

THE PERQUIMAN WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

35 cents

Blood shortage serious

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

While the amount of blood being donated in Perquimans County is up from last year, there still remains a serious shortage regionwide in most blood types.

According to information provided by the American Red Cross, 564 pints of blood were donated here last fiscal year, up 32 percent from the previous fiscal year. There were 19 blood drives in the county. Last month's blood collection locally was also tremendously successful, officials noted.

However, there still remains critical and low blood supplies in the Mid-Atlantic Region which includes northeastern North Carolina and parts of Virginia including the Tidewater area.

O+ blood remains critically low while A+, B+, O-, A-, and B- all are listed as low, meaning more donations are needed quickly to prevent a blood emergency.

"There is a critical need for blood," Georgia Donaldson, Red Cross senior account manager for donor resources development, said. "I've never seen it quite like this before."

As of Aug. 18, out of the eight blood types, only AB+ and AB- were classified as meeting safe levels, meaning blood donations in those types are strong enough to meet patient needs now.

But Donaldson cautions that hurricane season is here, and one bad storm could cause numerous injuries requiring blood.

Every blood drive is especially important to help boost those figures. Next month's blood drives will be held Thursday, Sept. 4 at the Perquimans County Recreation Center from 2-7 p.m. and Sept. 8 at New Hope United Methodist Church 3-7 p.m. The Bloodmobile will be at Albemarle Plantation Sept. 18 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Donaldson stresses to drink plenty of fluids before donating, bring a valid ID, and eat lots of iron rich foods.

Those who donate region-wide will be registered to win a 2008 Pontiac Solstice or \$500 in free gas.

GOOD-BYE, SUMMER

Perquimans welcomes 1,742 students Monday

SUSAN HARRIS

School bells rang Monday across Perquimans, as some children returned joyfully, others tearfully, and still others fearfully.

Teachers welcomed 1,742 students for a new year of learning.

Schools Public Information Officer Brenda Lassiter said things went relatively smoothly.

"Everything went fine except for the bus consolidation and some scheduling issues at the high school," Lassiter said.

Many students at Central and Hertford Grammar schools didn't know which bus to ride when it came time to go home.

"Parents bring children to school the first day of school, consequently children don't know which bus to ride to get home," Lassiter said. "Also, a lot of parents enrolled their children yesterday, rather than during the summer, so students had to be assigned to buses."

To make sure students got on the right buses, personnel at the schools had to double-check bus manifests. Making sure students got on the right buses delayed them an hour leaving school.

Because of the delay, Lassiter said a Connect-Ed call went out to parents of Central and Hertford Grammar students around 3:45 to let them know what was happening.

Throughout the evening, Lassiter said parents called, and school personnel would radio the buses to find out exact locations, then get back with parents.

"I think it helped that we were here to answer the phones and we could tell parents exactly where their children were," Lassiter said.

"The transportation department worked diligently through the evening to try to make sure things go more smoothly from now on," Lassiter said.



Perquimans Weekly photo by CATHY WILSON

SOME STUDENTS, ESPECIALLY THE youngest, had a hard time saying good-bye to Mom and Dad and the carefree days of summer Monday, the first day of school in Perquimans. Others, marched in happily with friends, brothers, sisters, and cousins, greeting classmates and teachers with broad smiles. Perquimans welcomed 1,742 students Monday.

"I expect today will be a lot better, and in fact, this morning was already a lot better," Lassiter continued. "This week, (drop-off) times will fluctuate until students get used to what bus they're on."

The renovations and personnel changes at the high school resulted in some schedule snafus. There was only one counselor at the site most of the summer, and the veteran employee who handled computer input and many scheduling duties resigned at the end of the school year.

In addition, with the renovations taking place, Lassiter said computers and equipment had to be dismantled and moved, along with files. There was a period just before school started when schedule information could not be accessed.

Student schedules were ready in mid-August, and students were notified that they could be picked up at the school on two dates. Those who did not pick up the

schedules did not know if there was a concern about their schedule until the first day of school.

"Our staff has done a tremendous job in our schools, especially at the high school with the renovations there, this summer," Lassiter said. "Unfortunately, the situation meant that some paperwork was slower getting done than we would have liked."

School personnel worked until Sunday evening at about 7 o'clock getting ready for the opening of school on Monday morning, Lassiter said.

"We just can't say enough about the tremendous amount of work our maintenance staff, administrators and some of our teachers did this summer helping to move and reorganize during the renovations," Lassiter said.

At the board meeting Monday night, Superintendent Dr. Dwayne Stallings searched for words to describe how much work was accomplished in a relatively short period of time to complete the renovations.

"Miracles do happen," he smiled and said.



Fire forces evacuation of Albemarle Village residents

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Residents at Albemarle Village were displaced for several hours Thursday when fire broke out in a kitchen of one of the apartments. Local firefighters extinguished the blaze, but heavy smoke filled one hall, forcing evacuation of the independent apartment complex for the elderly, handicapped and disabled.

Firefighters were called to the scene around 10 a.m. when fire broke out in an apartment occupied by Charles Barco. Site Manager Imogene Penfound said Barco was frying chicken on the stove and left the apartment for a few minutes. The grease ignited and fire spread from the stove to nearby cabinets and to the ceiling area.

Jarvis Winslow, Perquimans County Emer-



Perquimans Weekly photo by CATHY WILSON

A COOKING FIRE FORCED the evacuation of Albemarle Village in Hertford last week. Site Manager Imogene Penfound made sure all residents were out and safe after the blaze was found.

gency Management Coordinator, said the heat in that apartment was hot enough to melt plastic figurines hanging on the wall. Firefighters were able to contain the fire to that one apartment, but heavy smoke filled the hallway which impacted seven other apartments. Fire walls in the building kept the dense smoke from spreading to other areas.

Penfound said she and others immediately started evacuating everyone in the wing near the fire. After firefighters arrived, firefighters instructed Penfound to evacuate the rest of the building's occupants because of the smoke inside the building which houses 38 residents in 36 individual apartments. There is also a hair salon in the complex.

"The smoke in the hall
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WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 81 LOW: 70
THUNDER SHOWERS

FRIDAY
HIGH: 82 LOW: 68
SCATTERED T'STORMS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 84 LOW: 68
SCATTERED T'STORMS



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