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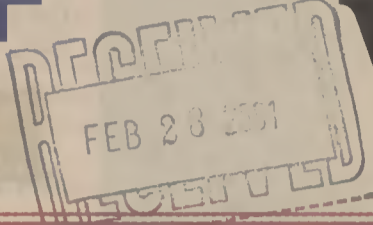
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THE
PERQUIMANS
WEEKLY

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35 cents



Downtown Hertford caught on film

Forum will use photos to chart town's future

MARIEL BETANCOURT
 The Daily Advance

Smile, Hertford. You've been caught on camera. Throughout last week, 36 people armed with disposable cameras toured the downtown, snapping photos of what they like and

dislike about the area. But the shutterbugs weren't tourists; most were residents participating in a project sponsored by the Hertford Main Street Program.

The photographers, made up of representatives of groups and organizations as varied as the Boy Scouts, Hertford Town Council and the Rotary Club, were each asked to spend an hour downtown, snapping photos and writing anonymous commentary about the town for an exhibit called "Picture

Downtown."

"Picture Downtown" will be on display March 6 at Hertford Baptist Church, and will be used to formulate a direction for the downtown during a Downtown Vision Forum from 7 to 9 p.m. To register for the Forum, call 426-1425.

"The town belongs to everybody, and we want everybody to have a chance to give their opinion and their ideas," said Hertford Main Street Program Manager Belinda Washlesky. "Often it's the best way to do that — have

a public forum."

The Vision Forum is just one of Washlesky's many projects since joining the Hertford Main Street Program as its part-time manager in August.

In fact, Washlesky has kept so busy that Feb. 12 the town council voted to make her a full-time employee.

"The (town) didn't realize how much we could do and how much time it was going to take," said Washlesky. "I'm tickled that they voted to make me full-time."

Her promotion follows

the recent announcement that the Hertford Main Street Program received a \$5,000 grant from the North Carolina Arts Council. The money is being used to hire an art consultant, who will advise how to incorporate art into the downtown area.

Also on Washlesky's plate is the renovation of the building at 118 W Market Street into a visitor's center. The office is already home to the Main Street Program and Chamber of Commerce.

The North Carolina Main Street Program,

administered through the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Community Assistance, helps communities revitalize their downtown areas. Hertford joined the Main Street Program last year.

To get involved with Hertford Main Street Program, residents can call Washlesky at 426-1425 or attend the board of directors' meeting at 5 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month. Meetings are held at the Main Street Program office, formerly Dr. Lane's office.

Chess club makes smart moves

ROBERT SHILES
 The Daily Advance

Watching students from Hertford Grammar School play chess, a spectator might think they were pros. But for most of the youngsters participating in Saturday's Chess-A-Thon at Southgate Mall, the game is a new experience that is both fun and educational.

"I really like it. It's fun," said Aaron Lane, a fifth-grade student who is one of 12 members of the school's newly formed chess club. "I'd only played two games of chess before ... Now I'm getting better. I beat my father last night."

Saturday's four-hour Chess-A-Thon featured club members, and others, playing rounds of chess to



Daily Advance photo

Hertford Grammar School Chess Club member Mary Allen Guthrie contemplates a move in a Chess-a-Thon at Southgate Mall Saturday. Educators say the game lifts student achievement.

raise money for clocks. The clocks, which are used to time a player's moves, are needed so the club can

eventually participate in competitive chess tournaments.

Club members, hoping to

make the \$150 needed to purchase three clocks, took pledges on how many games they would complete

as a team in four hours.

While it was anticipated that no more than 30 games

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School safety is one of local board's top priorities

School safety is one of the top priorities for the Board of Education in Perquimans County. It is a key component in all local school improvement plans.

Staff and administrators continuously work to enforce and improve safety in the schools using the goals in each individual school's improvement plans, according to Brenda Lassiter, Schools' Public Relations Officer. Personnel at each school look at facilities, history, possible problems and other factors, and compose a plan to prevent safety problems as well as deal with any problem that arises.

Both the middle and high schools have resource officers on duty during the school day, and often during extra-curricular activi-

ties. In addition, local law enforcement officers provide coverage during ball-games and other activities to ensure the safety of the school community and visitors. Officers also assist with such programs as locker searches.

In conjunction with Severe Weather Awareness Week, local schools participated in the Statewide Tornado Drill on Feb. 21.

"An important lesson for all school-age children to learn how to protect themselves when severe weather threatens regardless of whether they are home or in school," Lassiter said.

Many people and agencies in the community share a concern and the responsibility of helping to provide safe schools. Funding is received from local, state and federal gov-

ernments which helps provide resources and assistance to help keep local schools safe. Parents, teachers and other adults volunteer time and make conscience effort to connect with children so that no child feels left out or isolated, Lassiter said.

Administrators apply discipline and crisis-prevention plans that are consistent with local and state board policies.

"It is due to the cooperation of many people that Perquimans County Schools ranks among the safest schools in the state of North Carolina," Lassiter said.

Policies and procedures are available for review at the central office and the main office at each school. Call the central office at 426-5741 for information.



Winfall Police Chief David Shaffer conducts a random drug search at the middle school in cooperation with the school's Safe Schools activities. No drugs were found.

We've changed a bit

Readers may notice that *The Perquimans Weekly* has a slightly different look today. That's because we are now printing on 25-inch newsprint, rather than on the 27-inch width used in the past. The biggest difference you'll notice is that it is easier to hold as you read.

This change in newsprint follows the newspaper industry standard size change that is being used in many North Carolina newspapers as well as newspapers across the country.

Readers will find the same local news and advertisements that regularly appear in the paper.

In addition to the size change, we've adopted a new slogan, and logo, "News from Next Door." You can see more about this change in our advertisement on page 7. We've also added a new feature, "Neighbors," which will allow us to introduce you to some of Perquimans' interesting people and places. Today's "Neighbors" is on page 7.

We hope you like the changes to your newspaper!

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
 High: 54
 Low: 36
 MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
 High: 55
 Low: 34
 PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
 High: 52
 Low: 34
 PARTLY CLOUDY