

# The Perquimans Weekly

35¢

Vol. 66, No. 43

The only newspaper for and about Perquimans County people

Hertford, North Carolina 27944

**Inside**

**Pirates, Tigers sports round-up**  
Page 6

**Snug Harbor health fair may have saved lives**  
Page 2

## Drug testing for athletes approved

By SUSAN R. HARRIS

The mandatory drug testing for student athletes proposed by several student organizations at Perquimans County High School was unanimously endorsed by the school board Monday night.

Under the drug screening policy accepted by the board, all student athletes at both the middle and high school levels will be subject to testing. The plans calls for testing every athlete during the school year,

with random tests scattered throughout the year.

Each student athlete will be assigned a number and a computer will randomly choose the numbers to be tested on a given date. Staff at Coastal Carolina Family Practice will perform the tests and report results by number. Student identities will not be known to the medical staff.

The component of the plan that board members seemed most pleased with when a delegation of students presented the policy in September was

counseling for those found to have drugs in their systems. Counseling is mandatory for any student athlete who tests positive.

The board also approved a revised calendar for the school year. The two days missed due to the hurricane the first week of school will be added at the end of the year. The last day of school for students will be Wednesday, June 9.

After a brief closed session to discuss personnel, the board accepted the resignations of Hertford Grammar School

physical education teacher Karen Booker effective Oct. 21 and Hertford Grammar School art teacher Cynthia White effective Nov. 10.

Former Perquimans County Recreation Director Todd Hunter was hired to replace Booker. He will report to work on Nov. 2.

Robert Banks was approved as custodian at Hertford Grammar School and Sarah Eason as exceptional children's assistant at Perquimans Middle School.

Superintendent Gregory

Todd reported that 13 contractors attended a pre-bid conference for the roofing project at Perquimans High School. The board agreed to bid the project in three sections, and want bids to include 20-year warranties. Bids for the project will be opened on Oct. 29.

The board changed the date of its November meeting to Nov. 9 from Nov. 16 to avoid a conflict with the North Carolina School Boards Association annual state conference.

## Phillips turns 100 on same Bethel farm where she was born

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

A lot of farms in Perquimans County have remained in the same family for a century. But not many families can boast that one of its members has remained on the same farm for 100 years.

Not so for Mattie Phillips, born and raised on the Bethel farm where she celebrated her 100th birthday on Sept. 17.

Born Mattie Irene White, Phillips was the youngest of eight children born to her mother, who first married an Elliott and then Charles F. White, Phillips' father.

All the brothers and sisters worked on the farm during their youth.

"Mama told me so many things (to do) by the time I got the first things done I forgot the last," Phillips chuckles recalling her childhood.

Phillips attended Bethel School before she finished her last year — the seventh grade — in Hertford.

At 17, Phillips married Charlie Phillips. It was a day she vividly recalls.

Because all her daughters had married young, Phillips' mother had told all the magistrates in Perquimans County not to issue a marriage license to her daughter. Not able to find anyone who would issue them a license, the young couple went by horse and buggy to a friend's house in Edenton, where they boarded the train for Plymouth. There, on April 9, 1916, they married.

The happy couple retraced their steps, heading back to the Bethel farm. Phillips said when they returned, they could hear her mother in the house talking about telling Jesus all her troubles. Phillips said it did make her feel bad that she had neglected to tell her mother she was leaving when she saw her mother's anguish.

"I thought I was grown," Phillips said.

The newlyweds settled down and raised four children, all born in the same old farmhouse where Phillips herself was born.

In 1937, the couple opened a store, which they ran for 18 years. The children worked



Mattie Irene White Phillips recently celebrated her 100th birthday with her family and friends.

alongside the parents in the general store.

"I was born behind the counter," jokes Phillips' daughter, Marjorie White.

The family built their own home on the farm in 1937, the

same home in which Phillips still lives. The new house was near the store. The original house was bought by Ben Hobbs and moved within eyesight of Phillips' house.

