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# PERQUIMANS

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# WEEKLY

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## Dublin is new principal at PCMS



John Dublin was named principal at Perquimans Middle School Monday night.

SUSAN R. HARRIS

John Dublin sees himself as just one piece of the puzzle of success as he takes the reins at Perquimans Middle School.

The present assistant principal at Pasquotank County High School believes that every staff member in a school contributes to its overall success.

"I'm going to try and keep that achievement level as high as I possibly can," Dublin said. "But it's not going to be done by John Dublin, I'm just one piece in that puzzle. It's going to take everybody there."

Dublin, a Buffalo, New York native, always wanted to be a social studies teacher. However, during his college years, he was recruited by law enforcement agencies. He was

intrigued, and began a career in law enforcement in 1971.

He did not forget his dream of becoming an educator, however. Dublin continued his own education, earning a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the State University College at Empire State, and later a masters in education/administration from Canisius College and a masters in criminal justice from State University College at Buffalo.

He fulfilled his desire to teach by instructing and lecturing at police academies and colleges beginning in 1979.

As Dublin considered retiring from the City of Buffalo police force in 1993, he knew he was young enough to pursue a full-time career in education. His first foray into the pub-

lic school classroom was as a substitute teacher. Before he left New York, he was assistant principal at Turner-Carroll High School.

Deciding to move south to a warmer climate, Dublin served for one year as assistant principal at Abbeville High School in South Carolina, before moving to Elizabeth City, where he spent a year as assistant principal at Elizabeth City Middle School before transferring to Pasquotank County High.

"The middle school is a very important part of our educational process," Dublin said. "Students are changing from children into young adults. It's very important to understand them...It's really time for them to start to have more responsibility."

Dublin also believes that performance goals should be set high, and that children should be challenged with interesting, attention-getting curriculum.

He also believes that no one can achieve without discipline in the classroom.

"You must have high expectations that you want all the students to learn and succeed, but along with that you need some discipline and order in the classrooms for that to happen," he said. "If you don't have that order in the classroom everybody loses, that child who is disruptive and the child who's trying to pay attention."

Perquimans Superintendent Kenneth Wells said he is working with officials in Pasquotank schools to negotiate a date for Dublin to begin work here.

## Summer breeze concert

Los Saxofonistas, a saxophone quartet that performs a varied repertoire of high-energy music, will be featured at the Summer Breeze Concert, Sunday, July 14, on the grounds of Hertford's historic 1730 Newbold-White House. The outdoor Summer Breeze Concerts are sponsored by the Perquimans County Restoration Association and the Perquimans Arts League, and made possible with support from the North Carolina Arts Council.

The concerts are free, but donations are accepted.

Concerts begin at 5:30 p.m. and last about one hour. Bring your blankets, lawn chairs and a picnic for this casual outdoor family concert.

The Newbold-White House is open for tours on Sundays from 2—5 p.m. For more information call the Newbold-White House at 426-7567.

## STATE CHAMPS



School Board Chairman Walter Leigh congratulates the Perquimans Middle School shooting team for its state championship season. The board presented team members with state championship jackets during Monday night's board meeting. The team will now compete in national competition in Pennsylvania.

## July 4th activities planned

ALICE BREWIN

Thanks to the hard work and perseverance of the American Legion Post 126, Historic Hertford Business Association, and countless volunteers and patrons, Hertford is ready to go off with a bang celebrating July 4th.

All activities will be held Thursday, July 4 at Missing Mill Park, and the day promises to be fun-filled for the young and the young-at-heart alike. The festivities begin at noon with Tommy's Pizza and the American Legion providing food and refreshments. There will also be cotton candy and surprise bags for sale.

The Hunter Safety Team will be on hand to educate while James and Sheila Duncan from "Party Rentals" will provide entertainment.

The band "Loose Change" is set to perform from 5-9 p.m. and the fireworks will explode over the river at 9.

Volunteers are still needed. If interested, please contact Mary at 426-2021.

## Schools appeal writing test scores to state

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Perquimans County Schools Superintendent Kenneth Wells wrote a point-of-view paper recently designed to persuade its reader that something is dreadfully wrong with state writing test scores in the seventh grade.

The letter was part of package sent to the state appealing the writing test scores.

Perquimans' scores dropped from 72.5 percent proficient last spring to 40.6 percent this spring. A decline that dramatic indicates that there is a big problem somewhere, and Wells doesn't believe that problem is in Winfall.

"We had been showing nothing but growth over the past few years," Wells

said. "In 1997, we were at 51.3 percent and had grown to 72.5 percent last year. We had done nothing, but show steady progress."

And Wells isn't the only superintendent with a new flair for writing. Wells said as of last week, 67 of the state's school districts have appealed test scores, and more may officially appeal before Friday's deadline.

Statewide, scores dropped from 73.3 percent last year to 62 percent this year. The drop was not what educators expected, as the state had been holding steady for several years. And the state really can't tell anyone why test scores slid.

In the Northeast region, test scores have topped the state average for the past three years, and local

scores were higher than the regional average.

Wells said he was first made aware of a problem with test scores when he spoke with personnel from two or three other school districts, asking if Perquimans had gotten writing test scores back.

"They were telling me they had dropped by 30 percentage points, 50 percentage points..." Wells said. "Ours came in and we had fallen dramatically."

Wells said Perquimans has worked diligently on improving reading and writing skills, hoping to better prepare students and raise test scores. The system even has higher promotion standards because students and faculty here have worked so hard to raise student achievement levels.

"Our teachers have pushed this (high writing standards)," Wells said. "Our teachers are committed to writing."

The middle school's Instructional Facilitator, Sandra Hooker, who has a strong background in writing and is a trained state writing test scorer, looked over the local papers, rescoring them. Her numbers and the state's assessment did not match.

So a team from the middle school looked over the papers, and agreed that there was a problem with scoring. Next, Principal Anne White wrote a letter stating her concerns. The papers then went to local Testing Coordinator Betty Waters, and were then looked over by the regional testing coordinator.

Everyone agreed that there was a problem, and Wells wrote his appeal.

In the meantime, fourth grade scores were received, and they were worse. Statewide, scores dropped from 68.8 percent to 46 percent proficiency. DPI actually stopped the scoring due to concerns regarding the scoring process, but determined that everything was all right and had the scoring company resume.

Perquimans is also appealing its fourth grade scores.

"This is probably one of the most disappointing odysies of this school year," Wells said.

"Teachers, principals and certainly this superintendent do not understand how these scores were computed," Wells said.

## WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY  
High: 94  
Low: 75  
ISOLATED T'STORMS

FRIDAY  
High: 91  
Low: 74  
SCATTERED T'STORMS

SATURDAY  
High: 90  
Low: 70  
PARTLY CLOUDY