

Young Careerist sought

page 2

Southern States sets meeting

page 3

Letters to the Editor

page 4

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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Students get prepared to write right

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

Perquimans County Schools students and staff are putting pencil to paper over and over again in preparation for the N.C. Writing Test to be administered on March 7.

A variety of techniques is being used throughout the system to improve writing.

Seventh grade students have been staying after school and coming to school on Saturdays to improve writing skills.

Sandra Hooker, assisted by all seventh grade teachers, conducted writing workshops after school Feb. 7-9. The first Saturday Writing Workshop conducted by Hooker with the assistance of Alan Babcock and June Lightfoot was held on Feb. 12. Students who attended the Saturday Workshop were treated to a karate workshop and a pizza luncheon. To instill in students the importance of practice and effort, each student was given a copy of Michael Jordan's book, *For the Love Of The Game*.

Valerie Jackson, Teresa

Blanchard and June Hunter also provided individual assistance to students during the workshop.

Anne White, principal at the middle school, talked with students about the importance of desiring to write well, believing that they can write well, and rolling up their sleeves and practicing the techniques taught.

To get students in the mood for writing, June Lightfoot led them through a rendition of "I Believe I can Write."

Writing workshops will continue Mondays through Wednesdays after school and Saturdays through March 4.

All the schools have made writing a focus this year, from practice prompts for the writing test to writing across the curriculum. Writing across the curriculum means turning in written assignments in all subject areas. In many cases, the assignments are graded not only for content in the subject area in which they were assigned, but also for basic writing mechanics, punctuation, and spelling.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Teacher Theresa Wheeling (center) and students Brian Chappell (left) and Michael Insley discuss techniques for improving writing in preparation for the N.C. Writing Test scheduled for March 7. Students in grade 4, 7, and 10 will be tested.

The state writing test will be administered to students in grades 4, 7 and 10. Although these are the grades the state tests, students in other grades are also given similar writing exercises to continue to improve writing skills. Often

these writing exercises are scored using the state guidelines so students can see strengths and weaknesses, and work toward improved scores.

End-of-grade and end-of-course tests are set for May 23 and 24.

18th Century feast raffled for Newbold-White

Imagine inviting your closest friends to a magnificent 18th century feast inside the historic 1730 Newbold-White House. The candles are lit, the table is set, the servers don costumes from the 1770s, and you and your guests sit down to an eight-course 18th century dinner.

The Perquimans County Restoration Association is offering the opportunity to win this magnificent 18th century holiday feast for 10 inside the historic 1730 Newbold-White House. The winner of the dinner will receive:

- an eight-course 18th century dinner for 10, prepared by an acclaimed chef,
- strolling musicians throughout the evening,
- servers donned in traditional 18th century dress, and
- the unmatched atmosphere of dining in the 260 year-old house bedecked with seasonal greenery.

The Newbold-White House, located on the beautiful Perquimans River, interprets early 18th century life in North Carolina. Dating to 1730, the house is the oldest brick house in the state and is listed on the

National Register of Historic Places. The house is authentically restored and features period furnishings, enormous fireplaces and a winding corner staircase.

Chances to win this once-in-a-lifetime feast are \$25 each or five chances for \$100. The winning name will be drawn on Wednesday, March 8. Entries must be received by Tuesday, March 7. To enter your name to win, send checks made out to the Perquimans County Restoration Association, P.O. Box 103, Hertford, NC 27944, or contact PCRA at 426-7567.

The Newbold-White House is located in Hertford, North Carolina, just off of Highway 17 between Edenton and Elizabeth City. Hours of operation are 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday thru Saturday, 2-5 p.m. on Sunday. The Newbold-White House is operated by the Perquimans County Restoration Association. PCRA promotes the cultural heritage of Perquimans County and preserves the early 18th century character of the Newbold-White House. For information, call 426-7567.

State observes Severe Weather Awareness Week

Spring, summer are prime times for bad weather; preparation saves lives, property

SUSAN R. HARRIS
Editor

They can touch down with little or no warning and leave death and destruction in their wake.

Tornadoes are not common in Perquimans County, but they have touched down here as recently as last September, slamming into houses, uprooting trees and frightening those who see them roar across the landscape.

