

Refunds And Rate Reductions Ordered

The N. C. Utilities Commission has ordered Virginia Electric & Power Company to make refunds and rate reductions to its customers to the tune of \$5.6-million.

Furthermore, the commission said Veeco customers in this state should see "a light at the end of the tunnel" in terms of reaching parity with rates being paid to other North Carolinians for electric utility service.

The decision was a clear victory of Operation Overcharge, a group formed nine months ago by chambers of commerce in 22 Northeastern North Carolina counties. The group gathered some 45,000 names on petitions which led to the utilities commission's most exhaustive study of any company.

However, Stan Hege, a member of Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce who serves on the executive committee of Operation Overcharge, said: "We are right on the 50-yard-line. We have finished with a successful project at the state level and now will continue our fight through the Federal Regulatory Agency."

Hege said Operation Overcharge has pointed up "how poorly and mismanaged Veeco has been" and is seeking alternate supply of electric power or bring Veeco's costs in line with other utilities serving customers in North Carolina.

The commission has ordered Veeco to make refunds to its customers to reflect disallowed total-company fuel expenses of \$31-million in the determination of rates for the billing months of February through July, 1979. Refunds to customers will be based on their consumption during that period.

For example, the total refund is \$12.14 for customers using 1,000 kwh each month.

The commission also has ordered Veeco to reduce its rates to North Carolina retail customers to reflect a disallowance of \$41-million in total-company fuel expenses used to determine Veeco's rates for the second half of 1979.

The commission also found that Veeco should be able to have five of its oil-fired plants converted to coal use by no later than the end of 1980. Beginning then, if the plants have not already been converted, the commission will adjust Veeco's rates to remove excess fuel expenses associated with the oil-fired generation. It is expected that this adjustment on a total-company basis would be in excess of \$10-million annually.

The commission's action comes as a result of an investigation initiated in September, 1978, in response to a request by Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., and concerns expressed to the commission by the Commission Panel

which heard Veeco's request for a rate increase in the summer of 1978. The investigation was conducted by the commission's Public Staff who subsequently presented their results and recommendations during two weeks of public hearings before the commission in May of this year. The Public Staff's Report covered all areas of the company's operation, with special emphasis on costs directly associated with the generation of electricity.

Based upon the investigation and hearings, the commission determined that Veeco's management has performed inadequately in the areas of planning and maintenance of its generation facilities. As a result, the commission is making downward adjustments to Veeco's rates consistent with the maximum amount shown by the evidence and permitted by law and consistent with the excess costs estimated to have been imposed and being imposed on Veeco's customers by the company's inadequate planning and maintenance of its generating facilities. The imposed downward adjustments are threefold.

First is a refund to Veeco's customers to reflect overcollections in fuel expenses from February through July, 1979.

Second, current base rates are reduced. Both of these adjustments reflect what the rates should have been, absent poor planning and

Continued On Page 4

THE CHOWAN HERALD

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Public Parade

Some Do It

We read in our favorite newspaper published on the Outer Banks where Kill Devil Hills and Nags Head have merged the operation of their separate water plants.

Mayor Donald Bryan of Nags Head and Mayor Lowell Perry of Kill Devil Hills lauded the move, which both agreed would lead to significant savings for the citizens of their communities.

Let's see. Isn't there a committee from the Town of Edenton, headed by Mayor Roy L. Harrell, charged with seeking a meeting with Chowan County to explore possible areas of greater cooperation, merger or consolidation?

Some do it, while along the Public Parade they won't even talk about it.

Energy Saver

A town out in Kansas is taking the energy shortage seriously. A bicycle has been substituted for a patrol car for working downtown.

The policeman interviewed enjoys his new assignment. While saving gas it provides him with much needed exercise.

Mopeds are said to get up to 125 miles-per-gallon of gas. Are you interested Chief Parrish?

New Faces

Sheriff Troy Toppin is distributing his allocation of the 1979-80 annual directory of the N.C. Sheriffs' Association. We are fortunate to be among those along the Public Parade on tap to receive one.

The 344-page directory is our favorite quick reference manual. It contains capsule information on not only law enforcement, but a variety of other state and local government subjects.

The 57th edition may establish a record for the number of new faces. There are 33 new chief county law enforcement officers in North Carolina. Some died, others resigned, but the majority of those not listed again just plain got ousted by the voters.

Recognizing 4-H

Well, we stopped off in the mecca of Tar Heel bureaucracy Thursday night enroute to Winston-Salem to pick up our ballerina who had spent five weeks at N. C. School of The Arts.

We represented the State Agricultural Extension Advisory Council at the delegate banquet and talent show at State 4-H Congress, held in Scott Pavilion at the fairgrounds.

