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June 9, 2004

Vol. 72, No. 23 Hertford, North Carolina 27944

Chaney named DSS head

SUSAN R. HARRIS

Eighteen months after Department of Social Services Director Chrystal Towe retired, Susan Chaney has been named acting director of the department.

Chaney, formerly a social work supervisor in the department, recently moved up to the department's top spot. Her appointment, recommended by the Social Services Board, was approved by county commissioners Monday night. Chaney will be considered acting director until she meets state training requirements for social services directors.

Assistant County Manager Bobby Darden said the Social Services Board and county commissioners were pleased to bring someone from within the department up to the director's spot. Chaney knows the area, staff and clients, and has a good knowledge of the programs, budget and other facets of social services, Darden said.

Chaney earned her bachelors degree in social work from Old Dominion University. She came to the Perquimans County Department of Social Services in May 1992 as a children's services social workers, later moving up to social work supervisor.

"I'm excited about the new challenge," Chaney said of her new job. "I know it's going to be challenging."

Chaney added that her co-workers have been very supportive of her promotion.

Now, she is immersing herself in learning her new responsibilities.

It is her ultimate goal to oversee a department totally committed to helping families and children.

A reception was held in her honor Tuesday afternoon.

Family deals with grief by helping local students

Giving, whether it's time, talent, treasures or money, brings joy to the giver and to the receiver. That is why it is so appropriate that Bill and Linda Mewborn chose to have family and friends contribute money in memory of their son, Peter Layden Mewborn, to The Perquimans County Schools Foundation, Inc.

After an extended hospital stay, the birth and subsequent death of their son, the Mewborns' desire was to be of assistance to others during their time of heart-break.

"We wanted to do something that would benefit the children in our county," said Linda Mewborn. "Foundation Board Member Larry Swindell shared information about the local Foundation, which allowed family and friends to donate money to the Foundation in memory of our son."

The monies were placed

in a restricted fund, allowing the parents to designate how the funds would be utilized.

"Literacy is important in every grade level, but we chose to donate the books to the third grade students because of the support the children gave our daughter, Amber, during this difficult time in our lives," Linda Mewborn said.

More than 300 books were purchased and given to third graders at Hertford Grammar School for summer reading.

"From the beginning of the Bible and God's creation of the world, giving has been a part of this universe. God gave life," said Foundation Board Member Brenda Lassiter. "The Foundation is a non-profit tax-exempt organization and we encourage others to 'give' for the good of others and for the work of education in our county. Funds donated can be designated as scholarship funds,



Hertford Grammar School Principal Tim Aydlett joins Linda Mewborn and daughter, Amber, as they review the more than 300 books purchased and given to third graders at the school for summer reading. The funds were donated through the Perquimans County Schools Foundation, Inc. in memory of Mewborn's son, Peter.

restricted funds or non-restricted funds."

For more information about the Perquimans County Schools

Foundation, Inc., you may visit www.pcsfoundation.org or contact Brenda Lassiter at 426-5741 ext. 239.

Summer is deadliest time for travel

The 101 days from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day are the deadliest days on the road, with more fatal crashes and more children and teens dying than any other time of the year.

That's the finding of a new report by a national coalition of driving safety advocacy groups that is urging families to adopt survival strategies to avoid tragedy this summer.

"We are entering the time of year when Americans pack up everything most precious to them — their families — and take to the road, traveling more than one trillion miles," said Susan Pikrallidas, AAA's Vice President of Public Affairs. "For most, it will be a time of happy memories, but, for thousands of families, their trips will end in needless tragedy. We need to change that."

The report, by "Drive for Life" — an initiative of AAA, Volvo Cars of North America, and Partners for

Highway Safety, in cooperation with a number of law enforcement and highway safety groups— details six factors that contribute to fatal crashes and provides survival strategies to keep families safe.

Among the major contributors to summer crashes are failure to wear safety belts or use child safety seats properly, drinking and driving, fatigue, car maintenance failures, speed, and distractions. The full report, with detailed information about survival strategies and an array of highway safety information is available at the initiative's website: www.driveforlife.com

Among the report's major findings are these:

- Nearly 13,000 Americans will die and 850,000 will be injured in car crashes during the 101 days. Of the 25 deadliest days on American roads in the past five years, 20 of them fell during the 101 days from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day,

including four of the top five.

- More children die in motor vehicle deaths in summer, with crashes being the No. 1 cause of children's deaths.

- Teen traffic deaths also peak in summer, when teens log significantly more hours behind the wheel and are much more likely to drive at night — many, for the first time.

- Parents driving with children are more likely to drive fatigued and at night, when they are most likely to meet up with a drunk driver.

Paul Burris, president of Partners for Highway Safety, urged drivers to develop summer safety plans and make a commitment to safer habits when they take to the road with their families this summer.

