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QTL Center to open at PCMS

ExplorNet recently announced the opening of a second Quality Teaching & Learning (QTL) Center in Perquimans.

The Center will be housed at Perquimans Middle School and will offer secondary teachers the same high-tech staff development that elementary teachers have been receiving at Perquimans Central School for the past three years.

The first Center, which opened at Perquimans Central School in 2001, has served as the training site for teachers across northeastern North Carolina, including teachers from Perquimans, Gates, Camden, Currituck, Pasquotank, and Dare

counties.

The training sessions typically accommodate 15 teachers who attend a total of seven training sessions. They receive training in the use of high-tech equipment like document readers, Smart Board projectors, digital cameras and scanners. Perquimans County Schools provides the lab and on-site technical support, while ExplorNet employs the personnel and the model for professional development.

"Perquimans has become the most progressive district in the northeast region with their foresight and collaboration, building partnerships and obtaining funding through grants," said ExplorNet

Regional Coordinator Susan Herring.

The QTL program shows teachers new ways of blending educational strategies with technology. School-based teams of educators work together through several days of formal staff development, creating a collaborative learning community within their school. The program stresses curriculum and technology, incorporating teaching strategies that impact student achievement.

"This gives us the highest quality of staff development. There is always going to be a demand for this training because we are constantly bringing in new teachers," said

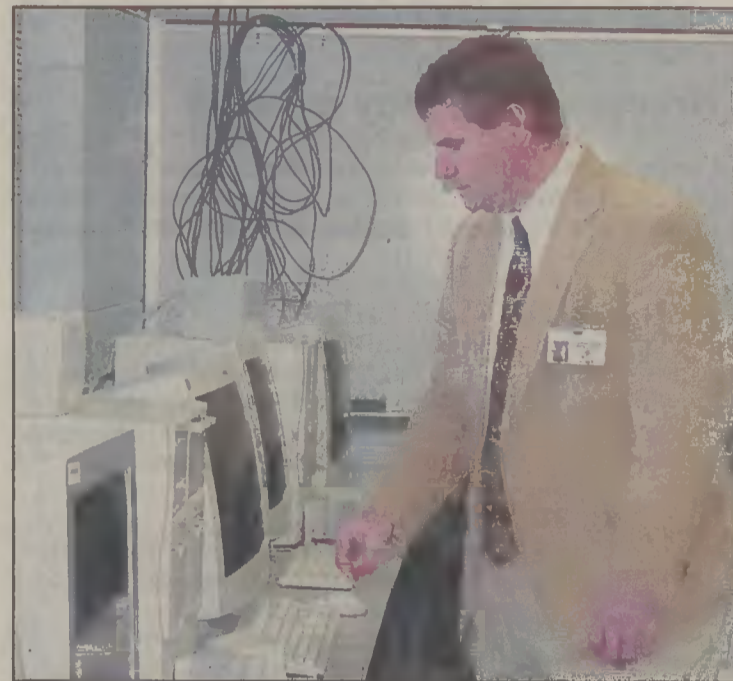
Superintendent Ken Wells.

Wells believes that Perquimans County Schools benefits twofold in the partnership with ExplorNet:

- The training site is located on school campus, making training sessions very accessible for staff, and

- When the lab is not being used for teacher training sessions, the lab is continuously used by students.

With the donation of computers coordinated through SAS, ExplorNet Centers, and the US Coast Guard's Partnership-In-Education, the Center is equipped to open its doors in March to serve the Northeast.



Principal Melvin Hawkins looks over the QTL Center at Perquimans Middle School, which is scheduled to open in March. The center will offer high-tech training to middle and secondary school teachers across the Northeast.

Blount speaks at Reagan Dinner

COLBY UNDERWOOD
 The Daily Advance

President Bush will take 60 percent of the N.C. vote in the Nov. 2 general election, state Republican Party Chairman Ferrell Blount predicted Saturday.

"Obviously our top priority in North Carolina is to see that President Bush gets reelected," he said. "My bet is he will carry North Carolina with a larger majority than he carried in 2000."

In 2000, Bush got 56 percent of votes in North Carolina, Blount said.

"I think he'll get 60 percent (this time)."

Blount made the statement shortly after a speech at the Perquimans County Republicans Party's 4th Annual Reagan Day Dinner, which nearly 50 people attended.

