

Roll bars save lives

page 11

USDA disaster relief offered

page 5

Piontka spends holidays in Med

page 3

January 20, 2000

Vol. 68, No. 3 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

35 cents

## Hertford plan to recruit cops OK

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Good cops are hard to come by.

Hertford police chief Dale Vanscoy told town officials last Monday that finding quality officers is becoming increasingly difficult.

"We're just not getting good applicants," Vanscoy said.

The eight-officer department is down one employee at present, but Vanscoy said more officers are needed to effectively serve the town.

The chief recommended, and council approved, a program aimed at alleviating the problem. Vanscoy will now be able to recruit potential officers, have the state-required background checks and screenings done, then pay the prospect's tuition, books and minimum wage salary during Basic Law Enforcement Training. Upon successful course completion and certification, the employee would work for the Hertford Police Department for a minimum of two years. A program participant failing to complete the program, not passing the class or not satisfying the two-year work agreement would have to repay the cost of tuition and books.

Vanscoy estimates the cost of tuition at books at \$500-600, with pay running \$3,000-\$4,000.

Elizabeth City is also having difficulty hiring officers and is considering a similar program, Vanscoy said. Elizabeth City Police Department hired about half of the 24 students to graduate from the last law enforcement class at COA and still has openings, he said.

Vanscoy said sheriff's departments may hire uncertified deputies, then have 12 months to get the deputies through training and certification. Police officers, however, are required by law to be certified before they can go to work.

Getting trained to be certified can also be a problem, Vanscoy said. COA offers one session of BLET each year. It is a full-time program that lasts 14-17 weeks. Both Martin and Beaufort community colleges offer BLET part-time at night, which greatly increases the amount of time it takes to get certified, but does allow those who are already have a job to become certified and continue to work.

Vanscoy added that Beaufort is considering a full-time program, and officers at the law enforcement training center at Salemburg are also discussing returning to their former program of full-time, back-to-back programs. If these programs are expanded, more certified officers could be available for hire, he said.

In the meantime, Vanscoy will look to recruit those interested in law enforcement and hope the education package will be appealing enough to entice good candidates to Hertford.



Daily Advance photo

The Inspirational Voices provided a wonderful musical addition to the Martin Luther King Day celebration at Perquimans Middle School Monday morning. Guest speaker for the event was state Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction Henry Johnson. The program also featured a panel discussion on way to help all children achieve.

## School chief seeks input

Community, civic leaders asked to play role in education

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Gregory Todd knows that it will take a community effort to give students in Perquimans County a sound education. So he's asking the community for help.

The superintendent recently asked community and civic leaders to meet to consider ways to address educational challenges.

"As respected community leaders, we value your opinions and thoughts as we start addressing the challenges which lay before us," Todd told those who attended the meeting. He also asked that they accept a role in helping to increase the educational standards and expectations for all students.

Todd shared several ideas to increase awareness of local and state education issues in the community, as well as get the community involvement in the schools.

One suggestion was that school employees and students be invited to attend civic meetings and events where information about higher education standards and expectations may be shared. This includes choral groups, bands, student clubs, teachers and other school personnel.

Another suggestion was that community leaders and civic groups adopt a school. The individual or group could offer student recognition awards for academics such as scholarships, and sponsorship of programs such as Student of the Month and Most Improved Student. Clubs can form education committees, and perhaps retired members could supervise homework centers.

Leaders were told they can also provide a vital service by helping to create and maintain lines of communication with the community and the schools. Clubs can provide factual information and about local and state education issues to their members. Questions and concerns about school operations can be directed to Todd or principals.

Becoming mentors, reading buddies, homework buddies and after-school program supervisors could greatly impact education, Todd said. Helping to recruit for these activities is another area to become involved.

Developing civic responsibility by setting a good example and inviting youth to participate in community service projects are other ways to help.

Another suggestion was involving civic, community, and school leaders in an educational advisory summit to create awareness of local and state expectations and provide time for long-term planning for interventions.

Local clubs were also asked to consider establishing public education foundations. Contributions would be tax-deductible and provide additional funding for student assistance.

Todd said those at the meeting were responsive to the discussion. Another meeting will be held next month.

