

Spruce up for spring

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Harrell at home at PCHS

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Sports

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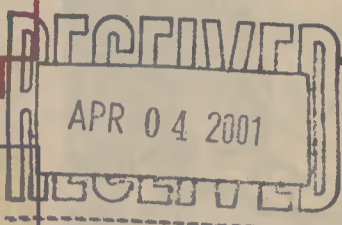
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Few show at safety meeting

Sparse turnout frustrates some parents

SUSAN R. HARRIS

When given the opportunity to have their voices heard about school violence, most people in Perquimans County clammed up.

About 50 people showed up for an open meeting on safe schools held at the high school Monday night. Only about 30 of them were parents of students enrolled in the school system. Written notice of the meeting was sent home with every student in all four schools and notices were published in both The Perquimans Weekly and The Daily Advance newspapers, according to Schools Interim Superintendent Pat Harrell.

In an open forum that ended the meeting, one theme continued to be expressed: Too many parents did not attend the meeting. Parents who were there were obviously frustrated with the low number of parents who showed up. Many said parents are an important key to making schools safer.

Some parents found it ironic that parents allowed students to stay at home in response to the March investigation of a reported incident of a student carrying a gun to school and a bomb threat a week later, but they did not attend the meeting.

Facilitated by Harrell, the meeting offered a chance to break into groups and offer suggestions to make schools safer. Each group prioritized their suggestions and stated how those suggestions might be implemented. The activity culminated with each group presenting their ideas on improving school safety.

The diverse group that included parents, students, school administrators and staff, grandparents, law enforcement officers and board members, came up with a variety of ideas. Among the suggestions made were identification badges for students and staff, having only one unlocked entrance at each school, more security officers, dress codes/uniforms, character education, parental involvement, more counselors, fencing the King Street parking lot at the high school, better facilities, parking decals, student courts, peer mediation, better awareness of bullies and their targets, bus monitors, video surveillance, and training for students and staff.

Harrell said some of the suggestions could be implemented easily and without financial considerations. Others, he said, would force setting budget priorities.

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FUTURE FARMERS?



Spring is here, and in Perquimans, that means getting back in touch with the good earth. Nicholas and Bryan Lewis were spied getting dirt under their fingernails at their Covent Garden home Monday afternoon. It could be the brothers will be architects or contractors instead of farmers as they were building castles in the rich, black dirt.

DWI check yields guns, drugs

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Law enforcement authorities set up a DWI roadblock Friday night in Hertford that netted guns and drugs, although few impaired drivers.

Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy said 10 agencies worked at the southern town limits, stopping traffic in both directions. Only three DWIs were issued; however, officers made six arrests for weapons violations and seven for drug possession.

Vanscoy said all warrants and citations issued at the scene went through the magistrate's office and he had not gotten copies of paperwork by press time, so arrest details were not available.

He did say that some of the drug and weapons charges stemmed from stopping a van from Virginia carrying disc jockeys on their way to Edenton to play at an event there. One of the charges in the case was a federal offense for altering a serial number.

"I was surprised at the traffic we had," Vanscoy said. "We had traffic all the way up to 1 o'clock (in the morning). I knew traffic had increased on (Highway) 17, but I didn't know it had increased that much."

The roadblock was a joint operation spearheaded by the Hertford Police Department. Agencies involved in addition to HPD were the Perquimans and Chowan county sheriff's departments, Winfall, Elizabeth City and Edenton police departments, Pasquotank County Drug Task Force, ALE, highway patrol and probation/parole.

Charges included open alcohol containers, child safety and seat belt violations, driving while license revoked, underage drinking, insurance violations and drug paraphernalia.

Truck runs into river

SUSAN R. HARRIS

A Hertford man escaped injury when he drove his tractor-trailer off the causeway in Hertford Friday.

Gerald Darian White, 33, of 108 Martin Lane, was traveling south on North Church Street around 4:30 Friday afternoon when the tractor-trailer he was driving jack-knifed and a portion of the rig ended up hanging off the causeway in the Perquimans River.

According to the accident report completed by Hertford Police officer Brad Krause, the right tires of the tractor-trailer dropped off the right side of the road onto the low shoulder of the road. White overcorrected, and the truck veered left heading into the curve. He pulled back to the right, and the rig jack-knifed, with the portion of the tractor and trailer that connects ending up hanging in the river and the rest of the rig in the northbound lane.



Daily Advance photo

A tractor-trailer driven by Gerald Darian White of Hertford ended up partially in the river Friday afternoon after White ran off the road and overcorrected. No one was injured in the one-vehicle accident.

The accident caused traffic delays for several hours as only the southbound lane was open. Hertford

Police Chief Dale Vanscoy said it took two wreckers to pull the truck back onto the roadway, and the causeway

was closed during the process. The causeway reopened just after 7 p.m. No charges were filed.

County board endorses COPS grant application

Funds could put resource officers at schools

SUSAN R. HARRIS

County commissioners endorsed a grant application for the sheriff's department that would put resource officers in Perquimans County Schools.

At the request of Sheriff Eric Tilley and Interim Schools Superintendent Pat Harrell, the commissioners endorsed a COPS grant application that could pay for salaries and benefits for three resource officers to be stationed on school campuses.

Tilley said the federal funds would pay up to

\$125,000 per officer over a 3-year period. He said the idea of adding resource officers at the schools came from meetings on school safety that occurred after the March 8 report of a student carrying a gun at the high school.

Receiving funding for two officers is likely, Tilley said, and officials hope a third will be approved. Preliminary plans call for placing the officers at both the high and middle schools, and if a third is approved, a shared D.A.R.E./resource officer at the county's elementary schools.

Tilley said if three officers are approved for funding, Deputy Lee Price would continue to serve as the D.A.R.E. officer and assist at other schools and with serving civil papers. His salary could then be

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Commissioners try for sewer money again

Nixon votes against application

SUSAN R. HARRIS

The county will try again to get funds to establish and provide sewer service to the Menzie's Creek Sewer District.

Consultant Dick George told commissioners that the county did not apply for state Clean Water Bond Act funds after a 1999 public hearing on establishing a Menzie's Creek Sewer district because the county needed to negotiate for land to build the system.

The grant application calls for the county to

purchase the working sewer system at Albemarle Plantation and expand it to serve homeowners in Holiday Island. George said the project falls under Clean Water guidelines because Holiday Island's sewer needs constitute an environmental problem area.

At present, there are numerous failing septic tanks in the Holiday Island subdivision, which could cause problems with groundwater quality and threatens the Albemarle Sound. Residents in the subdivision have requested county help with the problem.

While the county did not submit a grant application in 1999, a capital improvement plan was submitted. George said it was not approved, but

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WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 68
Low: 49
PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
High: 68
Low: 50
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
High: 74
Low: 57
MOSTLY CLOUDY