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Meeting to focus on local tourism

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Those who would like to have input into planning a comprehensive heritage tourism program in the county may do so at a public meeting next Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the historic Perquimans County courthouse.

Attending the meeting will be representatives of the Perquimans County Heritage Tourism Development Council, the team of local residents who are developing a master plan for Hertford's future as a heritage tourism community. The plan will be submitted to the N.C. Division

of Tourism, Film and Sports Development. Bettie Stokes is chairing the committee developing the plan for Hertford Township. Harriette Woodard chairs the committee developing the plan for the downtown district.

Hertford was recently named as the pilot community for heritage tourism development in eastern North Carolina, one of only two sites to be chosen in the state. Director of the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development Gordon Clapp cited the town's tremendous historic resources and strong community interest and support as key reasons for

its selection.

Interest in preserving the rich history of the area has remained strong for many years thanks to the efforts of the Perquimans County Restoration Association. That organization's first project was the restoration of the Newbold-White House, the oldest standing brick house in North Carolina. The site is now a historic complex featuring the restored and furnished house, the restored David Newby Cottage and a visitor's center. Tours and a video interpret the importance of the Newbold-White House not only to local history, but to the history of the state as well.

The ongoing work of the PCRA coupled with growing knowledge of the positive economic results of tourism brought the Chamber of Commerce into the efforts to highlight the area's history. The chamber has worked for many years to promote downtown renovation and restoration and other tourism promotions.

Working together with others interested in preserving and promoting historic preservation and tourism, a committee was formed to develop the Old Neck Rural Historic District and submit a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Next, interest

in the Belvidere community sparked that area's move to become a National Register District. Hertford is the latest community to be included in the Register.

In addition to the establishment of the historic districts and the restoration and development of Newbold-White, the chamber developed guidebooks for the Hertford Walking Tour and audiotapes for a driving tour through the county's scenic backroads.

PCRA is also taking steps to broaden and expand interpretation and programs at the Newbold-White historic complex.

Recognizing the potential in

eastern North Carolina, the Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development hired LuAnne Pendergraft as a tourism development officer based at the Newbold-White House.

The Tourism Development Council is now considering the resources and programs already in place and developing a plan to integrate those existing resources with more steps to bring tourists into the area.

Tuesday's meeting will allow interested county residents to ask questions and have input into the plan to be submitted to state and federal agencies for review.

S bridge hours may shorten

By SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

The U.S. Coast Guard is considering changes to the hours of operation of the draw bridge across the Perquimans River.

The requested changes would require the draw to operate as follows: During May through September, the draw would open on signal from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. seven days per week; during April and October, the draw would open on signal from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; during March and November, the draw would open on signal from 10 a.m.-10 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays; during December, January and February, 24-hour advance notice would be required for openings. At all other times, the draw would not be required to open.

The bridge is currently required to open on signal.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation requested that the Coast Guard modify the hours of operation of the bridge. The proposal is intended to reduce the cost of manning the draw bridge 24 hours a day while still providing for the reasonable needs of navigation.

NCDOT reported to the Coast Guard that the bridge presently operates as follows: April 1-Sept. 31, 8 a.m. until midnight; Oct. 1-March 31, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. With the blessings of the Town of Hertford, NCDOT requested that the number of hours the bridge is attended be decreased. In support of the request, NCDOT reported that in the 3 years from 1995-1997, the bridge opening logs show that marine vessel traffic significantly decreased during April and at night from 10 p.m.-midnight throughout the year.

The Coast Guard reviewed the logs and verified that the bridge opened 233 times from January 1995-December 1997, a decrease from 370 openings from January 1992-December 1994.

Those who wish to make written comments concerning the proposed change may write Commander, USCG Atlantic Area (Aowb), 431 Crawford St., Portsmouth, Va. 23704-5004 by Dec. 9. All correspondence should include the party's name and address, the rulemaking number (CGD05-98-069) and the specific section of the rule to which the comment applies. The document may be reviewed at the Hertford Town Offices.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN HARRIS

Phillip Brent, Brandy Hollowell, and Linwood Jackson (left to right, front) earned first, second and third places, respectively in the premiere Perquimans Arts League Young Artist Competition. Noted for honorable mention were (back) David Haislip, Matthew White, Jason Warden and John Grosjean. The winning art was on display at the PAL Gallery (below) during November and is now at the Perquimans County Library.

Youth win art contest

From staff reports

Seven local young artists created lasting impressions for the premiere Perquimans County Young Artist Competition sponsored by the Perquimans Arts League last month.

