

Rotarians celebrate 75 years  
 Page 3

4-H workshops this summer  
 Page 2

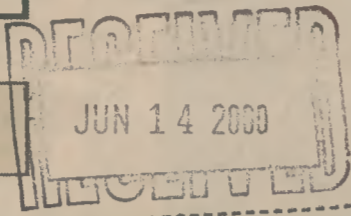
Top students, other school news  
 Page 8

June 15, 2000

Vol. 68, No. 24 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

35 cents



## Boat Bash organizers requesting alcohol sales

ANNA GOODWIN  
 MCCARTHY  
 Correspondent

The sign in front of Missing Mill Park lists the park's rules in bold, black letters.

A Hertford Town Councilman wants to change one of the rules for two days.

Town Councilman Dan Daneker said that a ban on alcohol use in Missing Mill Park should be lifted for the Perquimans Narrows Boat Bash in August. The event is scheduled for August 12-13.

"It would be a temporary suspension on the limitation of alcohol sales," said Daneker.

Daneker, who is one of the organizers for the event, urged town council members to ask the opinions of their constituents before they make a

decision.

Daneker said he was tentative about asking the town council to abandon the rule that prohibits the sale of alcohol at the park.

"It has probably never been done," said Daneker.

Profits from the sale of alcohol at the event will aid the town, said Daneker. "The proceeds we realize will go towards downtown revitalization."

Daneker said he expected at least 80 boats in the Perquimans River during the weekend.

Daneker persuaded town council members to close the boat ramp and the parking lot for the event.

The Chamber of Commerce will hold an "Anything that Floats" boat race to kick off the event, said Daneker.

## Town takes hard stand against poorly maintained, messy yards

ANNA GOODWIN  
 MCCARTHY  
 Correspondent

Hertford residents will have to pay a fine if they do not keep their yards clean.

Hertford Town Manager John Christensen said residents will receive letters from the town if they fail to mow their grass, or if there is junk in their front yards.

"At least 50 letters have gone out," said Christensen.

Christensen said that residents will have an opportunity

to clean up their yards before they receive a fine.

If the yards are not maintained after several weeks, the town will take action, said Christensen.

Christensen said the town will be forced to mow the grass, and a bill will be sent to the owner.

Residents have adequate time to modify the situation, said Christensen.

The town's actions are a result of a strict ordinance passed last year that requires the maintenance of yards, said Christensen.

## READY FOR THE SHEEPSKIN



PHOTO BY ERIC ABERNETHY

Perquimans County High School's Class of 2000 listens to the program during commencement last Friday night. This year's graduating senior class includes 108 students

## Perquimans H.S. Class of 2000 turns tassels

SEAN JACKSON  
 Staff Writer

On an almost perfect late spring evening, Perquimans County High School sent 108 graduating seniors out into the world as the school's first graduating class of the new millennium.

Or was it the last class of the millennium? During Friday night's commencement ceremonies at Memorial Field, Perquimans County Schools Superintendent Gregory Todd posed that question to the Class of 2000.

"Make your own choice," Todd said.

On a somber theme, the schools chief added, "This is the last time the Class of 2000 will be gathered as a group together," Todd said.

Todd urged the graduates to understand themselves and others, in order to prosper. "That is the key to your success," he said. Class valedictorian Courtney Harris spoke of the change she and her classmates are bound to face in the near and distant future. Harris noted there would be no more high school-related joys and pitfalls for herself and her fellow students.

"We have all become new individuals," Harris said.

Harris said the class had been given the

tools to find success in the past 13 years of schooling.

"I challenge each of you to take these keys you've been provided and unlock the door to the future," she said.

Salutatorian Blair Winslow also proffered words of advice to her peers.

"Shoot for the moon, you will land in the stars." Even if you miss, you will land in the stars.

Honor student Rebecca Hyde told the standing-room only audience that, although she was leaving PCHS, she would not soon forget her time there.

"All of us are carrying memories and experiences of high school that will last a lifetime," she said.

Amanda Drozdowski admitted high school had its ups and downs.

"We have had the opportunity to experience the best and worst of our lives," she said.

School board chairman Walter Leigh thanked the parents, teachers and staff members who aided the class in the long process leading up to graduation. He also acknowledged the students' hard work over the past four years.

"As I look into each face tonight," he said, "I see you are excited and proud of yourselves."

## Hertford looking to light up downtown

JEREMY DESPOSITO  
 Staff Writer

Traditional-style lighting fixtures, first erected in the 19th century, may soon illuminate much of the town from the downtown to the "S" bridge.

That's if a special grant is approved to buy 107 of the traditional post lights.

The traditional bulb lighting used in the late 1800s would be in keeping with the heritage tourism plans, Town Manager John Christensen said.

"Part of the heritage tourism initiative is to be more in character with the way the town used to look," he said. "We will have building facades to emulate the history of the town and we want the lights to match that period."

The modern lighting on the "S" Bridge, which is part of U.S. Highway 17 Business South, will be converted back to the traditional post lighting if the grant is approved, Christensen said.

The T21 grant provides federal money for highway enhancements through the state Department of Transportation. This is the second year of the program, which is a good time to submit the grant, Christensen said.

