

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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"News from Next Door"

35 cents

PCHS turns learning around

TOBY TATE
The Daily Advance

Perquimans County High School made the top 20 on the state's "turnaround" list, finishing sixth. The school, which posted an overall 71.9 percent composite on the end-of-course tests, had the highest score among the schools recognized.

Former Gov. Mike Easley started the High School Turnaround Initiative in 2005, when he asked the state Department of Public Instruction to assist low-performing high schools where proficiency on end-of-grade tests fell below 60 percent.

With the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 35 schools began receiving assistance from DPI during the 2006-07 school year as part of a three-year cycle. The next year, the program added 31 high schools and 57 middle and elementary schools.

High schools are identified for turnaround based on their performance composite.

This measure describes the percentage of student test scores that are at or above the proficiency level.

All high school students take end-of-course tests in five core subjects: algebra I, English I, biology, U.S. history, civics and economics.

All schools had a performance composite below 60 percent in the 2005-06 school year.

The benchmark for schools in the 2007-08 school year was also below 60 percent.

According to DPI data, Perquimans High School's composite score in 2006-07 was 57.813 percent.

The score had improved to 71.9 percent a year later, giving the school a "turnaround" percentage change of 14.087—sixth best among the 54 schools surveyed.

North Brunswick High, in Brunswick County, had the best turnaround percentage in 2007-08 of the 54 schools.

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A day of Celebration



Perquimans Weekly photos by CATHY WILSON
THE PERQUIMANS COUNTY NAACP celebrated the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Monday afternoon at Melton Grove Missionary Church with spirited music and enlightening messages. Guest speaker was Dr. Gilbert Vaughn of Edenton. (bottom right). At left, NAACP President Fred Yates presents the 2009 Unsung Hero award to Shirley Skinner.

Schools focus on dropout rate

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Dee Winslow is the newest team member to focus on keeping kids in school.

As the school system's new dropout prevention coordinator, she will work with the system's counselor/parent coordinator and social worker to help prevent students from dropping out of school. The local effort is funded through a \$150,000 dropout prevention grant received from the state.

County youths "at risk" of dropping out of school in grades 6 — 12 at Perquimans middle and high schools will be served. Winslow will coordinate all program activities at the two schools as well as with other agencies.

Winslow, of Hertford, is a former social worker/clinical counselor and supervisor with the Albemarle Mental Health Center in Elizabeth City. She is a graduate of East Carolina University with a masters degree in criminal justice, a bachelor of science in criminal justice from Elizabeth City State University, and an associate's degree in criminal justice from the College of The Albemarle.

The goals of the dropout prevention project in Perquimans are to implement, expand, coordinate, and evaluate a comprehensive dropout prevention program; provide academic assistance for at-risk students to maximize their academic potential; create a more personalized learning environment; and to provide staff development for all staff to improve appropriate identification in early intervention and prevention techniques.

The school system is partnering with Communities in Schools, Governors One-on-One, Perquimans 2020 Vision Coalition, and the Ministers Council in Education to make the project successful.

Students who are eligible include those with long-term suspension or expulsion, and those at risk of dropping out due to discipline, attendance or academic failure.

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Vaughn keynotes King Day program

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Nothing is going to change until change finds you.

While the world is harping on the Democratic theory that change is coming with the inauguration of Barack Obama as the nation's 44th president, Dr. Gilbert Vaughn says instead, change starts within the individual.

"When you think you can vote in a change, know that nothing's going to change until change finds you," Vaughn told those attending the Monday after-

noon service honoring the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Melton Grove Missionary Church. "If you don't see injustice, know that you ARE injustice."

Monday's service was sponsored by the Perquimans County NAACP.

Vaughn gave a passionate message highlighting how people need to get serious about God, and become dedicated Christians who are willing to work for the right changes as Dr. King did.

"What we've got before us is an uphill battle," he said. "God is looking for

a change...I have a dream of men who will do what God wants them to do. All answers can be found in the Bible. Our first love isn't civil rights or social injustice. Our first love is to know what God is doing and what He says."

Like's Dr. King's Christian involvement and leadership in the nation's civil rights movement, Vaughn believes that ministers need to follow his example and once again become active in the NAACP.

"I have a dream today that every pastor in Perquimans County will become a member of the NAACP. What's wrong with

the NAACP? All the ministers have run off. I have a dream that one day we will see a NAACP where men and women of God will be at the forefront," he said, standing behind an alter flanked by photos of both King and Obama.

Vaughn's words were embraced by the spirit-filled singing of the Melton Grove choir and congregation that included young, old, blacks and whites.

Fred Yates, president of the NAACP, presented its Unsung Hero award for 2009 to Shirley Skinner in recognition of her selfless giving to others whenever needed.

Snug Harbor residents want Bethel property cleaned up

Residents: County hasn't enforced junk rules on property

CATHY WILSON
Staff Writer

Snug Harbor residents say they aren't surprised with the recent arrest of William H. "Pork Chop" Felton Jr. on illegal drug charges.

While he resides on Snug Harbor Road, they will quickly point out that the properties raided Jan. 9 are not located inside the corporate limits of the Snug Harbor subdivision. In fact, he lives about three miles from the Snug Harbor

entrance. But, Snug Harbor residents say they have complained to local government officials about the properties occupied or controlled by the Feltons since 2003.

"We have petitioned the board of commissioners four times over the years trying to have the junked vehicle ordinance enforced on that property," said Annis Murphy, a Snug Harbor resident for the past 12 years. "Nothing ever seems to get done. They keep saying they don't have the money to enforce it."

Felton, who has a record of felony drug convictions, was busted after sheriff's deputies and an agent with the State Bureau of Investigation raided the properties located at 704 and 696 Snug Harbor Road. Over \$62,000 in cash, two small

safes, firearms and 30 grams of marijuana seeds were seized.

According to Perquimans County tax records, both properties are owned by William H. Felton Sr. who resides at 883 Pender Road.

Felton Jr., 50, is charged with possession with intent to manufacture, sell, deliver marijuana; maintaining a dwelling for the purpose of manufacturing, selling, delivering marijuana; maintaining a vehicle for the purpose of manufacturing, selling, delivering marijuana, and possession of firearms by a felon. He is currently being held in Albemarle District Jail under \$25,000 bond.

The raid was the result of an undercover investigation that spanned several weeks.

Following the raid, Sheriff Eric

Tilley reported the home's living conditions to social services after finding a four-year-old child at the residence living in what he termed "filth."

Murphy said Snug Harbor residents have worked hard to clean up the subdivision, and they have been trying to get the eyesores on Snug Harbor Road leading to the subdivision cleaned up as well.

"There's no other way to get into Snug Harbor than by going by those properties," she pointed out. "There's one way in and one way out."

Residents presented petitions to county commissioners regarding those eyesores in 2003, 200, and 2007.

According to Zeke Jackson, the CONTINUED on page 10

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 48 LOW: 33
SUNNY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 56 LOW: 43
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 53 LOW: 31
SHOWERS