Among the key behaviors are buckling up, making sure child safety seats are installed properly and keeping older children in booster seats for longer, doing some basic car main-

tenance before heading out on a trip, and avoiding distractions.

Burris said educational effort will continue throughout the summer. He said Drive for Life will conduct another national poll of driver behaviors and attitudes, to be released in late summer, and the initiative also will air a new national 30-minute television special, "Drive for Life: The National Safe Driving Test 2004" on PAX-TV on Saturday, Sept. 4 at 7 p.m., during the height of Labor Day Weekend.

"We know enforcement works. But we also believe in the power of education," said Bill Johnson, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations. "Parents have a bigger motivation to drive safely than the fear of a traffic ticket. They have the lives of their children to protect."

Child safety seats must be installed properly to protect kids

The N.C. Highway Patrol will conduct free child safety seat clinics across the state during its seventh annual "Buckle In Baby Safety" week June 6-13. The Patrol and its parent agency, the Department of Crime Control & Public Safety, developed the BIBS program several years ago to inform parents and child caregivers about the proper way to safeguard children while riding in cars.

According to state and national child passenger safety experts, most people put their children in child safety seats when they travel. But data gathered at child safety seat clinics across the country shows as many as 80 percent of those child safety seats aren't being used correctly.

"Parents want their children to be as safe as possible when they ride in cars, and so do we," said CCPS Secretary Bryan E. Beatty. "But in order for the safety seat to do its job, the seat has to be properly installed."

The object of the clinics is not to find violations and write tickets, but to teach motorists how to properly use a child safety seat.

"In North Carolina, the leading cause of death and serious injury to children after age one is trauma from motor vehicle crashes," said Colonel Richard W. Holden, commander of the Highway Patrol. "If we can get every child secured in a properly-installed child safety seat or snugly buckled into a lap and

shoulder seat belt, we will save lives and reduce injuries."

North Carolina law requires children under 16 to buckle up no matter where they sit in a vehicle, and mandates all children under age five and weighing less than 40 pounds be buckled into a properly installed child safety seat. Safety experts say children under 12 are safest in the back seat and should never ride in the front seat of a vehicle equipped with a passenger-side airbag. Child safety seats should also be appropriate for the size and age of a child. A conviction of a child seat violation results in court fines of \$125 and two driver's license points placed on the violator's drivers

license.

Troopers recommend parents read the instructions that come with their child's safety seat as well as fill out and mail in warranty information to the seat's manufacturer. That way, if there is a safety seat recall, parents will be notified.

At the BIBS clinics, Troopers will give out a bright, orange BIBS sticker. Designed to go on the back of a child's safety seat, each sticker is actually a form for listing vital information about the child. Police and rescue workers would need that information if a child's caregivers were unable to speak due to a crash or illness.

The Department of Crime Control & Public Safety annually distributes

educational BIBS brochures and stickers to hospital birthing centers around the state. North Carolina records more than 100,000 births each year making the BIBS education campaign a vital and ongoing project. Since 1998, the Patrol has distributed more than 500,000 BIBS brochures and stickers; has established permanent fitting stations for child restraint systems at its eight Troop Headquarters across the state; and has begun conducting classes for childcare professionals and others who want to learn the proper installation of child safety seats.

There will be no clinic here. For more information, contact the Hertford Police Department.

Habitat House going up in Snug Harbor

SUSAN R. HARRIS

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Edenton participates in a number of mission projects each year. Last year, they sent a crew to Belize and this year were considering Haiti as a possible mission trip.

But then some parishioners pointed out the obvious: There are unmet needs that don't require international travel.

So this year, the congregation partnered with Habitat for Humanity to blitz-build a home in Snug Harbor. A single mother and her three teens will soon live in a safe home that they themselves helped to build.

Those working on the project welcome others to lend a hand. There is a need for rough and finish carpenters, electricians, plumbers, roofers, window and door installers, landscapers and even cooks to help feed the workers.

The group hopes to dedicate the home on June 27, but as is often the case, delays have threatened that date.

Those interested in helping may contact John Sams at 482-3555 or samsje@earthlink.net to volunteer.

Habitat for Humanity is an international organization committed to providing safe, affordable housing to those who may not otherwise be able to afford to own their own homes. Labor is volunteered, and often businesses and corporations offer discounts on needed building supplies and appliances. Owners are required to help with construction, creating for themselves "sweat equity" in the project.

For more information on Habitat efforts in Perquimans and Chowan counties, contact Jim Robison at 312-7711 or jrobison@net-change.net.

WEEKEND
WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 90
Low: 72
SCATTERED T'STORMS

FRIDAY
High: 84
Low: 68
ISOLATED T'STORMS

SATURDAY
High: 82
Low: 70
SCATTERED T'STORMS