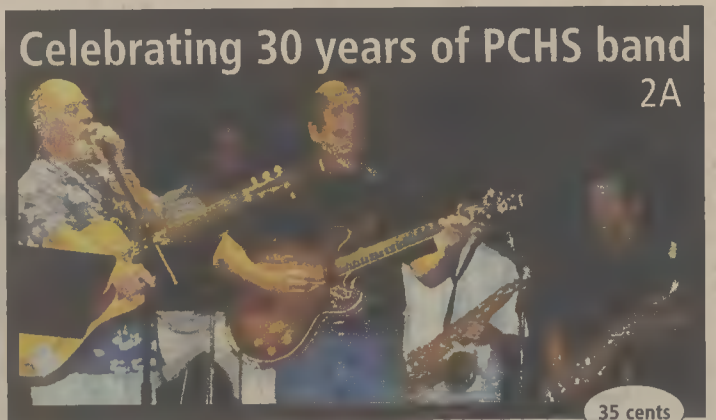


THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

MAY 13 — MAY 19, 2009



Celebrating 30 years of PCHS band

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35 cents

Housesitter charges with jewelry theft

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

A housesitter who apparently threw a party while the owner was away is one of several people charged in connection with the theft of \$15,000 in jewelry from a Front Street home.

Hertford Police Chief Joe Amos said five people face felony charges in connection with the May 2 theft of jewelry from the home of Murielle Harmon.

While out of town, Harmon left her home in the care of Ashley Marie Duke of Hertford, Amos wrote in a press release.

"While she was watching the house, Ashley Duke invited people to come over to Mrs. Harmon's home and have a party," the release states. "While there, the party guests helped themselves to a variety of Harmon's jewelry with the permission and assistance of Duke."

Hertford police were notified of the theft after Harmon returned home on May 7.

Warrants charging felony larceny have been issued for David Marquette, 35, Richard Ada King, 35, Amanda Tripp, 24, and Duke, 25, police said. Kathryn Marquette, 36, faces the charge of felony possession of stolen property.

The case is being investigated by Officer Calvin Johnson with the HPD. Members of the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department assisted in making the arrests.

COMMUNITY GATHERS TO PRAY



Prayer for America

God of our Fathers, Shepherd of Thy people, Lord of free men's souls,

Bless thou our nation with a valiant, Godly spirit, with a vision to see, with the courage to try, With the power to achieve, that, marching behind Thee, Thy people shall not perish.

God, bless our America! Hear our prayer for our united peoples, grant guidance to our leaders, Protection to our sons, and teach each of us Thy way of life in good will and peace. Amen.

— by Cardinal Francis Spellman

PERQUIMANS WEEKLY PHOTO BY CATHY WILSON

Dozens of Perquimans residents joined hands to pray Thursday morning in town.



By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

The rain stopped, the clouds parted, and the bright blue sky shone forth.

And that was before the people stared praying.

About 50 people gathered on the courthouse green Thursday at noon during National Day of Prayer to pray despite earlier

morning downpours. Sponsored by the Ministers' Council for Education and Communities in Schools, preachers and local government leaders lifted up prayers for leadership.

Gilbert Vaughn prayed for the president and other national leaders while James Spaugh prayed for those who lead North Carolina.

Fred Yates prayed for the local government leaders and Gloria

Mason lead prayers for educators. Willie Vaughn prayed for the communities of faith, followed by Calvin Whedbee, who asked the Lord to bless families and children.

C.D. White prayed for those who serve in the military and their families.

Special music was presented by both Gloria Mason and Estelle Felton.

Events fill PQ community calendar

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

This weekend's activities around the county provides something for everyone from eating to grabbing bargains to raising money for special causes.

The three days of activities begin on Friday with the annual Pig Out on the Green sponsored by Historic Hertford, Inc.

Barbecue and all the fixin's will be available for lunch and dinner, 11 a.m.— 2 p.m. and 5—7 p.m. at \$7 a plate. You can take it home or relax and enjoy an outdoor dinner under the trees.

Advance tickets can be purchased at the Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce, Newbold-White House or from any Historic Hertford board member.

The proceeds will support the downtown projects of Historic Hertford, Inc., Hertford's

Main Street Program.

Friday also marks the beginning of the two-day Chowan/Perquimans Relay for Life at John A. Holmes athletic complex, 6 p.m. Friday until noon on Saturday.

The opening ceremonies will be followed by the Survivor and Caregiver Recognition at 6:15 p.m., with the luminaria ceremony scheduled for 9 p.m. The closing ceremony, "Fight Back," will begin at 11 a.m. on Saturday.

In between, there will be a variety of fun, food, games, music and more onsite. A silent auction will run from 6 p.m. Friday until 10 a.m. Saturday. Teams will sell food and have other fund raisers from their tents.

The Kids Walk is set for 10 a.m. Saturday, when scads of children will walk the track. All funds that have been raised and will be raised during the Relay event will benefit the American Cancer Society.

On Saturday, two local homeowner associations will hold their annual tag sale to benefit the Perquimans County Rescue Squad.

The 12th Annual Perquimans County Tag Sale will be held at the Perquimans County Recreation Center beginning at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 12:30 p.m. Homeowners from Albemarle Plantation and Holiday Island have donated goods and will help bargain shoppers during the sale.

All proceeds from the sale are given to the volunteer squad to use for equipment and training. Almost \$80,000

has been raised from the last 11 years of tag sales.

Each year, the sale features one special item. This year's featured item is an 18-foot sailboat built in 1995. The fully-equipped boat includes all class equipment onboard, including spinnaker, rigging and pole, bags, covers, main and jib as well as a new main halyard and a new jib furling line.

