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PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Christmas comes to town

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Floats and bands, Scouts and emergency vehicles, and even Santa braved Saturday's frigid breezes as the annual Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce Christmas parade made its way through Hertford.

The parade was led by local law enforcement agencies and the newly-formed Perquimans County High School ROTC.

Serving as grand marshalls were the department heads of county emergency services agencies, honoring the outstanding job their members did during and after Hurricane Isabel blew through the county in September.

"Despite the cold and the wind, it was an enthusiastic crowd and the participants were equally enthusiastic," said parade chair Wes Hostetler. "All but two or three showed up, and two of them were from out of the county."

Chappell Hill Baptist Church and Hertford Grammar School PTA tied for The Perquimans Weekly Best in Parade Award. They will share a \$100 prize.

Winners in the individual categories were:

School: Hertford Grammar School, first; Beacon Academy, second.

Civic: SPCA of Perquimans County, first; Perquimans County Senior Center, second; Holiday Island Community, third.

Church: Chappell Hill Baptist Church, first; Hertford Pentecostal Church, second; Bagley Swamp Wesleyan Kids, third.

Santa got off downtown to hear the Christmas wishes of boys and girls, heading to the warmth of Inteliport and its new Cyber Cafe.

Strolling carolers and musicians toured downtown after the parade, continuing the holiday cheer.

Historic Hertford, Inc. dedicated the plaza beside Woodard's Pharmacy and the new period lighting that has been installed downtown and across the S-bridge.

Downtown businesses offered a respite from the



Chappell Hill Baptist Church (above) and Hertford Grammar School (below) tied for The Perquimans Weekly Best in Parade Award. Both won first place in their categories.



The Elizabeth City Fire Department escorted parade grand marshalls, the department heads of county emergency services agencies, in Saturday's parade. The agencies were honored for their tremendous efforts during and after Hurricane Isabel wreaked havoc on Perquimans in September.

bitter cold as shoppers could find a variety of gift items in welcoming shops.

(Please see page two for more photographs of the parade.)



Tips to ease pain of grief during holidays

For most people, the holidays bring about a time of joy and celebration.

Family get-togethers, home-cooked dinners and family traditions are just a few of the many cherished activities.

Yet, for those who have experienced the loss of a loved one, the holidays are often robbed of their joy. Instead, these and other important days, become a time of loneliness and sadness.

What's more, throughout these seasons, we are constantly bombarded with happy family images through cards, television, commercials, movies and magazines. The contrast between what we see and how we feel, only amplifies the loneliness within.

Brook Noel, co-author of the noted book "I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: surviving, coping and healing with the sudden death of a loved one" (Champion Press) and author of the new book, "Surviving Holidays, Birthdays and Anniversaries: a guide to grieving during special occasions" (Champion Press) offers these tips for easing grief's grip during the holidays:

Be prepared for the ambush: Deep pain and sadness, as if the death had just occurred, can surface at odd moments. Anticipating these ambushes is half the battle. Know that they are part of the grief process.

Talk, talk, talk: With all the celebrations and happiness that surround us, we may feel awkward bringing up anything that isn't equally festive. But we must release our feelings through talking to others. If we don't, our feelings will lodge within us creating a dark sadness. The only way to get past our sadness is to move through it. If you do not have someone you can talk to, consider free online support, like that which is found at www.griefsteps.com

Grieve in your own

way: Sometimes societal and religious beliefs impose rules like time limits for grief, what we should wear, how we should behave, when and where we should talk about the death and to whom. It is important not to weigh ourselves down with societal expectations. We must find our own way through to embrace life again.

Hold a grief session: The goal of a Grief Session is simple. Set aside 20 minutes each day where we are safe to experience our feelings. When we don't do this, we let our feelings build inside our hearts and they cause sadness and depression.

Create a support group: Chances are that other family members and friends who were close to your lost loved one will be having equal difficulty with these difficult days. Consider asking one or more people who are facing similar emotions, to gather for a support group.

Choose activities wisely: During holidays and other busy seasons, not only do we have to face our grief, but we often have many other commitments and people that need our attention. As you look at the upcoming difficult days, take a personal "emotional inventory." Decide ahead of time how much you can handle during the holidays. Then make sure you don't take on more than feels right to you.

Do not try to outspend grief: As you face your holiday shopping, beware of the common pitfall of trying to "outspend" your grief. When we are feeling a hole or ache inside, human nature often leads us to purchase items to fill that hole.

Let your body lead you: Grief affects us all differently. Let your body lead you. If you feel tired sleep. If you feel like crying cry. If you are hungry eat. Don't feel you need to act one way or another. There are no "shoulds" right now, simply follow the lead of your body.

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Browns open Planters Ridge in commerce centre

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Planters Ridge is a natural extension of Lyl Brown's landscaping business.

Brown has offered full-scale landscaping, from mowing to installation to reconstruction, for over eight years. Opening a lawn and garden shop will allow he and his wife, Natalie, to provide even better service to the community.

The Chamber of Commerce sponsored a ribbon cutting at the grand opening of Planters Ridge, a full-service lawn and garden and gift shop in the Perquimans Commerce Centre, on Friday. Lyl and Natalie Brown, along with their son, Landon, cut the ribbon to officially open their new business venture.

Planters Ridge carries everything from Yankee candles to topsoil.



The Chamber of Commerce sponsored a ribbon cutting celebrating the grand opening of Planters Ridge, a full-service lawn and garden and gift shop in the Perquimans Commerce Centre, on Friday. Lyl and Natalie Brown, along with their son, Landon, cut the ribbon to officially open their new business venture. Planters Ridge carries everything from Yankee candles to topsoil.

ty residents browsed and shopped in their new store. Some purchased the fresh Christmas trees and poinsettias offered in Planters Ridge. Others did some Christmas shopping, choosing from a variety of gift items including Yankee candles and accessories, wind chimes, flags, Eagle pottery, garden accessories and more.

Lyl Brown said the shop offers a full line of lawn and garden supplies, including seasonal annuals and perennials, trees and shrubs, and hanging baskets.

Also available to Planters Ridge is mulch by the yard, sand, rock and topsoil. Delivery is also available.

The couple chose the

commerce centre as the home for their business because they believe it will become a business center.

"I feel like this is where Hertford is growing," Brown said.

The location is also convenient, being just off U.S. Highway 17.

Through Christmas, the Browns will open the shop, Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. and Sunday, 1-8 p.m. to allow plenty of time for shopping.

The Browns invite everyone to stop by and see them at Planters Ridge. They'll find that the couple is committed to offering good product with good, friendly, hometown service.

Call 426-3636 for more information.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 62
Low: 36
AM Clouds PM Sun

FRIDAY
High: 56
Low: 32
SUNNY

SATURDAY
High: 52
Low: 40
MOSTLY SUNNY