

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

"News from Next Door"

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PCMS basketball team honored, 6

## Community mourns 'Mama' Felton

FILE PHOTO

Estelle Felton speaks on the steps of the Perquimans County Courthouse last year.



By PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

More than 600 people came out last week to honor a woman that many simply called "Mama Felton."

A funeral service for Estelle Felton was held Friday at Greater Saunders Grove Missionary Baptist Church. She died March 2 at the age of 81 at Vidant Chowan Hospital.

The mayors of Hertford and Winfall and the chairmen of the

Perquimans County School Board and Perquimans County Commission adopted a resolution Friday in Felton's honor.

For more than 25 years, Felton served on the board of directors of the Albemarle Electric Membership Cooperative. She spent 20 years as a community service aide for the Perquimans County School System and held leadership roles in both the NAACP and the Democratic Party.

"Her official positions do not begin to accurately describe the

level and commitment of service to which Estelle Mitchell Felton dedicated her life, exuding love and compassion for all individuals and unselfishly and untiringly working to make her community a better place," the resolution reads.

Janice Cole, the chairman of the county commission, remembers when she and her husband moved there 30 years, Felton "adopted us."

"She's a legend," Cole said.

See FELTON, 3

## VOLUNTEERS MAKE NEW MUSEUM REALITY

By PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Ten men from across the country descended on Hertford last week to expand a museum honoring baseball great Jimmy "Catfish" Hunter.

Tommy Harrell, a local farmer and Hunter's neighbor since the 1970s, helped coordinate the effort. He was invited to join the No Bats Baseball Club in 1999 and is one of only two members who live in North Carolina. There are about 100 members in all.

The Hunter museum at the Perquimans Chamber of Commerce was opened three years ago in an 81-square-foot room.

The club's job last week was to knock down a wall in an adjacent room, install a wood floor and new drywall. The new museum is about triple the size. The club paid about \$15,000 for the materials and members volunteered to provide the labor.

The participants included a lawyer from Chicago, a retired fireman from San Francisco and an accountant from Florida.

Ted Simendinger, the founder of the group and a resident of Colorado, said the idea is to give back to those in need. The club supports charities that are somehow linked to professional baseball.

"Here you have a farmer pulling down



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Tommy Harrell of Hertford (far right) speaks to a volunteer while No Bats Baseball Club founder Ted Simendinger shovels debris last week at the Perquimans Chamber of Commerce. Ten members of the club from across the country came to Hertford, some of them for five days, to expand the museum.

sheetrock side-by-side with a successful Chicago attorney," Simendinger said.

"We have members who are very well off financially and we have others that live paycheck to paycheck.

"We have four rules and they're all we've ever needed, No wives, no kids, no drugs, no arguing. I created No Bats

A sign designed to look like an autographed baseball marks the Catfish Hunter Museum on Market Street in downtown Hertford.

to be a positive escape weekend for middle-aged men who love the game and appreciate true friendship with like-minded people in an ultra-supportive environment."

Simendinger grew interested in Hunter in 1999

after Hunter was diagnosed with Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). He said instead of hiding the disease, Hunter went public to raise money to fight what most call Lou Gehrig's disease.

Simendinger never got the chance to actually meet him but he says Hunter and Hertford changed his life.

He was scheduled to visit Hertford and meet with Hunter, but the pitching legend died about three weeks before he was to arrive.

"You can't forget the date, 9-9-99," he said. "Coming to Hertford changed the club forever."

The members could have saved the expense and time of the trip and raised the money and paid somebody to remodel the chamber building, but Simendinger said it's not the same. The club is all about helping others and developing friendships within the group. Once a year the club meets in some area of the

See MUSEUM, 3

## Hertford agency fills two positions

By PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

The Albemarle Commission has filled two top vacancies at the Hertford-based agency.

Executive Director Bert Banks said last week Laura Alvarico was picked to take the role as director for the Area Agency on Aging. Natalie Roundtree will be the new director of Workforce Development. Both women were already employed in the departments they will now lead.