Also included is a custom Triad trailer, and a 2005 Honda 4-stroke/2 HP motor (long shaft, with motor mount installed) with less than 50 hours on it.

After shopping Saturday morning, there's plenty of time to take a nap before the Southern Garden Party.

Held this year on the shores of the Albemarle Sound, the annual Southern soirée is sponsored by the Perquimans Restoration Association.

This year's event will be held at the home of Gayle and Connie Pollard in Albemarle Plantation from 6—8 p.m. Heavy hors d'oeuvres, libations and live entertainment is provided with a prepaid reservation. Tickets are \$30 and may be obtained by calling 426-7567.

The weekend is completed on Sunday afternoon with an ice cream social on the courthouse green, 2—4 p.m., sponsored jointly by the Rotary Club of Hertford and the Interact Club from Perquimans County High School which is a Rotary youth service organization. Ice cream sundaes will be \$3 each.

Art Grills, Rotary president, said the club uses the ice cream social as a team building activity for newly-minted Rotarians and expanded that concept this year to include the new Interact Club at the school. Funds generated will help fund the Interact Club's initial service projects.

County library makes optimum use of funding

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

In this struggling economy, librarian Jeri Oltman says library staff is making optimum use of funding and striving to reduce costs while not compromising their commitment to high-quality service to the public.

Sound impossible? Not according to Oltman. But, it would help to have enough money in the budget to do it.

"Your appropriation to the library is a deciding factor in how well we achieve our goals," Oltman told county commissioners as she presented facts and figures to county leaders during this budget preparation season.

County and state funding make up 93 percent of funding for the Pettigrew Regional Library System which includes the Perquimans County Library as well as three others in the region. Since state funding to the regional system has already been cut this fiscal year, Oltman is cautious when it comes to estimating how much money the state will contribute to their cause in the next fiscal year which begins July 1.

"We don't know at this time what our level of funding from the state will be, although no scenario presented so far is optimistic," Oltman told commissioners.

"Because we rely so heavily on state and county funds, a cut in either will have dramatic deleterious impact. The original state aid allocation for the current fiscal year was \$404,523 for Pettigrew Regional Library System; with the reductions it is now \$375,727. That's a 7.12 percent reduction for the current fiscal year."

In addition to state and local funds, the local library also receives funding from a variety of other sources including fines for turning in items late, and fees for services like faxing, photocopying, and laminating.

A federal program, known as e-rate, subsidizes about 75 percent of the library's cost for internet connectivity on a reimbursement basis.

In addition, the library holds used book sales.

See LIBRARY on Page 2

County seeks housing funds

By Cathy Wilson
Staff Writer

County commissioners will seek federal funds to help improve low-income housing in the county.

Last week, commissioners approved the first step in seeking \$400,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the North Carolina Department of Commerce. The state receives the funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Commissioners intend to apply for the funds by the end of July.

County Manager Bobby Darden explained that the number of houses that can be improved by the funds depends on the amount and cost of work needed.

"We expect to be able to do five or six houses," Darden said. "Some may need rehabilitation, some may need complete replacement."

Both Hertford and Winfall can also participate in the program, Darden added.

The funds are awarded in three-year cycles. In March, Perquimans County closed out a project awarded in 2006. The county received \$400,000 then to rehabilitate houses in the county, and completed the improvements and replacements within 24 months, allowing the county to receive additional funds to help even more residents. As a result, the county's last CDBG project improved 14 properties. Improvements ranged from complete replacement to roof repair to septic tank installation.

No local funds are used. "The CDBG is not a magic wand that will wipe out all concerns," commented Vice-chairman Tammy Miller-White. "But it does address some amount of need."

Commissioner Shirley Wiggins said she visited five of the houses improved during the previous CDBG project. Of those, residents received improvements in windows, roofs, plumbing, even a new dwelling.

"These people really had a need for it," she added. Chairman Mack Nixon said citizens can help clean up neighborhoods by identifying properties that need help.

In other matters last week, no one spoke in opposition to a proposed minimum housing ordinance during the May 4 public hearing conducted by commissioners. Commissioners won't decide on action regarding the proposal until June.

Citizens from both Snug Harbor and Holiday Island voiced support for the proposed ordinance that would help rid the county of substandard housing.

The proposed ordinance is comprehensive, covering all types of housing including rental, mobile homes, rooming houses, and dwellings holding multiple units. It includes minimum standards for structural condition, plumbing, heating, electrical, ventilation, space, safety, cleanliness, and infestations by rodents or insects.

The proposed ordinance is slated to be enforced by the building inspector's office, and offers an appeal process for property owners not satisfied with findings cited by the county.

The ordinance is complaint driven, and can be used as a tool by county agencies like the Department of Social Services or the Sheriff's Department to help in investigations like abuse or neglect cases.

A copy of the proposed ordinance can be found in the county manager's office or on the county's website: www.perquimanscountync.gov.

Commissioners also 1. approved a resolution opposing transfer of secondary road program to counties; 2. awarded the new nature trail project at the recreation center to Brown's Land Developing, low bidder at \$30,460. The nearly mile-long nature trail is part of the shoreline stabilization project at the site and funded by state funds; 3. awarded the pier and canoe/kayak access project at the recreation center to low-bidder Riddick Marine/Donald Riddick Builders. State funds are being utilized.



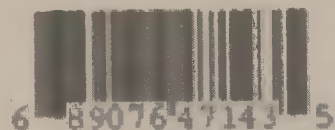
Darden

WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 80 LOW: 67
T-SHOWERS

FRIDAY
HIGH: 82 LOW: 68
SCATTERED T-STORMS

SATURDAY
HIGH: 84 LOW: 69
ISOLATED SHOWERS



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