

SEP 20 2000

PERQUIMANS COUNTY LIBRARY  
110 W ACADEMY ST  
HERTFORD NC 27944

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ALS events begin Friday  
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September 21, 2000

Vol. 68, No. 38 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

35 cents

## Marijuana crop harvested by law officers

Officers look for clues to owners of plants

JEREMY DESPOSITO  
The Daily Advance

Around 30 marijuana plants, some as tall as 6 to 9 feet, were cut down by police in Winfall last Wednesday. Police Chief David Shaffer said he is looking for the owners and tenders of the crop.

Shaffer said he received a confidential tip about the farm in May and has been conducting surveillance efforts and building leads since then. Shaffer seized the crops, located in privately owned woods in the vicinity of U.S. Highway 17 and Old Neck Road, between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

"I've been investigating who's farming the area," Shaffer said.

That investigation is still continuing. In the several times he's been to the area for surveillance, Shaffer said he once saw a person near the

plants, but when he was spotted, the suspect fled on foot before being identified.

Evidence leads Shaffer to believe the crops were harvested for some time. The trail leading to the area is well maintained and trodden, he said. Remnants of past crops harvested are scattered around the area, along with old pots and fertilizer. And the area within the woods is conducive to sunlight he said.

"(The plants) had been growing there on more than one occasion," Shaffer said. "The trail was well main-

tained. The plants were well-manicured and spaced out. This was not just growing wild. They (the suspects) knew what they were doing."

The area where the plants were growing is about 10 feet wide, and the length of the plot varies. Most of the plants were about 6 feet tall. One of the stalks was about 2 inches in diameter near the base, he said.

Shaffer said some of the crops had been harvested. However, he estimated that the 30 plants he seized had a value of between \$2,000 and \$3,000.

The harvest will eventually be used to train narcotics dogs in Hertford and Winfall, he said.

Suspects, if caught, are likely to face multiple charges related to manufacturing, and stiffer charges if the case falls under federal laws. The farming took place on private property, and Shaffer said he still has to talk with the landowners.

The Pasquotank Sheriff's Drug Task Force, including deputies Max Robeson, Aaron Wallio and Brent McKeuken, assisted in the raid. The

Perquimans Sheriff's office was unavailable for assistance at the time of the raid due to court and other commitments.

Helicopter support was sought from the U.S. Coast Guard, but they were unable to assist because of search and rescue priorities. However, Shaffer said he is seeking helicopter support from the U.S. Army or National Guard.

"We haven't seen anything like this (in Winfall) before," he said, but we want to scan the area for any other crops growing."

## Farm tour set for Oct.

Tour will show importance of agriculture to county

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

"Well, life on the farm is kinda' laid back..." John Denver sang it.

Many in Perquimans County wonder what he was talking about. Rising with the sun, working in the summer's heat and winter's cold, worrying about the weather, and risking everything year after year to plant a crop is not a slow-paced, worry-free lifestyle.

And yet, for generations, there are families in Perquimans County that have remained true to their agricultural roots.

Everybody can get a taste of life on the farm on Oct. 7 and 8 when 10 farms and agriculture-related sites open to the public for tours, demonstrations and information. Tourists will get an up-close look at horses, cattle, hogs, chickens, cotton, peanuts, grapes, hand-stuffed sausages and smoked meats, a cotton gin, old-timey farm equipment and a 4-H demonstration of animals shown at a plantation.

Farming is still an important part of the economic and social character of Perquimans County.

"While many regions of this country are experiencing a decline in agriculture, Perquimans County remains a primarily agricultural county," said Lewis Smith, extension agent for Perquimans County. "This weekend will give the general public an opportunity to learn about the farming community and experience both the beauty and hard work found on the farm."

Stops on the tour will include:

B&P Acres (Preston, Ed and Nick Nixon): The Nixons breed and train beautiful quarter horses and will offer demonstrations.

Willow Creek Farm (Billy and Joyce Elliott): Willow Creek Farm is one of the region's top producers of Simmental influence cattle.

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## Three honored by Main Street Program

JEREMY DESPOSITO  
The Daily Advance

Three locals were honored with Main Street Champion awards presented during a gala event celebrating the North Carolina Main Street Program's 20th anniversary last Wednesday.

Mayor Sid Eley, Harriette Woodard and Chris Lane received the honor.

The one-time award recognizes persons who've played key roles in downtown revitalization in Main Street communities. Hertford became A Main Street community this spring.

Hertford's nominees were chosen by a panel that included Main Street Program Manager Belinda Washlesky, Town Manager John Christensen and LuAnne Pendergraft, development officer with the N.C. Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development.

All three were chosen for the countless hours they volunteered to make Hertford a Main Street community, Washlesky said.

Eley was chosen for his



Hertford Mayor Sid Eley and Perquimans County Restoration Association President Chris Lane (above) were chosen, along with Harriette Woodard, were chosen by a local panel to earn Main Street Champion awards. The awards recognized the trio's efforts in downtown revitalization.

leadership in town government—he served as a councilman for eight years before he was elected mayor last year—and because of his support for the Main Street application, Washlesky said.