Blount praised Bush and U.S. Rep. Richard Burr, R-Winston-Salem, who is a candidate for the Senate seat being vacated by presidential candidate John Edwards. Blount also accused Democrats of taking soft money and defended his participation in a



State Republican Party Chairman Ferrell Blount spoke at the annual Reagan Day Dinner sponsored by the Perquimans County Republican Party Saturday.

lawsuit against the state Legislature's newly approved redistricting maps.

Burr, who has Bush's backing, might run unopposed for the Republican nomination to take over Edwards' seat, Blount told the Republicans.

Burr "has done a wonderful job for us for the 5th congressional district," Blount said. "And we are excited about the possibility of him going over to the Senate. He's a great American."

Blount didn't pinpoint any favorite Republican candidate for governor, choosing instead to criticize current Gov. Mike Easley, a Democrat.

"I would say we've got three or four (candidates) that could beat Mike Easley," he said. "Easley has got a lot of explaining to do on the economy."

North Carolina lags behind neighboring states in employment, Blount said.

"I think Governor Easley — his tax policies —

are holding economic development back," Blount said. "We've got the highest corporate tax rate, higher than any other state that adjoins us. And it's hurting us recruiting industry."

Blount said he doesn't believe tax rates have changed since the 2000 gubernatorial election but, "obviously, the unemployment rate is higher now than it was in 2000."

He accused Democrats of taking soft money from nonprofit advocacy groups, some of which are support-

ed by billionaire George Soros, a critic of Bush.

The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, supported by senators John McCain and Russ Feingold, outlawed such donations but Democrats are finding ways to skirt the law, Blount said.

"Democrats have these 501C4 corporations," he said Saturday. "They are basically, as far as I'm concerned, violating the campaign finance laws. And they are going to dump a whole lot of money in the

state of North Carolina that support liberal causes."

The Federal Election Commission "is going to rule on some of these activities shortly," Blount said. "But we are bracing ourselves. Because it could very well be true that the George Soros of the world... and these liberal Democrats are going to drop a lot of money into North Carolina to defeat our candidates."

The FEC ruling is not the only legal decision that Blount is waiting on. He is involved in a lawsuit trying to prevent the Legislature from implementing state legislative districts approved last year. Asked how the lawsuit benefits Republicans, Blount said it doesn't. He claimed the lawsuit is an effort to uphold a state constitution provision.

"The state constitution of North Carolina is very clear in that you should split the fewest number of counties possible when drawing these district lines," he said. "The attorneys who advise me tell me that the map that was passed in November by the General Assembly is not a constitutional map."

During the Reagan Dinner Saturday, Blount was the keynote speaker. Before Blount's speech, gubernatorial candidate Dan Barrett, a Davie County commissioner, said Republicans need to work together to defeat the real enemy, Easley.

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High school sweethearts keep love alive through the years

SUSAN R. HARRIS

(Part 1 of series on high school sweethearts.)

She went to the dance in the spring of 1965 at St. Patrick's Catholic School with someone else, but she couldn't help smiling at the handsome guy across the room.

He was taken with her also, and had a friend introduce them.

Five years later, Tom and Gail Culver were taking their wedding vows at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Scranton, Penn.

The next time the two



Tom and Gail Culver met at a dance in 1965. They married in 1970.

went to a dance at the Catholic school, a popular hang-out for local teens,



Al and Mary Krepla cut a rug at her 50th high school reunion recently.

they were a couple.

That was a big thing back then," Gail said. "Every Friday everybody went to the dance."

Soon, they were "going steady," and she wore his ID ring.

"She was my main squeeze," Tom laughs as the two sit in the cozy den of their Hertford home and remember the past 39 years.

Tom graduated in 1967 and enlisted in the Marines, leaving in June 1967 just as young GIs were beginning to be shipped to Viet Nam. Tom didn't want to tie Gail down when he

was on tours of duty, especially if he was sent to Nam, so Gail dated a little.

But while on leave in November 1968, Tom popped the question — in the parking lot of The Scranton Times, of all places — and Gail said, "Yes."

"That was so unromantic, in the parking lot of a newspaper!" Gail eyes Tom as she remembers that day.

The two had been window shopping in downtown Scranton and had returned to the car when he asked the high school senior to marry him.

Continued on page 3.

HOLIDAY WEATHER

THURSDAY
 HIGH: 46
 LOW: 29
 RAIN

FRIDAY
 HIGH: 51
 LOW: 31
 PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
 HIGH: 51
 LOW: 31
 SUNNY