

Wiggins attends senior legislature

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The pledge of allegiance

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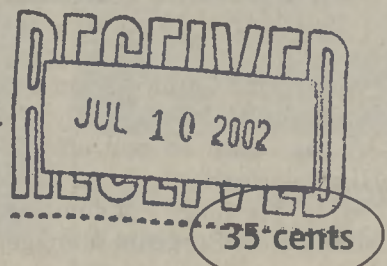
Central hosts aeronautics camp

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July 10, 2002

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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Hertford crabber drowns in sound Friday morning

SUSAN R. HARRIS

The body of a Hertford man was pulled from the Albemarle Sound just before noon on Saturday.

John Burk, 30, of 319 Stokes Drive, had been missing since jumping overboard from a commercial fishing boat Friday morning.

Perquimans County Sheriff Eric Tilley said Burk's body was found by rescue officials using sonar about 11:30 a.m. Saturday. The body was in about 12-15 feet of water about a half mile south of the Harvey Point Defense Facility.

According to Tilley, Burk was fishing with Bobby Lane aboard a 25-foot crabbing vessel when a piece of equipment fell over the side of the boat around 10:39 a.m. Friday.

Burk was wearing waders, but no life jacket, and jumped into the water to retrieve the equipment. The boots and waders quickly filled with water, tugging Burk beneath the water's surface.

Lane dove in the water trying to rescue Burk, but was unable to pull him back above the water.

Tilley said authorities were alerted within 10 minutes of the incident.

Rescue and search efforts by several area law enforcement and emergency response units got underway as soon as the call for help was received. Responders searched until a storm threatened rescuers Friday evening, then resumed. The Sheriff's Department, Perquimans County Water Rescue and Dive Team, Hertford Police Department, U.S. Coast Guard and N.C. Wildlife Commission assisted in the search, as did the Hertford and Elizabeth City fire departments. The Coast Guard sent two search vessels and a helicopter. Burk's body was recovered when the Sidney Dive Team from Beaufort County brought in sonar equipment on Saturday.

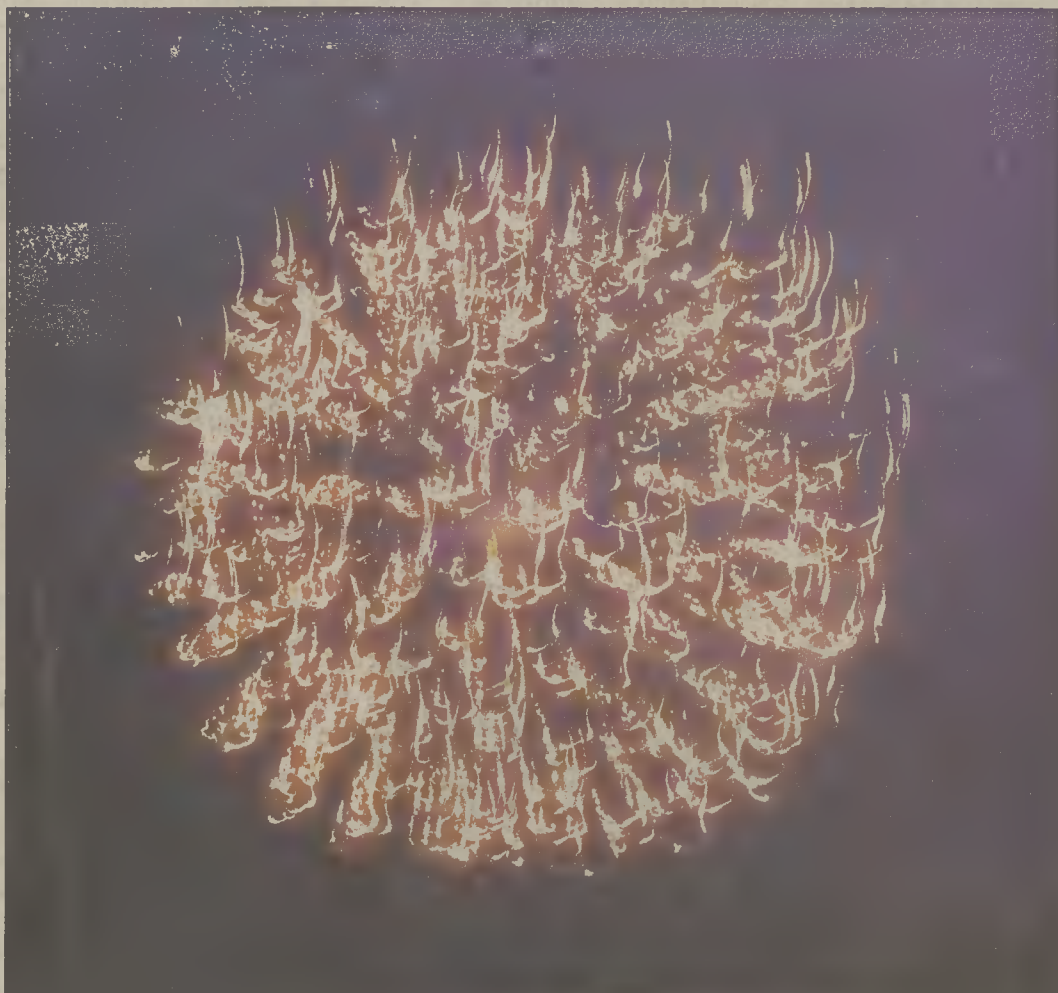
Tilley commended all those involved in the search and rescue effort. He said there were between 75 and 100 people helping with the search, most of them volunteers.

