

Continued From Page 1

On the same level, agricultural-related businesses and industries are either cutting back or closing outright. This is a good place for people to begin to stop and think. Instead of adding to the problem, we must think about what contribution we can make, however meager, to improve the situation.

Also, those fortunate to have secure jobs in perilous times must demonstrate their appreciation by caring for and sharing with those less fortunate.

The unemployment rate along the Public Parade, as reported elsewhere in today's newspaper, is higher than the statewide average. The predictions of it getting even worse is even more frightening. But there are those who shroud themselves with good intent but thrive on taking advantage of the less fortunate. Here is where those who think only to the limits of their capacity must bow up to the task.

Of even greater concern for those who care and share is the fact that Northeastern North Carolina has unemployment nearly double the state average. Tyrrell County, for example, had a 12.5 per cent unemployment rate in November, up from 9.3 per cent the previous month. Yet some of those employed in the area are faced with trickery which could result in abolition of more jobs.

The labor movement has prospered during hard times in this nation. In fact, the auto workers have organized to the point that the U. S. Government had to come to the rescue of Chrysler Corporation and it isn't all over yet. Ford Motor Company and General Motors are in serious trouble. American productivity has steadily decreased while wages have steadily increased. That blows to thunder that age old supply and demand theory of economics.

The cloud now hangs over the Public Parade. Organized labor is nothing new here. It could, though, become something terrible. The answer lies with some 179 workers at Atlantic Forest Products, Inc., eligible to vote in a union election January 8.

Three unions are already in place along the Public Parade. They represent workers in various trades, and have made advancements without much fanfare. The promise of such harmony out at Atlantic Forest isn't encouraging.

Union Local 20408, United Warehouse Industrial & Affiliate Trades out of New York City is represented by convicted felons. They are experienced troublemakers who would, according to past records, exploit anyone for personal gain.

Seventy per cent of the eligible workers at Atlantic Forest are of the minority race. They all have jobs worth keeping with a blue chip company that puts out an annual payroll of \$2,500,000 and is the largest taxpayer in Chowan County. That makes the upcoming event personal to all of us.

Local 20409 is a maverick group. The attempt at Atlantic Forest is the first made outside the New York, New Jersey area. They stand everything to gain on January 8. Not only the employees at Atlantic Forest but the entire community has everything to lose.

It is hoped that those eligible to "scratch" a ballot on January 8 will do only one thing ... think! Then this entire area will have shown a positive intent to do



MEMORIAL GIFT — Edenton United Methodist Church is recipient of a small concert piano given in memory of Dana Lea Darnell by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. James E. Darnell. Rev. Richard Blankenhorn, center, presented a key to the piano on behalf of the Darnell family to C. B. Smith, representing the Board of Trustees. At left is Mrs. Lucy Brown who played a dedication number at last Sunday's service.

something constructive about improvement of conditions hereabouts, not destructive.

The cards will be in the hands of those 179 eligible employees at Atlantic Forest. They have a great responsibility and we have enough faith in those who meander along the Public Parade that they aren't about to choke.

Let's resolve to think!

More Aggressive

It has long been stipulated that a stuck hog squeals. In recent weeks court officials along the Public Parade and throughout Tar Heelia are acting like victims.

The issue centers around implementation of new state laws governing requirements for sentencing and a speedy trial. This is but one issue on which the N.C. District Attorneys Association is becoming more aggressive.

It has only been in recent years that the code of ethics for lawyers allowed them to advertise. The DA's are making full use of the change via a media blitz which warns of forthcoming dangers - like a backlog of cases, or less than professionalism in the disposition of cases.

Dist. Atty. Tom Watts is immediate past president of the DA's association. It was during his term that the prosecutors started being more visible outside the courtroom. It may have come too late.

Like a lot of other drawers of the bureaucracy, our court system is often misunderstood. A lot of it has been brought about by "reformers" who have created a monster. The District Court system is a case in point. The reorganization a few years back created a paper giant which has proven to be burdensome, if nothing else.

