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PARADE PHOTOS BY COURTNEY HARRIS

Chappell Hill Baptist Church took The Perquimans Weekly Best Float in Parade Award at the annual Chamber of Commerce-organized Christmas parade Saturday, as well as first place in the church category.



The Perquimans Middle School Marching Tigers, composed of seventh and eighth grade band students, was a big hit at the annual holiday event.



Parade Grand Marshal Sadot Mendez, who was chosen as an Olympic torchbearer, wore the running suit in which he will carry the Olympic flame in Leesburg, Va. on Dec. 21. He was escorted by a representative of the Chrome Pony Mustang Club.

Christmas parade draws huge crowd

It felt like Christmas in Florida as the annual holiday parade made its way through the streets of Hertford Saturday.

Sunny skies and balmy breezes replaced last year's snow for the holiday event.

The streets were lined from the parade's beginning spot at the high school all along the parade route. Main Street Program Director Belinda Washlesky and her husband counted about 1,200 in the downtown block. Organizers estimated that about 2,500 attended the parade.

Chappell Hill Baptist Church earned The Perquimans Weekly Best Float in Parade Award for the second consecutive year. The award carries a \$100 prize. The group also earned first place in the church category.

Themed "An American Christmas" in honor of local emergency and law enforcement personnel, those who continue to work in New York and Washington, D.C. following the September terrorist attacks, and service members involved in the war on terrorism, the parade featured a number of floats bearing messages of unity and patriotism.

Even the reviewing stand was patriotic. Decorated by Mary White of The Wishing Well in red, white and blue, the stand

featured flags from all eras of American history provided by the Hertford Fifes and Drums. Corps members Charlie Skinner and Billy White donned period costumes and set up the flags.

For the young set, the highlight was the arrival of Santa Claus on his sleigh, brought in by the Hertford Fire Department. The jolly old elf stopped at the courthouse to hear the Christmas wish list of girls and boys who promised they had been good throughout the year.

Parade winners included:

Church category: Chappell Hill Baptist, first place; Woodland United Methodist and Bagley Swamp Wesleyan, second place; and Up River Friends, third place.

Civic category: Perquimans Senior Center, first place; Forestburg Ruritan Club, second place; and Albemarle Plantation Women's Club, third place.

School category: Beacon Academy, first place; Perquimans County Middle School, second place.

Bands: Perquimans County Middle School, first place 60 and under; Northeastern High School, first place 61 and over. Perquimans High School is not judged. Their performance is their gift to the community for support throughout the year.

Chamber welcomes new businesses to county

SUSAN R. HARRIS

The two new businesses welcomed to the county recently have something in common: Both have space

they want to fill. Sure-Store Mini-Warehouses located at Country Corner offers storage space for rent. The Branwick Center, located

in the Perquimans Commerce Centre, is looking for a tenant or tenants to occupy its newly-renovated building.

Jacobs, who owns and operates six storage rental facilities in the Albemarle area, said he opted to come to Perquimans County for several reasons. First, he has many friends in the area. Second, a business survey showed a need for additional storage here. Third, he found a good location to build storage units at Lane's Country Corner.

"I've always had a good relationship with the peo-

ple in Perquimans County," Jacobs said. "There's just good people in Perquimans County."

Jacobs has units available in various sizes, from those in which to store household items to those large enough for boat and vehicle storage. He even has handicapped-accessible units.

Units in Hertford, Elizabeth City, Camden, South Mills, Eason's Crossroads (Gates County) and Creswell are open 24 hours a day and are well lit.

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PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Branwick Associates president Bob Smithwick and his associate Karen Sherr speak with Hertford Mayor Sid Eley during an open house at the Branwick Center in the Perquimans Commerce Centre.



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Owner Rusty Jacobs celebrated the grand opening of Sure-Store Mini-Warehouses at Country Corner recently with a Chamber of Commerce-sponsored ribbon cutting.

Hobbs elected board chairman

SUSAN R. HARRIS

County Republicans scored a victory Monday when both party members on the board of county commissioners were chosen for leadership positions in 2002.

Ben Hobbs was chosen by the county commissioners to serve as chairman of the board. Wallace Nelson will serve as vice chairman.

Hobbs, who served as vice chair this year, was nominated by present chairman Charles Ward for the position.

After Hobbs' nomination, Evelyn Stubbins nominated Charles Ward for the post.

Mack Nixon, Ward, Hobbs and Wallace Nelson voted for Hobbs. Stubbins and Shirley Wiggins voted for Ward. Hobbs was hesitant to vote.

"I never liked voting for myself," he said as he raised his hand.

Had Hobbs opted to vote for Ward, it would have created a 3-3 deadlock.

With a chairman chosen, Nixon nominated Nelson as vice chair. Wiggins moved to close the nominations, and Nelson was elected unanimously.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 75
LOW: 49
PARTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 68
LOW: 46
SCATTERED SHOWERS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 61
LOW: 38
SHOWERS