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December 12, 2001

Vol. 69, No. 51 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

35 cents

Cole considers congressional bid

Ex-prosecutor may run for Clayton's seat

ROBERT SHILES
The Daily Advance

Janice McKenzie Cole, a former U.S. attorney and the first black woman to be elected a judge in the 1st Judicial District, may run for the U.S. Congress.

Cole, a Perquimans County resident, said Friday that she has formed a committee to explore the

feasibility of running for the 1st Congressional District seat now held by Rep. Eva Clayton of Warrenton.

Clayton, a D-N.C., announced last month that she will not seek another term.

Since her announcement, the names of several potential candidates for the 1st District seat have surfaced, the most prominent being state Senate Deputy President Pro Tem Frank Ballance.

Ballance, who chaired Clayton's 2000 re-election campaign and managed two of her other cam-

paigns, is expected to announce this morning in Rocky Mount that he will be a candidate for Clayton's seat.

Cole must run for the 1st District seat, instead of the 3rd District seat now held by Walter Jones Jr., because recent redistricting of congressional districts has moved Perquimans County from the 3rd to the 1st District.

The move means Cole must give up the chairmanship of the 3rd District's Democratic Party, a position she was elected to earlier this year.

Asked why she was set-

ting up an exploratory committee, Cole said Friday that "I want to make sure that I have the support at the right corners of the state and the ability to raise money."

"If I decide to run, I want it to be an informed decision," she said. "When I ask people to vote for me, I want them to feel confident that I am a strong and viable candidate."

Cole believes she can be a strong candidate and muster support from across the 1st Congressional District. Since Clayton announced her retirement, citizens from across the

district have asked her to consider running for Congress, Cole said. She has been "humbled," she said, by the number who said they believed a seat in Congress "would be a natural transition" for her after stints on the district court bench and the U.S. Attorney's office.

"This hit me kind of suddenly," Cole said. "It came up very quickly. I had no idea that Eva was not going to seek re-election."

Cole said she'll decide shortly after the holidays if she will be a congressional candidate.

"I am giving this very

serious consideration," she said.

Familiar throughout eastern North Carolina, Cole was U.S. attorney for the Eastern District for seven years, resigning in April of this year. Before becoming U.S. attorney, she had served as a district court judge in the First Judicial District.

In October, she was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the state's highest civilian award. The award recognizes those who have a record of service in the state, including outstanding contributions to their communities.

Dail pleads guilty to sex offenses

SUSAN R. HARRIS

A Perquimans County man will spend the next 10 years in prison after pleading guilty to four sexual abuse charges.

Jack Hardy Dail, 61, of 329 Hunters Fork Road, Tyner was sentenced by Superior Court Judge William Griffin in Perquimans County Superior Court on Dec. 3.

Originally charged with 18 counts of sexual abuse alleged to have occurred over four decades, Dail pleaded guilty to three counts of indecent liberties with a child and one count of indecent liberties with a child and crimes against nature in a plea bargain agreement arranged by his attorney, former district attorney H.P. Williams. He received 10 year sentences on all counts. According to Sheriff Eric Tilley, Dail will serve at least 10 years.

Dail was arrested in December 2000 after turning himself in to the sheriff's department when indictments were handed down by the grand jury.

Sheriff's investigator Nate Zachary said at the time of Dail's arrest that the investigation began in early September 2000, when one of Dail's alleged victims contacted the sheriff's department.

Zachary said after Dail's arrest that the alleged incidents took place over a period of 34 years. The deputy said Dail admitted his guilt in some of the cases, but said he was not guilty of all charges against him.

At that time, there were four confirmed victims, Zachary said.

Until his arrest, Dail was a Sunday school teacher with no prior criminal history.

After sentencing, Dail was taken to Albemarle District Jail from where he was transported to Central Prison in Raleigh for processing. He may be sent to another facility to serve his term, Tilley said.

CHRISTMAS IN PERQUIMANS



PHOTOS BY SUSAN HARRIS

Perquimans was filled with the sights, sounds and tastes of the holidays last Thursday as the annual HHBA Caroling on the Green and Treasure Hunt, Extension Christmas Ramble Homes Tour and Antique Dealers Association Ramble took place simultaneously. From choirs on the courthouse lawn (above), to treasure hunters finding hidden prizes in stores (right), to beautifully decorated homes to welcoming antiques shops, there was something to help everyone to help get into the holiday spirit Thursday.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Perquimans Extension Director Lewis Smith, Farm Tour Coordinator Harriette Woodard and PCRA Heritage Tourism Development Officer LuAnne Pendergraft present the proceeds of the second annual farm tour to PCHS agriculture teacher Angel Workman.

Farm Tour nets \$2k

A second successful Perquimans County Farm Tour and Hertford Heritage Antique and Craft Show and Sale netted \$2,115 for the Perquimans County High School Agriculture Program.

The check for the proceeds was presented by tour organizers to PCHS agriculture teacher Angel Workman at a thank-you dinner held Nov. 27 for all the host families and every-

one who worked to make the tour possible.

The tour was sponsored by the Perquimans County Extension Center and the Perquimans County Restoration Association. Financial assistance was provided by several Albemarle area businesses.

The tour, which premiered in October 2000, will now be held every other year. In off years, a spring home tours will be held.

Youth arrested after high-speed chase

SUSAN R. HARRIS

A high speed chase through Hertford resulted in multiple charges against a 17-year-old.

Armen Levall Hodges of Hertford led sheriff's deputies and Hertford Police officers on a chase that ended at Miller and Meads Mobile Home Park with the youth's arrest. Speeds hit 100 miles per hour.

Sheriff Eric Tilley said the chase started on Edenton Road Street near Perquimans High School on Nov. 27 when deputies Nate Zachary and Larry Chamblee tried to pull Hodges over. Hodges led officers south on Edenton Road Street to its intersection with Ocean Highway, which is also U.S. 17 Bypass. Hodges turned north on Ocean Highway, then turned on Church Street Extended at the stoplight on the bypass. The chase moved onto Dobbs Street, turned onto Covent Garden, turned onto

Market Street, turned onto Dobbs Street, turned onto Perry Street, turned onto Grubb Street, turned on River Road and into the mobile home park. Hodges pulled into a driveway, but hit the side of the driveway and hit a pipe, which blew out a tire on the vehicle.

Hodges was arrested at the mobile home park and charged with passing a stopped school bus, felony speeding to elude arrest, careless and reckless driving and driving while license revoked.

He was released under a \$10,000 unsecured bond by District Court Judge J.C. Cole with the conditions including that he not be away from his mother's residence except to attend school, meet his his attorney or participate in the pretrial release program (a day reporting center), that he obey his mother and not violate any of her rules, and that he enroll at COA by Dec. 11. He is scheduled to appear in court again today.

Town may face electric increases

SEAN JACKSON
Correspondent

Although it's likely a year away, Town Manager John Christensen said Hertford residents and businesses could see an increase in their electric bills by next December.

Christensen told the Town Council Monday night that the N.C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency will increase its wholesale rates in January. That rise will not immediately result in higher costs to customers, he added.

"The good news is," Christensen said, "we have established a rate stabilization fund which will hold off any rate increase for some months to come."

Christensen said any potential rate increase will likely not be identified until council reviews the Electric Department's budget for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. He said projected revenues could be enhanced by a growth in the town's customer base.

If no growth occurs, customers could see as much as an 8-percent rate hike in order to balance the town's budget.

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WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 70
Low: 46
SCATTERED T'STORMS

FRIDAY
High: 60
Low: 39
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
High: 60
Low: 44
PARTY CLOUDY