Thirty-three years ago we were a representative from Yadkin County at the affair, then known as State 4-H Club Week. It was our first experience away from home except in the shade of a relative.

Continued on Page 4

NRHDA Clears Hurdle For Second Year Funds

HERTFORD — Northeastern Rural Health Development Association has cleared the first hurdle enroute to second year funding. Steps are now being taken to meet conditions tacked onto approval of a \$200,000 grant application by the Project Review

Committee of Eastern Carolina Health Systems Agency.

NRHDA had made a move toward stronger linkage with local government and other health providers through reorganization of the board of directors. Andrew Martin, executive director, announced several weeks ago a plan to reorganize the board to provide greater representation from communities being served.

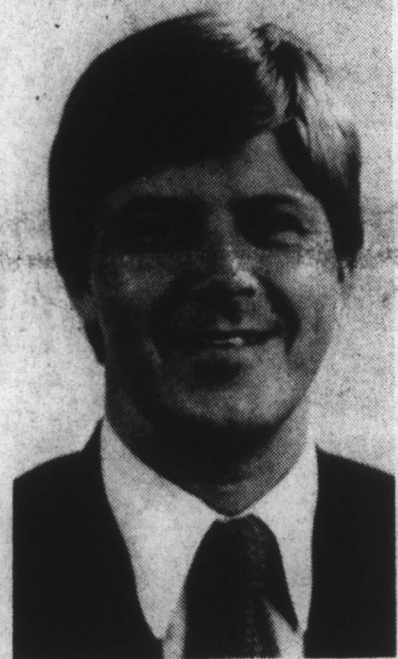
At a meeting here Monday night, Walter Oakes of Tyrrell County questioned the board's authority to reorganize in the fashion outlined by Martin. Oakes, a banker who has been a NRHDA board member since its inception, said he read in the newspaper about his resignation, when in fact he had not resigned.

Martin said he failed to contact Oakes prior to the release of the news story and could understand his concern. However, the director said in his opinion everything being done was in accordance with the by-laws.

Oakes charged that the biggest problem with NRHDA has been poor public relations and the inability of the public to separate the non-profit association from Albemarle Family Practice.

NRHDA has contracts with Dr. C. Clement Lucas, Jr., and Dr. Richard N. Hines, Jr., to provide medical and dental services. Dr. Hines attended the meeting. He said Raleigh Carver, chairman of Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners, has made statement that indicated "what we have done is not honorable" and that he would go "head-to-head with him on that basis."

Continued on Page 4



LEGION SPEAKER — Rep. Charles Evans of Nags Head will make his first address in Chowan County since adjournment of the 1979 General Assembly when he addresses the Edward G. Bond Post No. 40, American Legion, Tuesday night. The dinner meeting begins at 7 P.M. and Rep. Evans is expected to discuss events related to the General Assembly.

Highway Rally

The second of three public rallies on behalf of Highway 17, a U. S. highway stretching through deep Eastern North Carolina from Virginia to South Carolina, will be conducted here on August 14.

The rally will be held at the Jaycee Building at 7 P.M., and will feature a big barbecue spread, members of the Planning Committee for the event report.

Already, a rally has been held at the Ramada Inn in New Bern, with a big crowd. Sen. Melvin Daniels of Elizabeth City, was the speaker and said Highway 17 is a project whose time has come for four laning by the State of North Carolina.

Serving on the Planning Committee for the rally in Edenton are Bob Moore, executive vice president of the Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce, Mayor Bill Cox of Hertford, and Tom Campbell of Elizabeth City, vice president of the Highway 17 Transportation Association.

Tickets are on sale in Edenton at Bank of North Carolina, N.A., Mitchell's Bank & Trust Company, Mitchener's Pharmacy, Hollowell-Blount Rexall, and the chamber of commerce.



SEEK DESIGNATION — Edenton and Chowan County are working toward designation as a Governor's Community of Excellence with judging set for August 16. Roger Critcher, second from left, field representative with the Department of Commerce, met with local officials Tuesday to outline the program. With him are, Charles Creighton, left, president of Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce; Norm Bullard, Mrs. Peggy Ann Vaughan, coordinator; and W. P. (Spec) Jones.

Community Excellence Award Sought

August 16 is being planned as N.C. Governor's Community of Excellence Award Day in Edenton and Chowan County. A team from the Department of Commerce will review inventories of all areas of activity and determine if this community is entitled to a spot on the blue ribbon list.