"Without him, a Hertford Main Street program would not have been possible," she said. "He is a strong supporter of Hertford's economic development and revitalization."

Woodard, who along with her husband Charles has owned Woodard's Pharmacy the past 30 years, was nominated for her involvement in a host of downtown events and promotions, Washlesky said. Besides volunteering for the annual Indian Summer Festival, 4th of July celebration and Christmas parade, Woodard is a member of the Historic Hertford Business Association, Heritage Tourism and Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce.

"She has been involved with downtown most of her life and wants it to remain a vital community in which her children can grow," Washlesky said.

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## Hertford Council wants to slow traffic

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The pace of small-town life may get slower.

Hertford Town Council is considering lower speed limits in two places on Church Street. Several members of council said speed limits on the S-bridge and between Newby's Bridge and U.S. 17 Bypass should be lowered.

Mayor Sid Eley said with increased development on South Church Street, there is more traffic on the road. When the health department being built on ARPDC Street is finished, traffic will increase again, he said.

Councilwoman Jo Ann Morris added that another factor justifying a decrease from the 45 miles per hour speed limit is the heavy pedestrian traffic along that stretch of the street.

Because of its width, age, walkway on which people both walk and fish, and bus traffic, the speed limit on the S-bridge should be very low, Councilman Dan Daneker said. Daneker said 20 miles per hour is "plenty fast" to travel the span.

Because Church Street is also U.S. Highway 17 Business, the town must request that the state lower the speed limits. Town Manager John Christensen will set up a meeting with a DOT district engineer to discuss speed limits.

## Those who nail signs to poles may get nailed

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Nailing a yard sale sign to a utility pole in Hertford will bring more than buyers to your home. It'll also bring you some mail.

Posting signs on utility poles is against a town ordinance. Those caught violating the ordinance will get a letter letting them know they are breaking the law. The town will use addresses and telephone numbers from the signs to identify culprits if there is no name on the sign.

Town resident Don Morris volunteered several months ago to take down signs he passes on his walks. Last Monday, he told the town council they should let people know they're violating a local ordinance when they post signs.

Residents have complained at times about signs being posted but not removed after an event or election. Mayor Sid Eley has pointed to the problems nails and other fastening devices can cause repairs.

In other business, the town:

- congratulated the Electric Department for the Safety Award presented by Electricities in recognition of no lost work time due to on-the-job injuries in 1999.

- heard Councilman Jo Ann Morris recommend that condemnation be discussed at an upcoming work session. Morris said council should prioritize properties on its condemnation list so town attorney Walter Edwards Jr. will be able to proceed.

- told resident Joe Meads the town will investigate his request that the town pay for repairs to his business equipment resulting from a break in an electric connection.

## Seatbelts save victims of accidents

SUSAN R. HARRIS  
and  
JEREMY DESPOSITO

No one was seriously injured when a pick-up truck overturned on U.S. 17 Bypass Thursday afternoon.

Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy said a 1994 Ford Ranger pulled into the path of a 1992 Honda at the intersection of U.S. 17 Bypass and Harvey Point Road around 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 14. The Honda hit the truck broadside, causing the truck to turn upside down in the median.

According to eyewitnesses, the truck, driven by Jamie Jernigan, 18, of Hertford, stopped at a red light, then proceeded through the intersection. Vanscoy said Jernigan allegedly pulled into the path of the Honda, driven by Wendy Smithson of Shawboro.

A passenger in the truck, Ashleigh Jernigan, was taken to Albemarle Hospital as a precaution because she hit her head in the accident. Vanscoy said all those involved in the accident escaped serious injury, probably due to the seat belts all were wearing. In fact, the Jernigan sisters were held in the truck by the seat belts when help arrived.

The truck was totaled and damages to the car were estimated at \$3,000.

Vanscoy said Jernigan will be charged with disregarding a traffic

signal.

Seatbelts prevented injuries in an accident involving a tractor trailer and four cars along Main Street in Winfall Friday morning.

The accident occurred around 7:30 a.m. when the driver of a 1993 Pontiac traveling north near Church Street crossed the double yellow line, sideswiping the rear end of a tractor trailer and then a 1989 Ford that was close behind the tractor trailer.

Trooper Jim Bray said the driver of the Pontiac was unclear about what caused him to cross into oncoming traffic. The driver was traveling slightly faster than the posted 35 mph speed limits, but not fast enough to consider it speeding, Bray said.

After sideswiping the second vehicle, both the Pontiac and Ford came to a stop in a ditch along the southbound lane. Both cars were totaled, Bray said. The tractor trailer had to replace the rim and tire on the left rear axle.

The driver of the Pontiac, Ronald Sutton, was ticketed for traveling left of center.

An inexperienced driver rear-ended a woman who slowed down at the accident scene, according to Winfall Police Chief David Shaffer. Shaffer said the woman was taken to Albemarle Hospital as a precaution because of her heart condition, but was uninjured. Wesley Adam McLawhorn, 16, was ticketed for following too close.

## WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY  
High: 86  
Low: 63  
ISOLATED T'S/TORMS

FRIDAY  
High: 82  
Low: 61  
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY  
High: 82  
Low: 63  
PARTLY CLOUDY