Apparently members of the General Assembly, which is composed of a generous number of gentlemen of the bar, haven't "gone to school" on earlier miscues. Each session sees layer applied to layer of rules and regulations which in many cases tie the hands of law enforcement officers and/or make it practically impossible for prosecutors to function.

The DA's association estimates it will cost in excess of \$10-million in additional funds over the next two years to staff sufficiently to adequately administer new wrinkles coming down the pike, in the name of more equal justice for all.

Judge Herbert Small, like DA Watts, has raised a flag. He is a former DA and is considered to be one of the most astute members of the bench. Judge Small, while having a reputation of being a "toughie", is a conservative who is determined to get the maximum result out of the system. When he speaks, someone should listen.

The courts are now faced with what local governments have been yelling about for years. It centers around good intended legislation that is sent out to be implemented without funds to do the job.

The fact that the DA's and judges have become more aggressive in bowing up to lawmakers produces a ray of hope in many quarters. If nothing else, they talk the same language with a majority of the people in the General Assembly who give birth to some of the bad legislation.

New Year's Day Schedule Listed

The last general holiday before Easter will be observed here today (Thursday). Activities in Edenton and Chowan County are expected to be at a slow pace on New Year's Day.

Local, state and federal offices will be closed Thursday. So will all financial institutions and most businesses.

The U.S. Postal Service will operate on a normal holiday schedule in observance of New Year's Day. No residential, business, or rural delivery will be provided. However, mail will be put in boxes at the post office.

The Chowan Herald office will be closed Thursday. The newspaper is being published on the regular schedule this week, which means distribution by mail will be Friday.

Rate Hike

Continued From Page 1 declines, it is explained. The companywide EAS annual revenue requirement has been placed at \$18.1-million, but the existing rate structures produce \$7.9-million, leaving a revenue deficit of \$10.2-million.

"If EAS rates are not adjusted, then all rate payers will have to subsidize EAS through higher basic service rates," the company contends.

Smaller Classes

Continued From Page 1 1981-82 and \$4.50 per hour in 1982-83. Increments are also requested each year of the biennium for non-certified school personnel which includes aides, clerical assistants, custodians, and maintenance supervisors.

Among the other priority budget requests are allotments for: instructional materials, supplies and equipment; textbooks; cultural arts education; additional aides; health, safety and physical education; science education; the Quality Assurance program (QAP) for professional personnel; economic education; staff development; additional regional education center personnel; state positions formerly paid with federal funds; community schools; and mandated matching requirements for School Food Services.

Officers Arrest 'Milkshake Bandit'

Edenton's "milkshake bandit" is lodged in the Chowan County Detention Facility here after being arrested in South Carolina. The arrest last week of the AWOL sailor allegedly solved four drug store armed robberies.

Carroll Henry Dockery, 22, Route 5, Travelers Rest, S.C., was arrested near Greenville, S.C., by the FBI. The agency was acting on a tip from Edenton Police Department.

Chief J. D. Parrish said Dockery has admitted to the October 12 armed robbery of Hollowell & Blount Rexall Drug Store on South Broad Street, and other similar offenses in Elizabeth City and Murfreesboro. Dockery faces two counts in Elizabeth City.

Dockery was labeled the "milkshake bandit" after his behavior at the downtown drug store. Witnesses have told police investigators that the suspect was in the business nearly one hour before the robbery in which a "shopping list" of drugs was filled.

The suspect allegedly ordered a strawberry milkshake and calmly consumed it while heavy Sunday afternoon traffic cleared out.

The suspect fled to an awaiting car at the foot of the Courthouse Green on Water Street. The car was seen speeding up North Oakum Street.

Robert Hendrix, district juvenile probation officer who lives several miles north of Edenton on Highway 32, heard police broadcasts of the crime. He met a suspicious car on the highway and by quick thinking got the license number.