To remind residents to be prepared and know the warning signs of severe weather such as tornadoes, North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt has declared Feb. 20-26 Severe Weather Awareness Week. The theme of the observance is "Be Alert, Be Prepared & Be Safe."

"We have been affected by severe weather in the past, and it will happen again," wrote Perquimans County Emergency Management Coordinator Walter A. Meads in a news release. "Micro burst winds, lightning, heavy rains and flash floods will again damage homes, farms and businesses. Unfortunately, many people will be injured or even killed because they did not protect themselves and their property."

According to the North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, severe weather most often occurs in the spring and summer months when two weather systems collide. Weather sys-



Daily Advance photo

A tornado spawned by Hurricane Floyd did considerable damage in the Durants Neck community last September. Tornadoes are some of nature's most violent storms.

tems that are only a few degrees different in temperature, or a few millibars different in pressure, can result in violent winds, hail, thunderstorms and even tornadoes.

Meads said every household should have an emergency kit prepared and every member of the household should know what to do in the event of severe weather. Being prepared includes knowing where to go in the event of severe weather. A plan should be formed to meet in what is determined to be the safest place in the house to wait out the storm and/or where to go if you need to leave your home. Preparing an emergency kit and having a plan of action greatly improve chances of survival should a tornado or other natural disaster strike, Meads added.

A basic emergency supplies kit should contain about one gallon of water per person for three to seven days, enough canned for the family, a hand operated can opener, a battery powered radio and extra batteries, a flashlight and extra batteries, a first aid kit, necessary prescription drugs, and games and reading materials to help pass the time. The kit should be stored in a portable container such as a plastic crate, duffel bag, or backpack in an interior closet, basement or other accessible safe place. Emergency management officials stress that people should not wait until a severe weather watch or warning is issued before assembling an emergency kit.

A tornado or other storm watch means that conditions are favorable for the develop-

ment of that particular weather. People in the watch area should stay tuned to a local radio or television station or listen to NOAA Weather Radio, secure loose objects outdoors, survey immediate surroundings for the most suitable shelter, and be alert for changing weather conditions. Tornadoes can occur in conjunction with thunderstorms that produce severe hail. This situation occurred in Perquimans County less than 2 years ago.

If a tornado warning is issued or you have an indication a tornado may be approaching, take cover immediately. The safest place in a home is the lowest level of the home, in an interior room away from windows. This may be a bathroom, interior closet or under a stairway. Go to the center of the room. Try to find

something sturdy you can get under and hold onto to protect you from flying debris and/or a collapsed roof. People in tall buildings should take shelter in interior hallways, away from windows.

People who live in mobile homes should leave immediately and seek shelter in a sturdy building. If no shelter is available, go outside and lie on the ground, if possible in a ditch or depression. Use your arms to protect your head and neck and wait for the storm to pass. Be alert for flooding.

In the event that you must leave your home, turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches.

Do not try to out-run a tornado. Vehicles are a very dangerous place to be in case of a tornado. They can be tossed about like toys. If you see a funnel cloud or hear a tornado warning issued, get out of your vehicle and find a safe shelter. If no shelter is available, lie down in a low area using your arms to cover the back of your head and neck. Be sure to stay alert for flooding.

Businesses should also have severe weather plans in place. Here are some tornado danger signs:

- If there is a watch or warning posted, falling hail should be considered as a real danger sign.
- An approaching cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado, even if a funnel is not visible.
- Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still.
- Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.

In addition to full-fledged tornadoes, downbursts and

microbursts can cause significant damage. Downbursts are severe localized downdrafts from a thunderstorm or shower. This outward burst of cool or colder air creates damaging winds at or near the surface.

Microbursts are severe localized wind blasting down from a thunderstorm. They generally cover less than 2.5 miles in diameter and are of short duration, usually less than 5 minutes.

Emergency officials suspected either a weak tornado or downburst/microburst was responsible for the uprooted trees and damage to Woodland United Methodist Church and the surrounding neighborhood several years ago.

The most destructive tornadoes ever to hit North Carolina killed more than 45 people: March 1998 in Stoneville, November 1988 in Raleigh, and March 1984 in the Sandhills.

To learn more about what to do should a disaster strike, call Meads at 426-5646.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 66
Low: 50
MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
High: 71
Low: 51
MOSTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
High: 70
Low: 47
PARTLY CLOUDY