, service calls are set through Christmas.

"We've got a pretty good reputation," Roy said of the early service bookings. "I think we provide a little better service than what most folks have gotten around here. We're not the cheapest one around but we don't apologize for our prices. But we've got good service. I'd put my service up against anybody's."

Roy especially likes to work in historic homes to allow homeowners to use fireplaces that were once unsafe due to lack of service over the years. Regular maintenance can save money and is much safer in the longrun, Roy said.

Once in a while, Roy and Gay's son, Christopher, 9, likes to work with his dad on chimney calls—"especially if somebody's got birds in the chimney. He loves doing those," Roy said.

David, 13, joined Christopher in helping the Murrays prepare for the grand opening of their new showroom.

In addition to Heat'N Glo, Superior, Quadra-Fire, Dober and Hearth Stone stoves, Chimney Masters Hearth and Home Shop carries Hatteras hammocks, swings and accessories; gas grills and fireplace accessories.

The store is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and on Saturday from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Brian Center helps keep town electric bills down

By SUSAN R. HARRIS

This summer's heat has sent many electric bills skyrocketing, but Brian Center has actually saved over previous years' utility bills.

Through the peak shaving/generation program offered by Electricities through the town of Hertford, Brian Center has been able to upgrade its generation capacity while holding down its electric bills.

The health care facility is required to operate its own generator in order to serve its patients during power outages. Brian Center administrator Joe France said that the state encouraged health care facilities to upgrade on-site generators to allow facilities to produce enough electricity to operate at full capacity during outages.

In order to help with this upgrade at Brian

Center/Hertford, France worked with Hertford Town Manager John Christensen to sign up for the town's peak shaving electric program.

During periods of peak consumption, Brian Center's generator is signaled by Electricities in Raleigh. Brian Center then operates on its generator, thereby reducing the town's overall demand. Reducing the town's demand during periods of peak usage keeps the town's electric bills down.

Because Brian Center was willing to participate in the shaving plan, the company earns \$10 per kilowatt hour credit. France said the savings should be enough to cover the cost of the much larger generator they installed in about 8 years. In addition, the larger generator means nothing at Brian Center is not operational during power outages.

For information, call Christensen at 426-1969.

Outside

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
High: 80s Low: 70s PARTLY CLOUDY	High: 90s Low: 70s PARTLY CLOUDY	High: 90s Low: 70s PARTLY CLOUDY