"We're hoping the application is successful," he said. "This is a big T21 money year. It's the second year. You never know how long programs will last."

Hertford won't find out if its application is approved until fall, Christensen said.

The project would be completed in three phases. According to plans, 13 lights would be erected on the "S" Bridge at a cost of \$82,000. Forty-two lights would be put up from the "S" Bridge to Grubb Street for another \$220,000. And 52 lights would be placed downtown costing \$246,000.

Perquimans County commissioners agreed to pay a portion of the \$125,000 Hertford would pay for the project, but no exact amount was finalized. The grant will cover the rest.

Christensen said the lighting is part of the Main Street program's mission to restore and enhance the downtown area.

If approved, Christensen said the project could take 12 months to complete.

## Downtown mural drawing new attention

SEAN JACKSON  
 Staff Writer

For 17 years, a mural depicting images of this town's historic past has stared down from the north side of a two-story hardware store in the heart of the downtown.

In one part of the popular mural, there's an image of a baseball and a New York Yankees hat — symbols for major league great and native son, Jim "Catfish" Hunter, who died last year. In another, a Native American stares out in profile. In still another, two youths — one black, one white — paddle a canoe down the Perquimans River.

It's the mural's largest image, however — a red-white-and-blue rendition of the Confederate Battle Flag on the building wall's right-hand corner — that's currently drawing all the attention.

Recently, Hertford Hardware owner Erie Haste, who owns the mural because he owns the building on which it's painted, announced that he's exploring

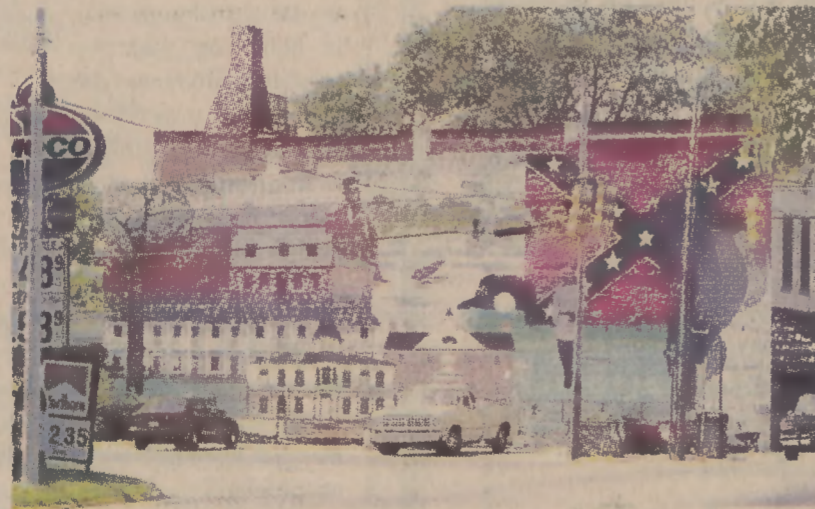


PHOTO BY ERIC ABERNETHY

The mural painted on the building belonging to Erie Haste in downtown Hertford has draw attention recently because of the Confederate battle flag that is part of the artwork.

having the mural restored — and when it is restored, having the Confederate flag removed.

"We are working on a plan to restore the mural," Haste said this week. "We're discussing that with the artist now."

Haste was approached by Winfall Mayor and Perquimans NAACP Chairman Fred Yates two

years ago about the possibility of removing the Confederate flag from the mural. Yates said state tourism officials, who named Hertford one of two pilot towns for Heritage Tourism in 1998, had raised concerns about the flag.

"It was mentioned to him that it was not favorable," Yates said.

The mural's image of the Confederate flag apparently isn't favorable for the same reason it isn't in South Carolina, where the NAACP coordinated a boycott of the state because of the flag's presence atop the state capitol — a presence state legislators only recently voted to end. African Americans consider the flag offensive because it's a symbol of the Confederacy, the group of Southern states that fought the Civil War to keep their ancestors enslaved.

Haste, a former Hertford town councilman, said he understands Yates' and others' concerns.

"Fred and I are good friends, and we have a pretty good understanding of each other," he said. But Haste also emphasized that he hasn't made any final decisions about whether the flag will remain part of the restored mural.

"There is no real hoopla because nothing has been determined about what we should do," he said.

The local chapter of a group

devoted to preserving the Confederacy's legacy believes it knows what Haste should do, however.

The newly-formed Albemarle Chapter of the League of the South of North Carolina has organized a petition drive to encourage Haste to keep the Confederate flag image a part of the mural. Albemarle League of the South chairman Charles Alexander, who says he's gathered an estimated 700 signatures so far, plans to present the petitions to Haste late next week.

"I'm just trying to show him there is community support for (retaining the flag on) the mural if he decided to keep it," Alexander said Friday. His group formed last month as a member of the League of the South, an organization formed by a University of Alabama professor in 1994.

Alexander said removing the Confederate flag from the South Carolina capitol and its image from the Hertford Hardware mural may help some folks, but it hurts others.

## WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY  
 High: 90  
 Low: 70  
 PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY  
 High: 90  
 Low: 70  
 PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY  
 High: 90  
 Low: 70  
 PARTLY CLOUDY