

Section B
is our annual
Christmas Greetings
section

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

December 23, 1999
Vol. 67, No. 51 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

35 cents

THE REASON FOR THE SEASON



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Around the world, Christians are celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, God's Son, during the Advent and Christmas seasons. The story of the birth in a stable in Bethlehem can be found in the Bible in the New Testament. The coming of the Messiah was foretold in the old testament by the prophets. As part of the observance of Christmas, many Christian churches display a nativity during the season, like this one at Hertford Pentecostal Church on Grubb Street.



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Community sends good will by not sending cards

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Many families at Albemarle Plantation didn't send each other Christmas cards this year. They weren't being grouches and bah-humbugging the season. Instead, they participated in a project that sent over \$2,000 to those in need.

For the second year, the Albemarle Plantation Homeowners Association sponsored a holiday fund raiser for the Salvation Army. Last year, they collected \$1,200.

The fund raiser works like this: Families gather at the community's clubhouse for a tree trimming. Each brings a card to hang on the Christmas tree wishing all in the community happy holidays. Participants then donate to the Salvation Army the amount of money they calculate they would have spent on cards and postage. Everyone in the community can send holiday wishes to everyone else, and others can have a happier holiday, also.

According to Homeowners Association president Al Gessler, about 70 families participated. Including owners of condominium units, there are about 119 occupied housing units in the subdivision, Gessler estimated.

Gessler said the fund raiser is just one of several ways residents at Albemarle Plantation give to the com-

munity. Residents are active in civic, service and church organizations, also, he said.

In addition to raising \$3,200 in two years for the Salvation Army through their card project, Gessler said the homeowners have volunteered to ring the bell at the kettle in Hertford.

Homeowners also have contributed \$7,000 to the rescue squad through two fund raisers.

Many Plantation residents are active in the Perquimans County Restoration Association, serving as docents and participating in programs at the oldest house in the state. The Hertford Rotary Club and local churches are also places that have welcomed Plantation residents. A group of men from the Plantation are helping to renovate a home in Bertie County damaged by Hurricane Floyd. Their work through Habitat for Humanity brought them together initially.

Gessler said the group is active in the community because they love their new home.

"My wife and I just absolutely love the place (Perquimans County). The people here (at the Plantation) want to participate and be active in the community," he said.

And for some people whose Christmas might not have been merry, that love for new neighbors will be especially appreciated.

HFD gets Christmas present from state

Hertford Fire Department has a new computer system, additional turnout gear and some replacement parts and equipment. Santa didn't bring the loot, but outgoing chief Sid Eley said it was a great gift to receive at any time of year.

The purchases were made through a \$9,953 grant from the Department of Insurance last week. The check was presented to Eley by Max Powell, Deputy Commissioner of the Eastern Regional Office of the Department of Insurance.

Eley said the funds, which are matched with local money, have been a tremendous help to his department as well as other volunteer fire and rescue units in the county over the years. With costs of equipment and vehicles skyrocketing, departments must search for all possible funding sources in order to maintain service to the communities they serve.

"North Carolina is fortunate to have such a large number of dedicated fire and rescue volunteers, and I am very pleased to assist their efforts,"

said Insurance Commission and State Fire Marshal Jim Long in a prepared news release. "These grants help volunteer fire personnel provide essential services to their communities by allowing them to spend more time training in the latest fire suppression methods, and less time fundraising."

The Volunteer Fire Department Grant Fund was created by the General Assembly in 1988 to help volunteer units raise money for firefighting equipment and supplies. The funds are matching grants — the state matches dollar for dollar, up to an approved amount, monies raised locally to purchase necessary equipment. During Long's tenure in office, the department has distributed over \$30 million in grant money to fire and rescue departments across the state. The total amount of volunteer rescue and fire grants approved for Perquimans County to date is \$233,673.



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Outgoing Hertford fire chief Sid Eley accepts a grant check of almost \$10,000 from Max Powell, Deputy Commissioner of the Eastern Regional Office of the Department of Insurance, last week.

THE ADVERTISING DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER 30 EDITION IS DEC. 23 AT 5 P.M.
THE NEWS DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER 30 EDITION IS DEC. 24 AT NOON.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 50
Low: 33
PARTLY CLOUDY

CHRISTMAS EVE
High: 45
Low: 29
PARTLY CLOUDY

CHRISTMAS DAY
High: 49
Low: 26
PARTLY CLOUDY