"You could not have asked for people to be more cooperative and work so well together," Tilley said.

Officials at the Harvey Point Defense Facility were very helpful, Tilley said, providing food for personnel on the scene.

Funeral arrangements for Burk are being handled by Stallings Funeral Home.

PICNIC IN THE PARK



S BY SUSAN HARRIS

Hundreds flocked to Missing Mill Park Thursday to enjoy food, games, music and the fireworks celebrating the birthday of the United States. Sponsored by the Historic Hertford Business Association, events began at noon and climaxed with sparkling pyrotechnics over the Perquimans River. The fireworks were sponsored by American Legion Post 126. While Thursday's 95 degree heat kept many folks at home until sundown, those who came to the park enjoyed traditional festival foods, including very popular snow cones, and listening to the music of Loose Change while waiting for the fireworks.



NEW FIRE TRUCK



PHOTO BY ALICE BFREWIN

The Hertford Fire Department needed a new, reliable pumper, and thanks to a grant/loan combination from USDA Rural Development, a custom Typhoon pumper, valued at \$190,490, was recently purchased. Admiring the new truck last week were E-1 representative Ronald Ingle, Town Manager John Christensen, Fire Chief Robert Reed, USDA Rural Development Specialist Susan Sorrell and Mayor Sid Eley.

Juveniles suspected in break-ins

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Two Hertford couples whose homes have been broken into and robbed, allegedly by juveniles, sought answers and help from Hertford Town Council Monday night.

David Wilson was the spokesperson for the two families, who live on Market Street.

Wilson said his home, commonly known in Hertford as the Buck House, has been broken into twice, and the security alarm set off at least one other time.

In a letter to the editor which appears on page 4 of this newspaper, Wilson said that about \$3,700 worth of items were stolen from his home during the initial break-in. On another occasion, a neighbor caught youth on the property. At that time, a brick was allegedly used to break a window.

Wilson's wife, Patricia, added that the family is reluctant to leave home at the same time, fearing another break-in. In fact, Patricia Wilson said, her husband was at work recently when she had to leave to go to the dentist. Upon her return, the alarm system had been activated. That was the first time the entire family had been away from the house since the second break-in, she said.

In addition, Wilson said his neighbors' home was vandalized. Eric and Donna Marcum returned from a trip to find guns stolen, beds appearing to have been slept in and food eaten.

A school report card was allegedly left behind during one break-in, and Wilson said at least one youth has written a letter of apology for at least one break-in.

All four were frustrated that law enforcement has not acted faster to get the alleged perpetrators off the street. And they feel like they are in the dark about how the investigation into the break-ins is progressing. He expressed displeasure that those allegedly involved in the break-ins have not been arrested and/or locked up pending trial.

Wilson said he has been given numerous pieces of information by different people in town, including that no court date has been set for the juveniles, the juveniles are repeat offenders, the police department is undermanned and does not always have an officer on duty, and that nothing can be done about the break-ins.

Donna Marcum said her children have been victims of violence and taunting from those who allegedly broke into the homes. She said she arms them with walkie-talkies when they ride their bikes so they can seek help if necessary.

Town Manager John Christensen, upon finding that Wilson has not spoken with Police Chief Dale Vanscoy, said Wilson should feel free to talk with the chief about the situation. He said that there are officers on duty 24 hours a day, seven days per week. He added that all positions on the police department are filled.

Vanscoy, who was at the meeting, told the Wilsons and Marcums that police officers have investigated the complaints, and in fact have filed 23 juvenile petitions relating to the break-ins.

Vanscoy explained that when juveniles are suspects in criminal activities, the police officers may pick the youth up for questioning, but cannot question them without a parent or guardian present. Even if officers determine that there is sufficient evidence to charge a juvenile with a crime, the juvenile is not immediately arrested and taken into custody as with adults. Unless they are determined to be violent or an immediate threat to themselves or others, juveniles are released into the custody of a parent or guardian.

At that point, juvenile petitions are filed with the juvenile justice agency in Elizabeth City.

Perquimans County does not have regularly scheduled juvenile court dates. Dates are set when juvenile justice officials decide that there is a sufficient case load. Vanscoy said law officers receive subpoenas to appear in court just as victims do once a court date has been set.

The chief added that officers may not divulge the names of juveniles, in North Carolina defined as youth under age 16, to anyone, including the victims.

Patricia Wilson said she and her family are willing to take steps to help keep Hertford's streets safe, including participating in a neighborhood watch program.

In his letter to the editor, Wilson asks those who have been crime victims to contact him.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 81
LOW: 66
MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 84
LOW: 66
MOSTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 83
LOW: 70
SCATTERED T'STORMS