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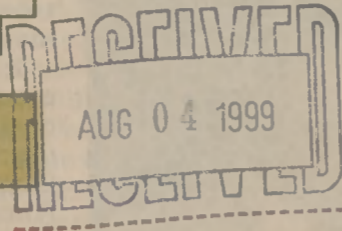
Be safe in pools, river  
 page 8

Babe Ruth Baseball champs  
 page 6

Class of '49 meets  
 page 3

August 5, 1999

Vol. 67, No. 30 Hertford, North Carolina 27944



# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

35 cents

## Ruritans sponsor ALS benefit

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
 Editor

The Bear Swamp-Beech Springs Ruritans hope the second grassroots benefit for the Jim "Catfish" Hunter ALS Foundation will be as successful as the first venture.

On May 8, the Bear Swamp-Beech Springs Ruritans joined forces with the Perquimans County Athletic Boosters during the annual Old Timer's Day to kick off the Foundation. The response was overwhelming. Literally hundreds of volunteers gave thousands of hours of time to plan, promote and pull off the event which drew about 3,000 people to Memorial Stadium. The all-day event netted \$64,634.88.

"The success of the kickoff was due to the overwhelming response from the many people who gave their time and talents and from the many gracious sponsors," said Ruritan spokesperson Bill Newbern. "Without their help, we could not have been this successful."

On Nov. 6, the Ruritan Club hopes to match that initial success with the inaugural Jim "Catfish" Hunter Golf Classic. The Ruritans are sponsoring the tournament for the Foundation.

Newbern said the late fall date was chosen to avoid conflicts with the World Series, as some of the major league baseball players, coaches and managers have said they want to come match their skills against The Sound Golf Links at Albemarle Plantation and be a part of the Hunter ALS Foundation.

Team entries (\$400), hole sponsorships, cart sponsorships and donations for the silent auction and door prizes are being accepted by Newbern (426-8349) and Wayne Howell (426-7844), the chairmen of the golf tournament. Entry, donation and sponsorship forms are also available at The Perquimans Weekly office. The deadline for entering the tournament is Sept. 27. There is a 36-team limit, and teams will be accepted in order of receipt of entry forms and fees.

Since the May 8 event, many individuals and businesses, both local and across the nation, have held events and made donations to the Foundation. Recently, the Kill Devil Hills K-Mart sponsored a barbecue chicken dinner and silent auction to benefit the Foundation. Newbern said \$7,610 was netted from the event. He added that store manager Jennie Veteto worked hard to plan the event, and many of the store employees gave their time to work the auction and other events during the day. The Bear Swamp-Beech Springs Ruritans, along with a delegation of county residents and natives, cooked and served the chicken. In addition, events have been held in Oakland, Edenton and Norfolk during baseball games to benefit the foundation.

Newbern said the Foundation is officially set up and its board of directors in place.

## Porter's Chapel total loss after Sunday blaze

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
 Editor

The fire that destroyed Porter's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church Sunday night did not burn out the spirit of those who worship there.

The Rev. Catherine W. Griffin, pastor of the church located on Weight Station Road, said the same spirit that has kept the church serving the community for over 100 years will sustain it through this troubled time.

"I just told the members last night that we'll keep going. Some good will come out of this. The Bible says that all things work together for good for them who love the Lord. I told the members we'll stay together to build a new church. I just thank the community and the firemen. Everyone has been so good to us."

The fire apparently started when lightning struck the church steeple or roof during a severe storm that passed through the region Sunday night.

The Intercounty Fire Department was called around 9 p.m., said Chief Eugene Rountree Sr. Firefighters arrived to find the steeple fully engulfed in flame. When they turned the hoses on the steeple, the whole ceiling caved in.

"I knew we were in trouble then," Rountree said.

The fire, which Rountree said was extremely hot, could not be brought under control, even with the help of an army of firefighters and equipment. Support arrived from Winfall, Hertford, Bethel and Durants Neck in Perquimans County and Nixonton and Weeksville in Pasquotank County.