A wonderful thing hap-

pened in 1947: Electricity came to Bethel. Phillips remembers REA running lines out in the county, making life much better for farm families. Telephone and indoor plumbing soon followed.

These days, Phillips doesn't get out much, enjoying watching the neighborhood from the hospital bed in the front room of her home. On days when the weather is good, she occasionally uses the new ramp at her back door to go out for a spin around the yard in her wheelchair.

Stephanie White with home health comes to help Phillips each morning, but she said it is her daughter, Marjorie, who is her main caretaker.

"I've 'bout wore her out," Phillips said. "That home health is nice."

Marjorie has a mobile home in her mother's yard, but moved into the house about a year ago to take care of her mother.

The two obviously have affection for each other and enjoy friendly kidding

around. White joked that she told the home health people that they had helped her find equipment and care for her mother, now what they needed to do is find her a husband. Phillips cackled at the thought, telling her daughter that she did not want a husband, and besides no one would want to marry her.

Phillips was able to get out for her birthday celebration. With a new permanent and pretty outfit, Phillips welcomed her children and grandchildren for cake and ice cream.

And not only her immediate family wanted to be a part of this milestone in Phillips' life. She said she enjoyed visits from neighbors, friends and kinfolks for several days. She received 80 birthday cards, a roomful of floral arrangements and many lovely gifts. She had guests from Texas, Florida, Virginia and all across North Carolina.

The stream of visitors has slowed down now, but Phillips will not soon forget what a wonderful 100th birthday she enjoyed.

## Interim sheriff, deputy want to be next county sheriff

Perquimans County voters will choose the man they want to serve as sheriff for the next four years on Nov. 3.

Running are Democrat Ralph Robinson, appointed by the Perquimans County Commissioners to serve as interim sheriff effective Aug. 1 upon the resignation of former Sheriff David Lane, and Billy Spruill, a deputy in the department who is running unaffiliated.

Robinson defeated Lane by 300 votes in the Democratic primary in May. A short time later, Spruill announced that he had begun a petition drive to get his name on the ballot in November. His efforts were successful.

Both candidates were asked to complete a questionnaire about their experience and opinions on law enforcement-related issues. Their answers appear exactly as submitted to The Perquimans Weekly.

**List all law enforcement positions you have held and the length of service of each.**

**Robinson:** Security Officer Holiday Island, 3 years, Sept. 84-Sept. 87; Deputy Sheriff Perquimans County, 12 years, June 86-June 98

**Spruill:** Deputy Sheriff Perquimans County, 2+ years; Sergeant/Police Officer, Edenton Police Department, 6.5 years; Lieutenant, S&C Security Corp, 2.5 years

**List all educational courses completed and certifica-**

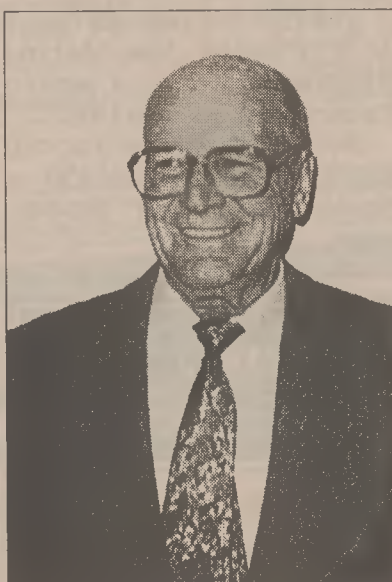
**tions you hold related to law enforcement:**

**Spruill:** Federal Department of Treasury-Firearms and Explosives; Federal Bureau of Investigation-Defensive Tactics; COA Criminal Justice Program-Arson Investigation/Bomb Techniques; State of NC-Basic Law Enforcement Training Program; Commendations-Wounded in Action; FBI and Attorney General of North Carolina Commendations of Merit