To share concerns or ideas about community involvement in education, call Todd at 426-5741.

## King Day focuses on kids

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Martin Luther King Jr. had a special vision for the future of this country's children.

He no doubt smiled Monday as he looked down on Perquimans County, where all three programs held in his honor focused on children. From the kick-off breakfast at which Rev. Keith Vaughan spoke, to the middle school program which featured a panel discussion on ways to help all children achieve, to the message brought by Rev. Jasper Horne at the worship service, the day's topics were all about youth.

Horne was strong in his message that the children are not the problem, the adults who fail them are the problems. Horne, who in addition to his ministry at Second Union Baptist church in Ahoskie, works as a counselor at D.F. Walker School in Edenton, said when children fail or are not taken care of, adults all too

often put the blame on someone else.

"We as a people have some awful challenges before us (where our children are concerned)," Horne said.

He challenged black men to step forward and become role models for young black males. He said the youth desperately need role models to help make them aware of and realize their potential. He said adults must take responsibility for helping get youth on track.

"It is now time for we black males to take the role of leadership and provide training for our youth," he said.

He spoke with obvious pain of a third grader he accompanied to court last week whose mother asked a judge to send him to a detention facility because she could not control him. The mother told the judge she did not know where the child's father is. Those types of situations must be stopped, he said, along with



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Rev. Jasper Horne brought the congregation to its feet with his message at the NAACP-sponsored Martin Luther King Jr. Day worship service hosted by Galatia Baptist Church.

the devastating consequences of drug abuse, murder, rage, teen and pre-teen pregnancy, poverty, low self-esteem, and crime.

He was especially strong in his admonition to church leaders and ministers who preach about going to heaven, and yet do not step down from the pulpit and pews to reach youth.

"How can you go to heaven and leave your young folk living in hell?" he asked.

He challenged those gathered to leave churches and go help youth.

"We can no longer put the

blame on somebody else ... "It is up to us to reach out to our children and help them."

The prayer breakfast was sponsored by Perquimans 2020 Vision Coalition and Communities in Schools. At the middle school, the school and the National Council of Negro Women, Northeastern N.C. Section teamed up to sponsor a program and lunch. The NAACP, Perquimans Chapter organized the motorcade from Missing Mill Park to Galatia Baptist Church and the worship service that capped the day.

## School calendar would extend year

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The proposed school calendar for next school year has some parents upset.

The Perquimans Weekly has received several calls about the calendar, which would send students back to school on Aug. 10, about two weeks earlier than this year. The last day of school for students would be June 6, around the same time school will get out this year.

The school year would be longer because the calendar committee tried to build two days into each month for staff development, remediation and acceleration, according to schools superintendent Gregory Todd.

There are several factors contributing to the change in the calendar, Todd said.

Probably the weightiest factor is state accountability standards for students. Those standards, along with high local expectations, mean that some students need extra time in the classroom to make sure they mas-

ter skills. It is often necessary for students to learn one concept before moving on to the next. Regularly scheduled remediation days give those students that time to catch up or hone weak skills before moving on to another concept.

Also, while staff development is a key component in the overall plan to increase standards and outcomes, it is often difficult to schedule staff development sessions without taking teachers out of the classroom. The additional days in the calendar provide time for workshops and training sessions without compromising classroom instructional time.

The days would also provide opportunities for acceleration for those students who may be ahead of other students in their classrooms. Projects, independent learning activities, research, even senior project work, could be completed during these additional instructional days.

Another plus for the extended year is that stu-

dents and staff should be able to schedule doctor, dentist, orthodontist and other necessary appointments on those days to avoid missing time in class.

Todd said the schedule also gives students and teachers a couple of days to get rejuvenated and ready for the next learning days.

While the extended calendar is not required by the state, Todd said as more accountability is placed at the local level, school systems are being required by the state to have plans in place for remediation for those students who do not make a level 3 or level 4 on state tests prior to promotion to the next grade. The remediation days built into the calendar is one component local educators are hoping will help to insure that all students score at grade level or above on the standardized tests.

"Our focus is going to be on those students who need that additional help," Todd said.

The extended calendar