



# West Craven Highlights

News From Along The Banks Of The Neuse



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## New Bern Post Office to celebrate special stamp issuance

**NEW BERN** — The New Bern Post Office is preparing for a festive celebration Aug. 23 to recognize the special issue of a North Carolina Statehood stamp in commemoration of the bicentennial of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

Among the planned activities will be ceremonies at the main branch of the New Bern Post Office, historic Tryon Palace and the gravesite of Richard Dobbs Spaight, one of North Carolina's three signers of the Constitution. Special entertainment will be held throughout the day at the gardens of Tryon Palace.

Postmaster Robert Peele says he is excited about hosting the New Bern ceremonies in honor of the special stamp issue. "The fact that we have so much of N.C. history right here in New Bern," he said, "makes this celebration one of the most relevant and meaningful in the state."

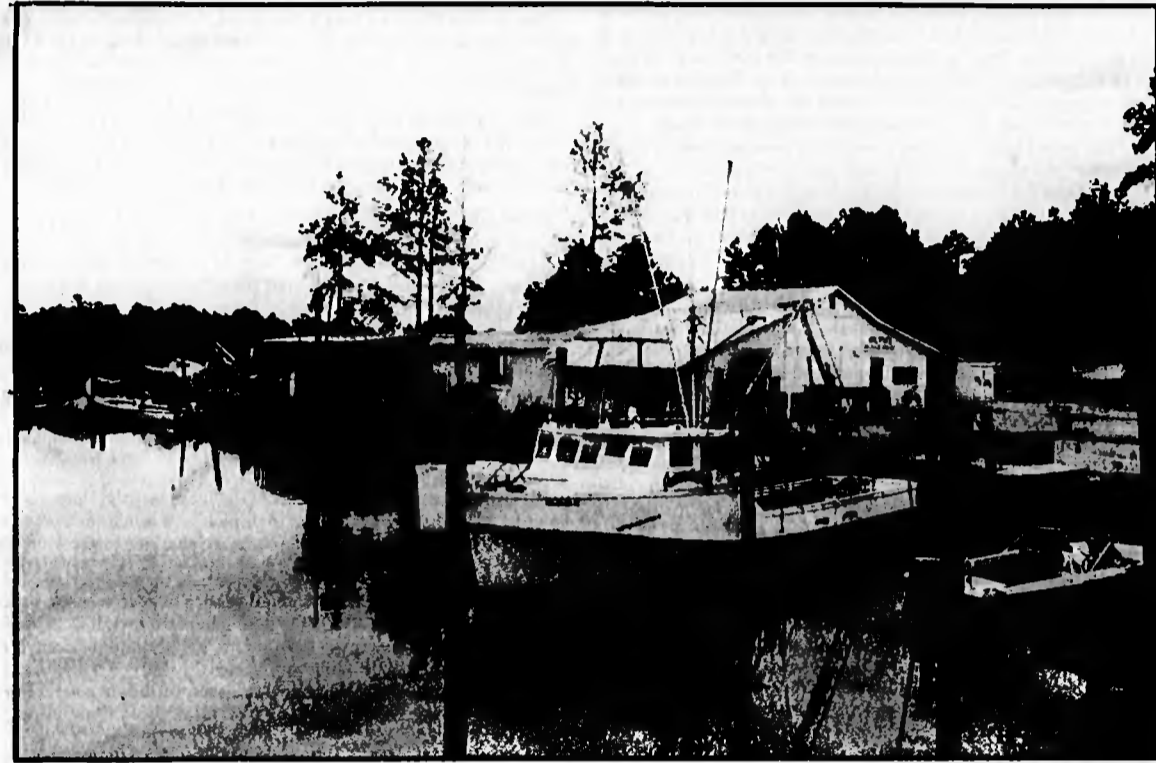
Bob Timberlake, a North Carolina native and nationally noted artist, has designed the statehood stamp, which depicts the state symbol of white dogwood blossoms against a black background. A pictorial design known as a "cachet," featuring the State Seal, also will be used in cancellations throughout the state.

A unique feature of the New Bern celebration, organizers say, will be the additional issuance of a specially prepared stamp cachet and pictorial cancellation. It will depict Tryon Palace, which was the state capitol in 1789, at the time of the ratification of the Constitution. The cachet also displays the historic John Wright Stanly House, the Coor-Gaston House and a profile of Richard Dobbs Spaight.

This collector's item will be available only on Aug. 23rd at New Bern post offices and at a one-day postal historic marker. A color guard with gun salute will open that program. Remarks will be made by Susan Moffat, executive director of Swiss Bear; Brig. Gen. C.L. Varmilaya and Craven County Commission Chairman Charles Potter. The Richard Dobbs Spaight Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Boy Scouts will participate in the dedication.

The gardens and grounds of historic Tryon Palace will be opened free to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors to the gardens will discover the alternating musical sounds of a harpsichord, dulcimer and bagpiper. Several jugglers and a magician will be on hand to entertain guests of all ages during the afternoon hours, and craftspeople, including the palace blacksmith, will demonstrate their skills.

In honor of the commemorative cachet issued only in New Bern, Combination Ticket tours of Tryon Palace, the John Wright Stanly



Ric Carter photo

### Backdoor parking at the fish house

Lots of small creeks around eastern North Carolina support bu-

businesses. With seafood businesses, water parking is often more important than a paved lot for cars. At Holton's Dockside Seafood in Bayboro, the fishermen are assured of plenty of space.

## Area residents comment on Mobil plan

By Betty Gray  
Special to the  
West Craven Highlights

A crowd of environmentalists, concerned citizens, oil industry spokesmen and government officials turned up at Beaufort Community College last week to argue for and against Mobil Oil Co. plans to drill for oil and gas off the Outer Banks.

Members of Greenpeace and the Sierra Club wore black armbands to symbolize what they called "a way of life that is dying."

"The safety aspect of drilling is a legitimate concern on behalf of the citizens," James C. Martin, project manager for Mobil, told the meeting. "Mobil shares that concern. We are confident this well can be drilled safely."

In an interview during last night's meeting, Martin said there would be no construction on the state's Outer Banks, but an underground pipeline would come ashore somewhere between Morehead City and Norfolk, Va.

## Blind beekeeper's not quitting type

By Michael Adams  
Special to the  
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Too many people keep mental lists — one of things they are able to do and the other of things they can't — and never venture anything that isn't on the can-do side of the ledger.

Bobby Gurkin, a blind beekeeper who lives near Williamston, keeps such lists himself. But he looks at them a little differently. For Gurkin, the lists are a challenge. He is busy shifting as many things as possible from the list of things he can't do to the list of things he can.



Bobby Gurkin leaning on one of his hives

bie. George works at Fountain Powerboats and Robbie is a shingler. Gurkin calls Robbie "my right hand when I go to mess with my bees."

Gurkin has also caught swarms of bees — swarms that he never saw.

## Etheridge to speak at opening ceremony for county schools

State Superintendent Bob Etheridge will be the guest speaker at the official opening ceremony for the New Bern-Craven County School System 1 p.m. August 25 in the New Bern High School auditorium.

## Area farmers gain from disaster law

By Cliff Moore  
County Executive Director

Area farmers will benefit from the \$897 million in disaster assistance that was approved when President George Bush signed the legislation Monday.

hibits payments to those with \$2 million or more in gross farm revenues.