**Robinson:** Basic Law Enforcement Training State of North Carolina, certified 1987; Additional certification received for the Middle School D.A.R.E. Curriculum awarded by the State Bureau of Investigation

**Why are you running for Sheriff?**

Robinson: Last year I was approached by many people who were unsatisfied with the direction the sheriffs Department was going. They asked me to run for the office of Sheriff of Perquimans County. After much soul searching I decided that I would run as your democratic candidate for Sheriff. I felt that I could make a difference in the county by unifying law enforcement groups to better serve the people. As the D.A.R.E. officer I observed much work that still needed to be done in the area of drugs and drug related crimes with our youth as well as the adults.



**Ralph Paul Robinson, age 71**  
Occupation: Interim Sheriff  
Spouse: Dorothy Beatrice Robinson  
Eight children, 49, 46, 45, 42, 39, 31, 29, one deceased  
Former elected offices: Board of Education, Putnam Valley, NY, one term  
Education: Graduate, Bellport High School, Long Island, NY; While serving as resident Retreat Director with East Harlem Protestant Parrish Inc., I attended and completed seminars on Conflict resolution, Drug Counseling, and dealing with family problems.

I feel that I have accumulated enough experience and wisdom to handle this position and serve this county well. I look forward to continue to serve perquimans county as I have been for the past 12 years. My experiences as a



**Billy Spruill, age 50**  
Occupation: Deputy Sheriff, Perquimans Co.  
Spouse: Peggy Chappell Spruill  
Two children, 22 and 26  
No former elected political offices  
Education: Vietnam War Combat Veteran, U.S. Army (Honorably Discharged) Martin Community College, Criminal Justice Major College of the Albemarle, Criminal Justice Program Chowan High School

deputy Sheriff in this county will greatly enhance my ability as your Sheriff.

**Spruill:** In order to make a significant improvement in law enforcement for Perquimans County citizens, particularly through leadership by example and experience, I am asking the people

for their vote and support. With my leadership through example, I can affect more positive change as the person responsible for Perquimans County Law Enforcement, and as Sheriff versus being a Deputy. Through my plan of action, if given the opportunity by the people, I will initiate significant yet very cost-effective changes in the Sheriff's Department.

**What do you see as the primary duties of the Sheriff?**

**Spruill:** The Sheriff of Perquimans County is responsible to Lead, Direct and at all times be the Chief Advocate for cooperative and county-wide Law Enforcement Programs including drug enforcement, highway safety, court bailiff, and domestic safety and assistance. As outlined in my "Five Point Plan of Action", my efforts toward positive change include work on improvements in Administration, Department Equipment, Personnel Training, Drug Enforcement and Public Communications.

**Robinson:** As set forth by State code, the Sheriffs responsibilities are the efficient running of the courts, serving the processes that begin the actions and give the courts the authority to decide cases. The sheriff must carry out the orders of the courts and enforce the judgments of the courts. This is in addition to answering calls for assistance, investigating crimes, and

ensuring the general safety of the citizens of perquimans county. Further, I will ensure effective management of staff, resources and budget constraints.

**What qualities would you bring to the job that you feel would make you a good sheriff?**

**Robinson:** I would bring my dedication, honesty, and the fairness that I have displayed to the people of Perquimans County as a Deputy Sheriff and DARE officer. I will bring my good work ethic and instill that same work ethic throughout the Sheriffs Dept. Additionally, I will offer the benefits of my years of law enforcement and management skills to develop a cohesive law enforcement team. I am a people oriented person and I believe that compassion is a virtue that all law enforcement officers should possess.

**Spruill:** My experiences on the streets of Perquimans County along with my varied administrative experiences are qualities that I believe would serve our citizens and this department well. Additionally, people who know me know that I will also bring the virtues of honesty, fairness, personal values, integrity, a strong work ethic, open communications and Christian values to the job of being your Sheriff.

Please see Sheriff, page 9