"All your entries were so good the judges really had a difficult time choosing the winners," PAL president Dolores Davenport told the youth as she presented the awards Monday. "You are all very talented and we hope you'll continue your interest in the arts."

Phillip Brent claimed first place, a check for \$75. Second place and \$50 went to Brandy Hollowell for her untitled drawing. Linwood Jackson's entry, "The End of the Line," earned third place and \$25. Honorable mention recognition went to John Grosjean, David Haislip, Jason



Warden, and Matthew White. Each student received a one-year membership in PAL and a grant to participate in any PAL-sponsored art class or workshop during 1999. The PAL membership will also allow the young artists to display and sell their work at the organization's gallery.

The art contest was open to all high school students, and all forms of art were accepted. One entry was a

decorated cake. Davenport said PALs put no restrictions on art forms for the contest in order to allow the young artists to be creative and encourage entries in all media.

The winning works were displayed at the PAL gallery in Hall of Fame Square through November. They are now hung in the Perquimans County Library, where they can be viewed throughout the month.

Nosebleeds plague Central School

Health officials called to inspect, recommend ways to curtail problem

From staff reports

Construction for the new pre-k-2 school facility in Winfall is on schedule — and won't be completed a moment too soon, according to schools superintendent Gregory T. Todd.

The existing Perquimans County Central School in Winfall dates back to 1939 and the building is deteriorating, overcrowded and outdated. In addition, students and staff at the school have experienced an increase in nosebleeds in recent weeks.

Last month, eight students and one teacher, all assigned to one of the school's mobile units, were diagnosed with nosebleeds. Once notified of the situation, Todd said he took immediate steps to research the causes and look for ways to prevent further problems.

School nurse LouAnn Jackson contacted Tim Peebles, Environmental Specialist at PPCC District Health Department, after the increase in nosebleeds. Peebles advised the school to change all air filters in the outside buildings and to check with the construction manager about any possible chemicals and fumes at the construction site that may cause nasal passage irritation. Direk Faulkenberry, Site Engineer for Kahn Construction, verified that no chemicals used in the construction of the new

facility would be dangerous to students.

In a letter dated Oct. 22 to Todd from PPCC Environmental Specialist Walker Rayburn, Rayburn stated, "Although I cannot say that you do or do not have an indoor air quality problem, dust could reduce indoor air quality."

Neither Rayburn nor Jackson could confirm why there has been an increase in student nosebleeds, only that dirty air filters, dust, farming, an unusually dry summer and the time of the year contribute to the nosebleed problem.

Rayburn visited the school in October and recommended that all classrooms be thor-

oughly cleaned to reduce dust and to open windows as weather and construction work permitted to bring in fresh air. In addition to dust control, these efforts may help to reduce mold growth, which can cause air quality problems.

"The safety of the students is my primary concern. I will take whatever steps necessary to ensure a safe learning environment for the students."

Gregory T. Todd
Perquimans Schools
Superintendent

School principal Susan Winslow said Rayburn's recommendations are being carried through. Rayburn will inspect the school again this month and immediately report his findings to Todd.

Students continue to be monitored closely for nosebleeds, Todd said. A log is being kept of reported nosebleeds and Todd is being kept apprised of the situation.

"The safety of the students is my primary concern," Todd said. "I will take whatever steps necessary to ensure a safe learning environment for the students."

Construction of the new facility, located directly behind the present structure, is on schedule for occupancy in January, Todd said.

Gustafson directs of Perquimans County Communities in Schools

Barbara Gustafson has been named Executive Director of the Perquimans County Communities In Schools.

She will be working to integrate the delivery of services at the schools.

"The focus for this year will be on reading, writing and math," said Gustafson. "Our

goal will be to provide reinforcement of what students are taught during school." Gustafson said her board is committed to serving students as well as other areas of interest in the county.

Communities In Schools is a nationwide nonprofit organization that helps the communi-

ty take responsibility for its own children and their education. It is a process that engages a wide range of private businesses and public human service organizations in collaborative action to identify and meet the needs of students and their families.

Founded in 1977,

Communities In Schools Inc. provides leadership support to the nation's largest stay-in-school network. The CIS mission is to champion the connection of needed resources with schools to help young people successfully learn, stay in school, and prepare for life. Small, caring teams of social

service providers form one-on-one relationships with students and work alongside teachers, volunteers, and mentors in the battle to keep children in school.

For additional information on Communities In Schools or to volunteer, call Gustafson at 426-9698.