



# The Perquimans Weekly

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## Hertford selected as pilot heritage community

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Hertford has been selected as the pilot community for heritage tourism in eastern North Carolina, according to Gordon Clapp, director of the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development.

Clapp made the announcement during the conference entitled "Tourism Affecting Communities" in Elizabeth City recently.

"With its tremendous amount of historic resources combined with strong community interest and support, Hertford best met the criteria established," Clapp said of the town's designation.

Now the Perquimans County Heritage Tourism Development Council, a group representing each community in the county, is working to compose a master plan for her-

itage tourism and development in the area. That plan will be submitted to the state in mid-January. It will then be reviewed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Smithsonian Institute, the Folk Life Center at the Library of Congress and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Some funding and technical advice are among the possibilities through Hertford's selection.

Hertford was one of only two communities in the state to be chosen as a pilot site, the other, as yet unannounced, in the far western region. Among the reasons the town was selected was the Hertford Historic District's listing in the National Register of Historic Places in October, as well as the nearby Old Neck Rural Historic District and the

Belvidere Historic District. State Tourism Development Officer LuAnne Pendergraft said local support and enthusiasm for the project was another factor in the decision.

Roughly 77 percent of the properties in the Hertford Historic District contribute to its historic and architectural significance. It is composed of a variety of architectural styles representing many time periods. It is also one of the Albemarle region's best-preserved and picturesque towns, according to information from Clapp.

The members of the local heritage tourism council are working closely with lead agencies the Chamber of Commerce and Perquimans County Restoration Association, and with the support of Pendergraft, who is based in Hertford at the Newbold-White House.

Pendergraft said officials in both Hertford and Perquimans County support the effort to develop heritage tourism here.

Recognizing the value of National Register Historic Districts in marketing efforts, the chamber, with strong support from members of each community, pursued the three county districts' designation. In addition, guidebooks were developed to assist visitors in finding and learning more about the county through a walking tour of Hertford and a driving tour of the county's back roads.

The PCRA began developing historically significant programs years ago, when the ca. 1730 Newbold-White House was opened to the public in 1981. It is recognized as an eminently significant site in North Carolina.

The association is taking steps to broaden and expand

interpretations and programs at the site. Long-range goals include transforming the historic house museum into an interactive, 18th-century farm and living history site. An application has been submitted to the federally-funded Museum Assessment Program for guidance.

Heritage tourism could be a strong component of local economic development. The North Carolina Department of Transportation reports that more than 11,000 vehicles pass by Hertford on U.S. 17 daily. It is estimated that when the four-lane expansion of the highway is completed, that number will increase by at least 25 percent.

Tourism is big business. It is expected to be the country's number one industry by the year 2000. It is already the number one industry in eastern North Carolina.

Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing trends in the tourism market. National statistics indicate a growing interest in getting off of the interstates and traveling the scenic byways and highways.

Heritage tourism entails travel for the purpose of experiencing the cultural and natural environment of another area. It offers three primary advantages for economic development. The quality of life is improved, the potential for business development is high and the economic base is diversified. Heritage tourism offers the opportunity to capitalize on the economic value of the unique and varied cultural and natural resources found in the community, without compromising natural resources and stressing infrastructure, schools and local government services.

## Council votes no to new fire truck

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The decision not to purchase a new fire truck has some Hertford firefighters blazing.

After what was described by some firefighters as an emotional discussion last Monday night, Hertford Town Council voted not to purchase a \$185,000 truck to replace both 1963 and 1969 pumpers presently used by the department in addition to a 1994 truck.

Council first denied the fire department's request in September. At that meeting, Councilman Carlton Davenport said that while he realized some of the department's rolling stock was not in good shape, he was not in favor of authorizing the purchase of the truck when the town was on the brink of borrowing \$850,000 for electric improvements and issuing up to \$4.8 million in bonds for water and sewer improvements. He recommended that council wait until after the Nov. 3 general election to see if state and local bond referendums were approved to make a decision.

Although both bond issues were approved and council has secured partial grant funding for the utilities projects, Davenport still voted against the truck purchase in November.

Councilman Billy Winslow said in September that the town has gone "overboard in the fire department." He questioned the department's mutual aid response, both fire and wreck calls. Winslow also voted against the truck purchase, as did Horace Reid.

