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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Rains blamed for large sewage spills

ROBERT SHILES
The Daily Advance

Last week's heavy rains are being blamed for two large sewage and wastewater spills in Hertford that occurred within two days of each other several weeks ago.

The spills, which dumped a combined 52,000 gallons of wastewater and sewage into Perquimans

County waterways, occurred on Feb. 16 and Feb. 18.

"It was all directly related to rain," John Christensen, the town's manager, said Monday. "We were inundated with water — more than eight inches within two days. ... This rain was unusual in that there was so much, it was persistent, and it was constant."

The first spill occurred at the town's wastewater treatment plant off Grubb Street, behind Miller and Meads Trailer Park, Christensen said.

Approximately 17,000 gallons of untreated wastewater spilled into the Perquimans River. The state Division of Water Quality was notified of the spill on Feb. 17.

The larger spill took

place two days later. Approximately 35,000 gallons of untreated sewage was discharged from the town's pump station on Willow Street. The discharge occurred on Feb. 18 at 8:05 a.m. and lasted about 4.5 hours.

Christensen said that during the bad weather a motor at the plant apparently shorted out, causing a malfunction to an alarm

that would have made plant operators aware of any spill.

"We weren't aware of the problem until there was already overflow," he said.

Approximately 25,000 gallons of the untreated wastewater actually entered an unnamed tributary leading into the Perquimans River, according to local officials. A permanent bypass was

installed with a bypass pump to prevent further discharge.

"Whenever we have a spill, we immediately take action," Christensen said. "We want to try to stop it as quick as possible."

News releases were issued by the municipality as required by state law whenever a waste spill of 1,000 gallons or more reaches surface waters.

Child Support Agency offers amnesty

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Parents behind on child support payments will get a chance to pay up without legal action being taken against them March 3-7.

The Albemarle Child Support Enforcement Agency, an arm of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, is holding an Amnesty Week next week.

Albemarle Child Support Enforcement Agency Supervisor Alden Miller said the primary goal of the Amnesty Week is to get children the support they need by allowing parents delinquent in their payments to voluntarily come in and make payment arrangements. The office in Elizabeth City serves Perquimans, Camden, Gates and Pasquotank counties.

In Perquimans County, 110 parents have been mailed invitations to go into the Child Support Office to make arrangements to catch up child support payments.

Miller said there are 827 child support cases in Perquimans County handled through his office. The number of children that caseload represents was not in his database, but he said that each case represents at least one child, and some represent several children being supported by the same non-custodial parent.

Monthly collections for Perquimans County total \$100,000-\$112,000. Total collections from June 2003-January 2003 total over \$835,000.

Over \$5 million was collected in all four counties between June 2002 and January 2003.

Albemarle Child Support Agency employs 15 full-time workers and two contract attorneys, and manages a caseload of 5,325.

Miller said most child support payments are made to a central office in Raleigh and disbursed from
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Boone and staff Give Kids a Smile

SUSAN R. HARRIS

The program was called "Give Kids a Smile," but it was the adults in Dr. Jack Boone's dental practice who looked happy last Thursday.

On that day, all six employees of the practice gave up their salaries to serve children who may not otherwise be able to get appropriate dental care. Twenty-five children had scheduled appointments, and received about \$6,000 in services.

Office Manager Andrea Boone said the practice had also worked in some children before Thursday and had continued to schedule others after

Thursday.

Boone said she had seen information on the program, a national initiative sponsored by the American Dental Association, for quite some time. The more she studied the program, the more she became convinced that the practice should become involved. When she brought up the idea at a staff meeting, she said the response was immediate and positive.

"They didn't even blink," Boone said. "They just said, 'Sure, we'll do it.' It's been fun. It makes you feel really good. We all like helping children."

Dental assistant Delores Howell agreed



Dental hygienist Sherry Murray cleans Alice Jenkins' teeth during Give Kids a Smile Day at the dental practice of Dr. Jack Boone.

with Boone.

"(I wanted to do this) because I love kids and I hate to see them hurt," Howell said. "I have two grandchildren and I would hope someone would do this for them if they needed it."

Shermin Prentice, a dental assistant II, said it is very important for children to receive dental care. Early preventative care helps insure good dental health for life, Prentice said. The primary teeth are the foundation for healthy permanent teeth, she added.

Cleanings, x-rays, sealants and recommending treatment plans were some of the procedures performed on Thursday.

Patty Rogal of Benco Dental, a dental supply company, donated toothbrushes, floss and fluoride trays for the program. She also sold Dr. Boone x-ray film at cost.



First grader Shakayla Jordan was all smiles as she received treatment from dental assistant II Shermin Prentice.

Central named Super Safe School

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Perquimans Central School was one of 37 North Carolina public schools named as 2002-03 Super Safe Schools.

The desigination recognizes schools providing a safe learning environment for children and educators.

The Triple "S" School Award was established by the Department of Public Instruction's School Improvement Division to recognize public schools' exemplary efforts to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Ocracoke School in Hyde County was the only other northeastern North Carolina School to earn recognition.

To receive recognition as a Triple "S" School, schools voluntarily submit a portfolio documenting the safety processes they have in place. On-site visits also are conducted prior to final recommendations.

Superintendent Kenneth Wells told the board of education Monday night that the principals and staff at all four county schools applied for the designation, and all met the requirements for recognition. He said administrators do not know why all four schools were not chosen for the award.

Grant supports completion of periauger project

The Perquimans County Restoration Association Periauger Project has received another infusion of funds to insure the project's completion.

PCRA was selected by the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Enhancement Program to receive \$55,623 in funding for the project. The funds will be used to complete the construction of a periauger, an eighteenth-century workboat of the Albemarle region.

Enhancement funding is federal money set aside by the Transportation Equity
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Volunteers Gerry Zell, Don Johnson and Monty Spindler work on the periauger mast at the Perquimans Business Center last Friday. Volunteers have made the sweeps, rudder, jib and other components of the periauger.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 50
Low: 35
RAIN

FRIDAY
High: 50
Low: 34
CLOUDY

SATURDAY
High: 52
Low: 33
CLOUDY