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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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I will survive

Relay for Life sets new records

SUSAN HARRIS

"Is this for real? Is this a real number?" Relay for Life Chair Debbie Burroughs asked during the event's closing ceremonies Saturday when handed the final tally for money raised through team fund raisers and donations.

Her voice breaking with emotion, Burroughs announced that \$158,500 had been raised as of the close of Relay to support cancer research and patient support services. The goal set by the American Cancer Society was \$140,000. Last year, over \$127,000 was raised.

"It's just absolutely phenomenal," Burroughs said Monday of the event's fund raising success. "We are so blessed to live in these two communities. They don't ever stop giving. When you think they've given all they can, they dig down and give some more. We don't just live in the best communities in the area, the state, the nation, but the whole world! I don't think there is a word good enough for what these communities do for Relay for Life."

In addition to breaking the fund raising goal, Relay also set a new record in the number of survivors who participated in the Survivor's Lap, which opens the event. Each survivor's name and how long they have survived since being diagnosed with cancer is read as they take their places on the track. A record 150 names were called before they group made its way around the track as those gathered around



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Cancer survivors, 150 strong, opened the Chowan-Perquimans Relay for Life at John A. Holmes High School Athletic Complex Friday evening. It was the largest group of survivors ever to participate in the event. Relay this year set a new record, raising \$158,500 on a \$140,000 set by the American Cancer Society, with funds still coming in.

its edges cheered for them.

Twenty-two teams raised money through a variety of fund raisers over the months leading up to Relay through team events, luminary sales and business donations. Businesses in the area gave \$27,000 in addition to donating prizes for team events and for the 18-hour Relay activities that began Friday evening at 6 and ran through Saturday at noon.

"Perquimans doesn't have any big industry and Chowan just has a few, so it's really amazing what they contribute to Relay," Burroughs said.

As with any large event, Burroughs said

credit for success goes to a lot of people. Her co-chair, Pat Mansfield, who received the Heart of Relay Award on Saturday, committee members and team captains worked very hard for months, she said.

"They make it happen," Burroughs said. She said in addition to raising money, the Relay event itself has an upbeat atmosphere that is friendly and inviting.

So will she chair Relay for a third year? She won't commit to that right now, but there is no doubt that Burroughs will be involved in some way in 2008. The cause is just too important not to carry on.



Jaedon Stepney

4-year-old diagnosed with cancer

SUSAN HARRIS

He's handsome, energetic and spirited. He's four, and he's a pre-kindergarten student at Central School.

Sadly, Jaedon Darius Ray Stepney is also a cancer patient.

The tyke had a lemon-sized mass removed from the back of his head at Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters on May 7. A few days later, the pathology reports came back. The tumor was malignant. Now, he must undergo radiation and chemotherapy.

The diagnosis all started with headaches, according to Jaedon's grandmother, Mrs. Quinton Harris of Elizabeth City. Quinton and his mother, Mineeta Harris, were in an automobile accident in December, so doctors initially thought Jaedon's frequent headaches were coming from the wreck. The headaches were monitored medically, but soon became so severe that his mother requested a CAT scan. That test showed the tumor that would send Jaedon to King's Daughters for surgery and the diagnosis.

As of Monday, Mineeta Harris said Jaedon is doing well, joking, laughing, playing and eating well. She said doctors believe they got all of the cancer, the tube is now out of Jaedon's head, and doctors want to make sure the fluid is draining properly before sending him home — Harris hopes by Thursday.

Within four weeks of the surgery date, chemotherapy and radiation will begin as a precautionary measure. The first round of the treatments will likely last 6-8 weeks, and he will probably require some type of treatments for a full year, Harris said.

"It was depressing, kind of sad," Harris said of her son's diagnosis, but she is determined to learn all she can and fight the disease with her son. "We have to do what we have to do."

What they will soon have to do is drive back and forth between King's Daughters Hospital for treatment and their home in Hertford daily during radiation and chemotherapy.

The cancer diagnosis stunned Jaedon's parents, Harris and Donald Stepney

Garden party a success for PCRA

SUSAN HARRIS



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

The river kissed the lawns of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Stokes and Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Reed on Front Street while the sun created diamonds on the water. Good food, good music and good company rounded out the setting at

Saturday was a perfect day to be on lawns overlooking the Perquimans River. It was a perfect setting for the annual PCRA Spring Garden Party.

the annual Perquimans County Restoration Association Garden Party Saturday evening.

About 140 people attended the gala, one of the signature events of the Association, according to state Tourism Development Officer Nancy Muller. Muller estimated that about \$5,000 was raised through the party to benefit the Newbold-White House historic complex.

Muller said the weather was perfect for the event, which featured a performance by the Concert Chorale of the Outer Banks, founded and directed by Forest Warren.

MC Auto offers used vehicles and service

SUSAN HARRIS

"Bring in your phone bill and a pay stub and we can put you in a car."

That's how Chris Cooper and his father, Melvin, like to do business at MC Auto on Ocean Highway.

After a ribbon cutting on Friday celebrating their move to a new building and expanded services, Chris Cooper said the father-son duo sells affordable, quality used vehicles of all descriptions in all price ranges. They'll do everything they can to match buyers with financing as quickly as possible.

The Coopers go to sales all over North Carolina and Virginia searching for the best cars they can find at prices local residents can



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

Chris Cooper cuts the ribbon at MC Auto as his wife, Amy, children Natalie and Chris Jr. "Topher," brother-in-law and chief mechanic Lary Harris, nephew Antwan Harris and Hertford Mayor Sid Eley look on.

afford. They also purchase from individuals and look at other dealers for good trade-ins.

The company provides maintenance services including oil changes, brake work, tires, tune-ups and state inspections. Cooper said he's had his head under car hoods since he was about 13 years old, and his brother-in-law, Lary Harris, although only a junior in high school, is also quite a mechanic. Harris was the top student in auto mechanics at the high school last year, and Cooper expects he might earn the same honor in his advanced classes this year.

Cooper's wife, Amy, and mom, Georgie, provide vital administrative services at MC Auto.

In addition, MC Auto is the local U-Haul company.

Hours are Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Call 426-CARS.

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
High: 78, Low: 58
SUNNY
FRIDAY
High: 83, Low: 58
SUNNY
SATURDAY
High: 85, Low: 67
PARTLY CLOUDY