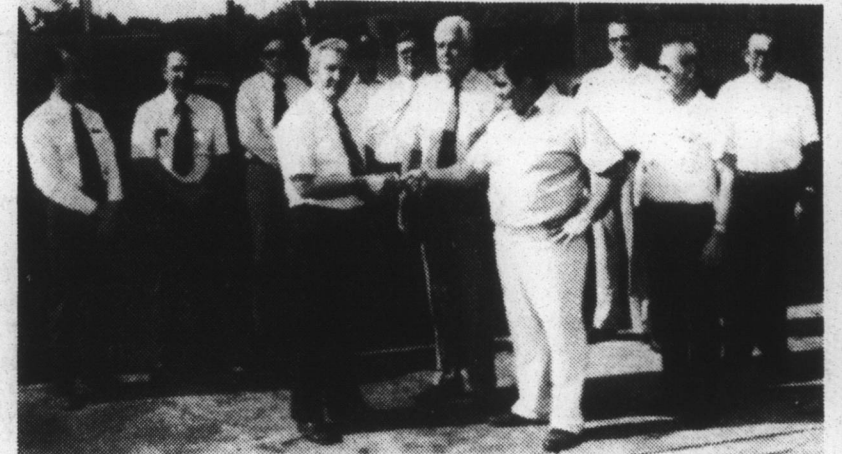
The presentation will be made at 2 P.M. in the Municipal Building. A tour will follow.

Mrs. Peggy Anne Vaughan has been named coordinator of the program, which is being sponsored by Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce. She plans development of a slide-tape presentation with color photographs by Allan Asbell. A scrapbook is also being prepared. At a meeting of interested citizens Tuesday afternoon, Mrs. Vaughan said she is excited about the program and the entire area will be proud of the designation. She said the fact that there are only little more than two weeks to assemble the material will require full cooperation of many people in the community.

W. P. (Spec) Jones, chairman of

the Industrial Committee, said the program is not only to aid smaller communities in attracting industry but new business establishments as well. He said he felt this area is in "pretty good shape" in regards to available industrial

sites. Norm Bullard is chairman of the tourism section and Mike Johnson is assisting with a report on available recreation. Vann Johnson will spearhead another clean-up campaign.



NEW HANGAR COMPLETED — Mayor Roy L. Harrell, left center, is shown formally accepting the keys to a new tee hangar at Edenton Municipal Airport from Nello Filippini, president of All Span Building Systems, Inc. In the center is Capt. Alfred Howard, chairman, Edenton-Chowan Airport Commission.

Airport Hangar Is Dedicated

Dedication ceremonies were held Friday for a new metal tee hangar at Edenton Municipal Airport. This hangar replaced an old 200 feet x 200 feet military hangar of wooden construction

that was deteriorating and potentially dangerous.

This new hangar is 56 feet x 245 feet - a ten unit nested-type tee hangar manufactured by Fulfab, Inc.—this configuration makes the utmost utilization of the old hangar concrete floor slab on which the new hangar was constructed.

Grant For Arts

Chowan Arts Council has been awarded \$1,257 in Grassroots Arts funds by the N. C. Arts Council. The money will be used to finance a membership drive as well as for general arts programs.

This was part of \$565,760 granted organizations in 89 counties, according to Sara W. Hodgkins, secretary of the Department of Cultural Resources.

The Grassroots Arts program, begun in 1977 with funding from the General Assembly, provides money on a per capita and matching basis to arts groups in each of the state's counties.

"We consider Grassroots to be one of our most successful programs," Mrs. Hodgkins said. "It works quite well toward its goal of providing quality arts experiences for people who live in every community of the state. We usually think of it as revenue sharing for the arts."

The new tee hangar has electronically operating "bi-fold" doors which are efficient and space saving. This is one of the first tee hangars in the state to utilize electric bi-fold doors. The contractor for this project is All-Span Building Systems, Inc., of Wilmington. The engineer is Talbert, Cox and Associates, Inc., of Wilmington.

This project was financed by the Town of Edenton and the N. C. Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics.

This new hangar is part of a continuing airport improvement program by the Edenton-Chowan Airport Commission towards maintaining and improving the airport's services to the community and the flying public.

Other improvements planned in the near future include the in-

Continued on Page 4



ELECTION OFFICIALS HONORED — At a informal ceremony held Friday morning, three former Chowan County Board of Election officials were honored. A plaque was presented Mrs. Sadie H. Hoskins, left, in recognition of more than 25 years continuous service on the board and to Mrs. Corrine F. Thorud for having served as Supervisor of Elections during the period 1968-1979. Robert S. Harrell was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for service as board chairman. The presentation was made by Election Board Chairman E. N. (Pete) Manning in the presence of other board members and several Democratic Party officials.