Sid Eley, the fire chief and a councilman, said failure to upgrade equipment in the 1970s and 1980s caused the present needs in the department.

Hertford firefighters have raised \$20,000 to put toward the truck's purchase.

Last week, the department received a \$15,000 state grant through the Department of Insurance's Volunteer Fire Department Grant Fund for equipment and supplies.

(See related letter to the editor, page 4.)

## Central School on target for Jan. finish

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Each day brings Central School students and teachers one day closer to the big move.

Construction at the new Central School in Winfall is on schedule and expected to be completed on schedule in January.

That was the report M.B. Kahn Construction Company Project Engineer Derek Faulkenberry gave at the November meeting of the board of education.

Faulkenberry reported that the mechanical duct installation was completed in wings A and B, with wing B near completion. The mechanical units in wing A were operational, and wing C anticipated to be operational this week.

N.C. Power completed the primary power service, with temporary permanent power turned on in early October.

Drywall installation is complete in all wings, with painting in progress. Floor tile was scheduled to begin this week.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Construction is on schedule at the new Central School in Winfall, according to supervisors with M.B. Kahn Construction Company. Kahn anticipates that students and teachers will be able to move into the new facility sometime in January or February.



## Holiday season gets underway

Holiday events will begin here this weekend, as the Hertford Downtown Merchants Association hosts the first annual "A Christmas in Carolina" Saturday.

Kicking off at 10 a.m. with entertainers performing songs of the season, the day will be filled with Christmas spirit. Apple cider, nachos and popcorn will be available from street vendors.

All of the merchants will be kicking off Christmas sales with a special theme on Saturday — The Downtown Hertford Bathrobe Sale. Shop the stores in your PJs, spend a designated amount in each store, and receive a coupon for a free sausage biscuit at Frankie's Hertford Cafe. The bathrobe sale ends at noon.

The festivities run until 4 p.m.

The annual chamber-sponsored holiday parade, "A Carolina Christmas," will wind its way through the streets of Hertford on Dec. 5 at 2 p.m.

Chamber organizers are asking bands, businesses, and church, civic and school groups to participate in the parade.

North Carolina Representative Bill Owens and his wife, Cynthia, will serve as parade grand marshalls.

Applications are available at the chamber office or by calling 426-5757.

## Welfare reform changes the welfare system

### County partners with workforce board to train recipients for jobs

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Welfare reform legislation has dramatically changed the nation's welfare system. Now, through federally-supported state initiatives such as North Carolina's WorkFirst, welfare recipients are required to work in exchange for time-limited assistance. In addition,

programs provide support for families moving from welfare to work.

"The focus on moving people from welfare to work is a primary goal of federal, state and local welfare policy," Karen Clary, Workforce Development Director of the Mid-East Commission told the Perquimans County Commissioners recently. "The Balanced Budget Act of 1997, signed by the President on Aug. 5, 1997, provides additional resources to achieve this goal by providing counties with Welfare to Work Grants for transitional employment assistance to move hard-to-

employ welfare recipients into long-term employment."

Perquimans County will receive \$58,953 to assist TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) recipients obtain and retain gainful employment, and thus move off assistance rolls.

The local program is administered by the Regional R. Workforce Development Board through the Mid-East Commission in joint partnership with the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners. The Perquimans County Department of Social Services is an integral partner in the

planning and implementation of services.

Brian Center Administrator Joe France and Monty Spindler represent Perquimans County on the Region R. Workforce Development Board. France serves as vice-chair and chairs the board's JobLink Committee. Spindler chairs the Public Relations Committee. Both are members of the board's executive committee. Evelyn Stubbins represents the board of commissioners on the Region R. Job Training Consortium.

While updating the board of commissioners on the Welfare

to Work Grants earlier this month, Clary also briefed the group on the Job Training Partnership Act activities for the last program year. Forty-two county residents received services through the Dislocated Worker Program, Summer Youth Employment Program, Youth Activities or Adult Training Activities, all components of JTPA. Clary used visuals to show commissioners that average wages for graduates of the Dislocated Worker and Adult Training Programs was higher than most entry-level wages in the county, at \$10.21 and \$6.96, respectively.