

Chorale revs up for new year

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# PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## Police work to nab equipment thieves

### One arrested

ERIN RICKERT

A string of robberies in which several pieces of lawn care equipment were taken from Hertford neighborhoods has led to one

arrest, law enforcement said Friday.

Vincent Lee Foster, 39, of 301 South Church Street, was arrested June 29 and served with an outstanding warrant for shoplifting and charged with possession of stolen property after police found stolen lawn equip-

ment in his possession.

Foster now awaits his first court appearance in Albemarle District Jail in lieu of \$2,500 cash bond.

Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy said the robberies were occurring at the rate of about a home a week since the beginning of

June, and already 10 Hertford residents had thieves nab their riding lawn mowers, weed whackers, leaf blowers, generators, push mowers and other lawn care items.

It was not until Foster's arrest, Vanscoy said, police got a break in the case.

In the early morning hours of June 29, Vanscoy said, officers saw a Foster on a bicycle traveling down Edenton Road Street toward Dobbs Street.

Officers decided to investigate further, Vanscoy said, once they noticed Foster had both a toolbox

and a leaf blower in his possession.

"They observed the individual with some items that just didn't seem to fit in," Vanscoy said.

A closer look, Vanscoy said, caused Foster to jump from his bicycle and pro-

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## Sales tax holiday this week

Parents and students can save 7 percent at the cash register on most back-to-school items during the fourth annual sales tax holiday Aug. 5-7.

Created by the North Carolina General Assembly, the three-day weekend helps consumers with back-to-school shopping by doing away with sales tax on many school-related items.

According to the North Carolina Retail Merchants Association, items that are free from sales tax include clothing, shoes, school supplies and computers. The association is providing posters to its members outlining what is and isn't exempt.

Clothing items must be under \$100 to be non-taxable. Tax-exempt items include aprons, athletic supporters, baby receiving blankets, bandannas, bathing suits and caps, beach capes and coats, belts and suspenders, boots, coats, jackets, capes, wraps, costumes (not masks sold separately), diapers, earmuffs, footlets, formal wear, garters and garter belts, girdles, general use gloves and mittens, hats and caps, hosiery, insoles for shoes, jogging suits, lab coats, leotards and tights, neckties, overshoes, rainwear, rubber pants, sandals, scarves, shoes and shoelaces, slippers, steel-toed shoes, underwear, uniforms and wedding apparel.

Sports or recreational equipment must be \$50 per item or less. Tax-exempt items include ballet and tap

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## HEALTHWISE



PHOTO BY ERIN RICKERT

Anita Couther, 48, talks with Chowan Hospital's Myrna Moehring after receiving the results of a blood glucose test Thursday. Couther was one of more than hundred individuals who took advantage of several free health screenings during the hospital's first Perquimans County Health Fair.

## Locals take advantage of free health screenings

ERIN RICKERT

Armed with goody bags filled with information on everything from proper nutrition to step-by-step instructions for home examinations, residents young and old left the Perquimans County Community Center Thursday with a new sense of awareness about their health.

It was during this first-ever Perquimans County

Health Fair, sponsored by Chowan Hospital, that more than 100 trickled in during the three hours the event was held to participate in screenings, sample healthy refreshments and collect brochures and logo scrawled pencils.

For friends Thelma Appleton and Madelyn Long, who were some of the first to arrive Thursday, their attendance at the event was something they had been planning since last Sunday.

"I've always loved to come to these fairs," Long said. "You always learn something."

Long cited the information concerning the risk factors for women in the presentation on heart disease by keynote speaker Dr. Wayne Cascio, chief of the cardiology division at Pitt Memorial Hospital, as some of the most valuable information she took away Thursday.

Long said she even won a

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## First loop of NC birding trail could be near Hertford

ERIN RICKERT

State government and private conservation groups are hopeful last week's regional meeting concerning the progress of the North Carolina Birding Trail would not only spread the word about the initiative, but also educate the community about the potential for a stop in their area.

Drawing more than 100 to the Vernon James Center in Plymouth last Tuesday, the gathering was an opportunity to gain some footing for an idea in the works, most recently, since 2003.

Supported by groups like the North Carolina Sea Grant, Audubon North Carolina, North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, the proposed birding trail has plans to span across the entire state of North Carolina by 2008.

The trail is in response to one of the fastest growing recreational activities in the nation — recreational birding, or avitourism and an initiative Hertford may very well fit into.

In last Tuesday's meeting, proclaimed nature experts from across the state shared insight on how a trail of this size could potentially effect business as well as several other components if places like Hertford were featured stops.

Citing statistics like those from a 2001 U.S. fish and wildlife study, which

claims close to 46 million people across the country to be birders with nearly half actively pursuing birding as a hobby.

Lena Gallitano, interim coordinator of the North Carolina Birding Trail and a birder herself, said these active birders travel often and spend billions across the U.S. each year — meaning a stop in Hertford could significantly increase the number of tourism dollars coming into Perquimans County. Effectively raising the \$7.15 million the N.C. Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development recorded was brought into Perquimans County by tourists in 2003.

The meeting also brought up how many of these birding tourists travel with companions who prefer other activities. Therefore, communities were encouraged to sell other attractions along with their birding sites.

In Hertford, attractions like the Newbold-White House and the S-bridge could help draw these types of travelers.

Though Hertford Main Street Program Manager Wendy Jewett said she felt after attending the meeting, Hertford's sites would never be a destination for birders quite like the places such as the Outer Banks it could work effectively as a stop along the way.

"It's more for families who want a trip with a little of everything, or people on their way to somewhere else," Jewett said. "We do

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## Shaw leads board of education

Helen Shaw was voted chairman of the school board last Monday night in regular session.

Former chairman Walter Leigh was named vice chair.

Shaw was appointed to the board in February 1994 when legislation provided for a sixth board seat. She was elected to four-year terms in 1996, 2000 and 2004.

A retired government worker, Shaw was vice chair of the board during the past fiscal year.

Leigh has served on the school board for 15 years, having first been seated in



Helen Shaw

December 1990. His present term ends June 30, 2006.

A retired industrial technology coordinator, Leigh is a minister and the district superintendent of area AME Zion churches.

School board members are elected to four-year terms in non-partisan elec-



Walter Leigh

tions held in May of every even-numbered year. Three of the six seats are up for re-election in each election.

Board members decide among themselves at the board's July meeting who will serve as chair and vice chair for the coming year.

## Filing to municipal offices in Hertford, Winfall slow

ERIN RICKERT

With the filing deadline set for Friday, few have filed with the local board of elections for the five open municipal seats available in the county.

As of 10 a.m. Tuesday, Hertford's Mayor Pro Tem Horace Reid was the only individual seeking election this fall, Eula Forbes, director of Perquimans County Board of Elections said.

Forbes said both Winfall Mayor Fred Yates and Councilwoman Donna Mummert picked up the filing paperwork.

Candidates have had the ability to file for office since July 1 at noon; however, before last week no one

had declared their intentions to run for the three seats in Winfall and two in Hertford.

Something Forbes said it is not unusual for individuals in the county.

"I should expect it will pick up by the end of the week," Forbes said. "It usually does."

Hertford Commissioner Abbott Marvin Hunter, who is finishing out his first four-year term on council, is still undecided about running. Attempts to reach Winfall Commissioners Clifford Towe and Mummert about their intentions to seek re-election were unsuccessful before press time.

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## WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY  
High: 93  
Low: 73  
SUNNY

FRIDAY  
High: 92  
Low: 74  
SUNNY

SATURDAY  
High: 91  
Low: 75  
SCATTERED T'STORMS