Rountree said tankers were refilling at the fire hydrant on U.S. Highway 17 Bypass on the Hobbs Implement Company site, going to the church, then circling back around on Chapanoke Road to U.S. 17 to fill again.

Aside from the church building being aflame and the thunderstorm still raging, firefighters had to watch a gas tank close to the church, Rountree said. Several firefighters kept the tank hoisted



PHOTO BY SAM WOLFE, THE DAILY ADVANCE

Firefighters with Intercounty Volunteer Fire Department battle the blaze that destroyed the 98-year-old Porter's Chapel A.M.E. Zion church on Weight Station Road Sunday night (above). At least six other fire departments in Perquimans and Pasquotank counties responded to the fire.

By Monday morning, little was left of the historic structure (right). A cloud of white smoke reached into the sky much like the church steeple had before the devastating fire.

down to keep it from becoming too hot.

Firefighters were on the scene until after 11 p.m., Rountree said.

Rev. Griffin said firefighters did all they could to save the church.

"They said they tried everything. It was just too far gone," she said.

Griffin could not find all of the church history that she had filed at her home on Monday, but said she had recently researched Porter's Chapel's beginnings as part of the heritage tourism development committee in the county. She said she could not remember exactly when the congregation was born, but that services were first held in the school house which still sits on



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

the church property. The building that fire claimed Sunday was constructed in 1901.

Porter's Chapel is the second church building to be consumed by fire after a lightning strike. Several years ago, Winslow Grove in the Belvidere community suffered the same fate. That congregation has since rebuilt and now worships in a new building.

As word of the catastrophe spread, gestures of relief

began to arrive.

Already other church families are reaching out, Griffin said. She said that several churches have offered their buildings to the Porter's Chapel congregation to hold services in until they can rebuild.

Griffin said Monday morning that she stayed up all night praying. With the recent growth and faith that have taken place in the congrega-

tion, the Porter's Chapel minister of two years believes that God has a plan for the church in the future. She said she planned to call the membership together this week to discuss where to hold services and begin the process of organizing and rebuilding.

While losing the building is sad, Griffin she feels sure that something great will be built from the ashes of what has been lost.

## Judge withdraws from HPD officer's trial

### Cole, Parrish will not hear Boone's case

JEREMY DESPOSITO  
 The Daily Advance

A district court judge withdrew himself from the trial of a Hertford policeman last week, saying his familiarity with the officer could raise questions of bias.

Judge J. Carlton Cole recused himself from the trial of Charles Boone Jr., the offi-

cer facing charges of simple assault.

As a police officer in Hertford and formerly in Elizabeth City, Boone handled two cases tried in Cole's courtroom, the judge said.

A warrant for the misdemeanor charge was issued for Boone on June 24 after he allegedly rammed a man's head into a car window and threw him to the ground.

At the time of the incident, which took place in January, the complainant, Richard Williams Jr., was being arrested by another Hertford police officer for allegedly assaulting Boone's sister on the same day.

This is the second time Boone has faced criminal charges. In August 1998, an individual complained that Boone, then an Elizabeth City police officer, pointed a gun at him.

That charge was dismissed, but Boone later resigned from the city police department.

Elizabeth City Police Capt. William "Bill" Williams Jr. said Boone resigned to accept the job in Hertford.

District Attorney Frank Parrish has also recused himself from Boone's trial. A prosecuting attorney from outside the 1st Judicial District will prosecute the case.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Johnson said recusing a judge or prosecutor is common when the case involves a law enforcement officer.

Cole said it's a matter of fairness.

"If you decide in the officer's favor, they say it was favoritism," said Cole, who's recused himself only one other time in nearly six years on the bench.

"It's a routine practice. (Boone) lives in this area. (A recusal) gives the appearance of fairness."

Boone's trial will be held Sept. 1. The officer remains on active duty.

## WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY  
 High: 80s  
 Low: 70s  
 MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY  
 High: 80s  
 Low: 70s  
 PARTLY SUNNY

SATURDAY  
 High: 80s  
 Low: 70s  
 PARTLY SUNNY