

Rotarians take on VITA

Page 2

Update legal documents

Page 6

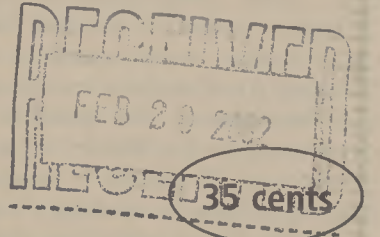
Lady Pirates in playoffs

Page 7

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PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Main Street gets tourism grant

The Hertford Main Street Program is working with a \$3,500 grant to create and develop a brochure to market Historic Hertford as a tourist destination.

The grant came from the N.C. Department of Commerce, the N.C. Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development. Thirty-three initiatives received more than \$129,000 in matching grants.

"Besides commitments for the \$1,166 match from Perquimans County, Historic Hertford Business Association, Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Lacefield and the Phios Corporation, Perquimans County Restoration Association, and the Antique Dealers Association of Perquimans County, we also have many partners to implement a creative, out-of-state tourism campaign, and the Main Street Program to handle the project," said Belinda Washlesky, Hertford Main Street Program Director. "Our goal is to design and print a brochure, complete with

Continued on page 10

PAL GALLERY SHOW



Daily Advance photos

The works of artist Janice Eure now hangs in the Perquimans Arts League Gallery in Hall of Fame Square, downtown Hertford. In addition to paintings, the show also includes some of Eure's other work, including painted mailboxes and accessories. The show will be hung through March 9. Gallery hours are Tuesday—Saturday, 10:30 a.m. — 3:30 p.m. Also in the Gallery are works by PAL members, including gift items for all occasions, which are offered for sale.



ABC head concerned about state study

ANNA GOODWIN
MCCARTHY
Correspondent

An area Alcoholic Beverage Control official is concerned about the future of liquor sales.

Alcoholic Beverage Control may become privatized, said Cecil Winslow, chairman of the Hertford ABC Board.

Winslow said the privatization of ABC would not benefit the community, because there would be less "control" of alcoholic beverage sales.

The General Assembly of North Carolina ratified Senate Bill 166 known as "The Studies Act of 2001." This act appointed a commission that would study among other issues, the "benefits and costs of control and license systems, as implemented in other states, or privatization of alcoholic beverage control, with particular focus on which type of system is more efficient."

Winslow said the current system is more efficient.

The ABC's goal is "to provide uniform control over the sale, purchase, transportation, manufacture, consumption and possession of alcoholic beverages in the state."

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Bill was enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1937, and it allowed voters in each county to determine whether or not liquor should be sold at retail.

"If approved by the local voters, the Act provided for the establishment of a local ABC board that has the authority and duty to operate one retail ABC store," according to the North Carolina ABC Commission.

Today, 153 local ABC systems in the state operate 400 retail stores, according to the Commission.

"The current sales figures are the best we have ever had," said Winslow in his ABC Quarterly Report for the fourth quarter of 2001.

"We were well pleased with what we did last year," said Winslow.

Students recall events of day jet crashed at PCHS

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Third in a series.

The navy fighter plane crash at Perquimans County High School on Feb. 21, 1957 burned memories into the minds of about 500 students.

One of the students was Pat Harrell, a senior in 1957. Harrell recalls that he and fellow student Murray Mac Elliott were sent on an errand by a teacher. At that time, there were partially open porches on the north and south ends of the main high school building on both the upper and lower floors. Harrell and Elliott were on the second floor porch on the north end of the building (the end near the gym) when the plane crashed.

"We had just gotten out on that porch and we heard a tremendous boom and the building just shook," Harrell said. "We immediately saw a huge column of black smoke and ran down into the ball park."

"I believe he and I were the first two people out there."

Once inside the wooden fence that surrounded the park, Harrell said they saw a huge object rolling toward third base on the baseball field. They would later learn it was the plane's engine.

The pair saw someone stumble from the bus garage and fall near the goal post on the cemetery end of the football field. They ran to see if they

could help. Once they neared the person, whose identity they did not know, they realized that he was seriously injured.