Alvarico's appointment fills a position created by a retirement in December and Roundtree's fills the gap left after Wendy Jewett would retire. Alvarico has worked for the Albemarle Commission for seven years and Roundtree has been with the agency for about two.

The Northeastern Workforce Development Board administers funds through the federal Workforce Investment Act and serves 10 counties in northeastern North Carolina: Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington.

Banks said between 20 and 30 people applied for

See VACANCIES, 3

## Group working on fall play production

By PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Dinner theater is scheduled to return to Hertford in October with an original play written by resident Ray Sawyer.

"A stroll through our town" looks at life in Hertford from the 1920s through the early 1950s.

Lynne Raymond, president of Historic Hertford Inc. and Sawyer spoke about the production recently. Sawyer's play centers around people and events in the area. Some of the vignettes are based on real individuals and events. Others are not.

The group is working now to collect local photographs from the period so sets can be designed to be as authentic as possible.

"It (the play) is not a history lesson as much as it is a story about the town."

LYNNE RAYMOND  
President, Historic Hertford Inc.

One location in particular is the old Navy base at Harvey Point, particularly the USO Club and the officer's club. Sawyer said one of the stories in the play revolves around a local woman who went away to college and got engaged but returned to town for spring break. During that time she met a Naval officer stationed at the base and the two fell in love and married.

Digital images are preferred, not the original photographs, but someone will be available to scan the pictures if no digital copy is available.

"It (the play) is not a history lesson as much as it is a story about the town," Raymond said.

The play is Sawyer's first and to do the research he spent hours and hours interviewing local residents about their stories from the past. Some of the stories are bittersweet while others are funny.

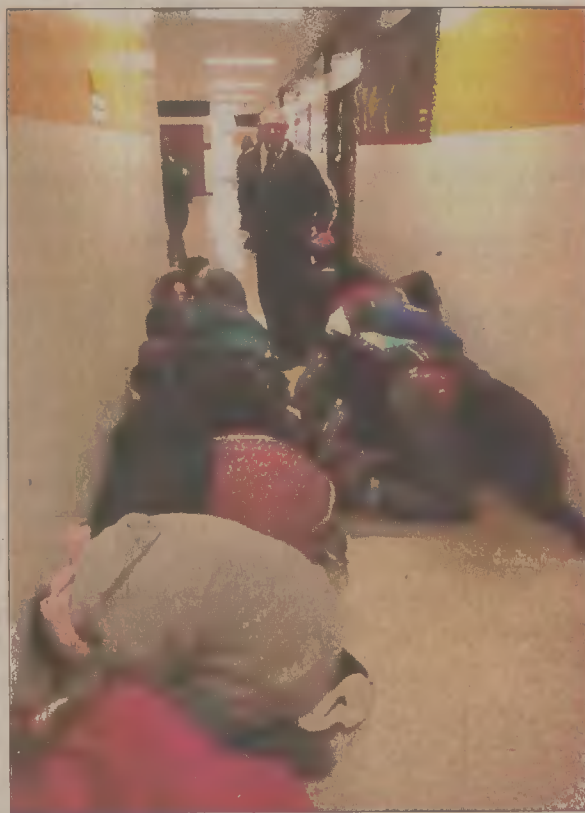
"There is a lot of humor in it," Sawyer said.

He said Hertford hasn't had a regular performing group in 15 or 20 years. The last big one was the Bootstrap Players.

Raymond would like to see the first production be a big hit and grow to two productions a year.

For rules and an entry form for the photo contest, visit carolinamoontheater.org. Pictures can be dropped off at the Perquimans Chamber by April 2. The best pictures will be enlarged and displayed in town and votes for "People's Choice" can be cast at The Silver Fox, Carolina Trophy and the Hertford General Store.

## TORNADO READY



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Robert Spruill looks over students who kneel next to lockers during a tornado drill at Perquimans County High School last week. All four local schools participated in the drill.



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UPCOMING AUCTION! Albemarle Plantation Golf Course Home at 107 Pungo Dr, Hertford.



Offers will be considered prior to auction. Call for details.

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