"We realized we needed help," Harrell said.

They started to get some help when they heard the fire alarm go off in the building and saw others come into the ball park. Several students came over to the goal post where Harrell and Elliott were.

"Someone said there were two men working in the garage, so Murray Mac and I walked toward the garage to see if we could find anyone else, but we couldn't see anybody."

Elliott and Harrell looked around and saw debris all over the ball park. The fire, Harrell said, had spread to the wooden fence between the bus garage and the baseball grandstand. The buses were backed up to that fence. Fearing that the buses would explode, the twosome began to move the buses to a safer location. Harrell said a third person came to help, but he doesn't know who that person was.

Harrell said once school officials realized exactly what had happened and the danger to students and staff in the ball park, everyone was moved back into the building.

While Harrell experienced the crash as a student, he can look back now through the eyes of one who would go on to become a teacher, principal, assistant superintendent, and

finally, superintendent. In fact, Harrell served as a principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent in Perquimans County. Going back over the events of Feb. 21, 1957, Harrell said the administrators, faculty and students handled the situation admirably. The building was evacuated in a quick, orderly manner once principal E.C. Woodard was alerted to danger, then students went back to class when the threat of danger was over.

Eighth grader Guy McCracken was day-dreaming, looking out the window in a downstairs classroom on the back of the high school building facing the ball park when he saw the plane coming toward the building.

"I yelled 'Everybody hit the floor,'" McCracken recalls.

McCracken said he saw the silver coming down, then a ball of fire and black smoke.

"It was quite scary at the time," he said.

He remembers evacuating the school and going onto the ball field, which was covered with debris. He also remembers seeing Preston Morgan, the mechanics helper who sustained burns over 60 percent of his body.

The Hertford County resident said he remembers numbers of military and law enforcement officials arriving on the scene as well as news crews from television and newspaper. In

fact, McCracken said he was quoted in a story that appeared in The Virginian Pilot newspaper.

He even kept a piece of the plane as a reminder of one of the most unforgettable days of his high school career.

"Oh, how I remember February 21, 1957!" Glenn White wrote in an email to The Perquimans Weekly. "As a ninth grader, sitting in Mrs. Jessup's Algebra I class upstairs on the front of the building, our life at the time changed."

His teacher was explaining a problem on the chalk board when the class felt a little rumble followed by a huge explosion.

"We all got up and ran down the hall, down the stairs and out the building as fast as we could, thinking that the boiler to the heater under the building had exploded," White wrote. "Tommy Matthews, the star athlete in school at the time, said that he was running as fast as he could, when he looked around and Dr. Harold White, who was teaching English, came running right past him!"

Once in the parking lot, which at that time where the present cafeteria sits, the students could see fire all across the athletic field.

"We came upon Preston Morgan, standing there, all black and yellow," White remembered. "All clothing he had had on except his belt and shoes had been burned off. I can remember him telling us that he didn't want to be seen by the girls

coming out. Coach (Ike) Perry got a coat and took him to the gym. The athletic field was still blazing, and all the students were out there watching, oblivious of the fact that the plane possibly could have had ammunition on board."

The CBS Evening News also sticks in White's mind. He remembers that Douglas Edwards began his broadcast with the words, "from Hertford, NC, where the song 'Carolina Moon' was written..."

For the rest of his high tenure at PCHS, White said pieces of the plane were found.

A native of Belvidere who now lives in Fayetteville, White said he hopes the Navy won't locate an outlying air strip in his home community.

"We live only a few miles from Pope AFB, Fort Bragg, and Simmons Air Field," White said. "Helicopters, and all types of planes fly over all the time, but they are at least supporting the military located on the bases here, and we chose to live here."

White, who emailed his memories of the crash, ended his correspondence this way, "It's said that when certain incidences happen one can remember when and what you were doing at the time, and that certainly was a vivid memory."

(There will be another story about the Navy fighter plane crash at the high school next week.)

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 68
LOW: 39
MOSTLY SUNNY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 57
LOW: 29
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 55
LOW: 34
PARTLY SUNNY