Police officers in Norfolk, Va., matched the Virginia license number to a vehicle near the USS America. Dockery was then listed as a suspect but he escaped from confinement aboard ship and has been AWOL since mid-October. Chief Parrish said it was not the suspect's first time at being AWOL. The FBI agent who arrested him in South Carolina had performed the same duty earlier.

Capt. C. H. Williams and Patrolman Andy Maglione returned Dockery from South Carolina Christmas eve. A probable cause hearing has been set in Chowan County District Court on January 6.

Chief Parrish said additional arrests are anticipated.

Jobless Rate Tops State

The unemployment rate in Chowan County rose to 7.3 per cent in November, which is higher than the North Carolina figure of 6.5 per cent. The November overall rate in this state was slightly up from the 6.3 per cent rate in October.

Mrs. Alice Bond, Edenton office manager, said Tuesday the local rate is higher than in some other areas because of a cutback in the peanut industry. "There was a general cutback," she observed, "but the greatest effect is in the peanut industry."

Mrs. Bond predicted that the December rate would be even higher because of the lack of peanut product for processing at local industries.

Public Hearing

The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries is conducting a public discussion meeting at 7:30 P.M. January 7 in the new Chowan County Courthouse on Broad Street.

The purpose of the meeting is to allow fishermen the opportunity to express themselves to Marine Fisheries officials on regulations they would like to see changed or amended, or new ones added.

"Marine Fisheries officials want fishermen to become more a part of the regulation making process because these decisions govern their livelihood," a spokesman said.

Questions regarding this meeting should be directed to Carlton Nixon or Lester Lewis in Chowan County.



NEW CONSTRUCTION — Workmen are shown here pouring concrete at the site of a new solid waste transfer station for the Town of Edenton. The station, the first of its kind in this area, is being developed near the Municipal Garage, between North Broad and North Granville streets. (Staff Photo by Luke Amburn.)

Continues High Rates Battle

Continued From Page 1 charges of bad management, etc., are all ultimately tacked onto the consumer's bill. In Northeastern North Carolina some are paying twice since Operation Overcharge is financed from voluntary contributions.

Operation Overcharge has not had an opportunity to respond to Vepco's latest request for a rate increase on retail customer bills. One can expect the reply to make sense, something which isn't always the case with utility commission decisions and court rulings.

However it is said, by Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., or an elderly person on a fixed income, electric rates are dangerously high in Northeastern North Carolina.

The Vepco saga cut through to Gov. Hunt in February, 1979, when thousands of names on petitions were laid on his desk. The Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce was a leader in the petition drive. And Gov. Hunt responded by calling for the most inclusive investigation ever held in this state on a utility matter.

The petitions followed a May 16, 1978, hearing in the area, the first time the Utilities Commission had ever gone into the territory involved to hold public hearings. Again, representatives of Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce were in the vanguard.

Gov. Hunt and State Sen. Melvin R. Daniels, Jr., argue that the Vepco rates are keeping out much needed industry. In fact, Gov. Hunt has gone so far as not merely suggest but invite Vepco to move out of North Carolina. That is a big pill, one which would take a long, long time to digest. But in some areas of Eastern North Carolina progress is being made as industries and municipalities make moves to switch to Carolina Power & Light Company.

As for Edenton and other municipalities in the Albemarle Area, the remedy appears to be in a Power Agency set up where the wholesalers own a piece of the action. The other new thing on the horizon is the use of peat from First Colony Farms to fire boilers. N.C. Electric Membership Corporations are pioneering this course, with Ed Brown, Jr., of Albemarle EMC in Hertford, on the inside track.

Operation Overcharge's battle with Vepco has drawn interest throughout the United States. The June 23, 1980, issue of the Los Angeles Times carried a feature by Debra Whitefield, a Times staffer, who observed that "Vepco no longer considers the feud a minor scuffle with inflation-weary

customers." She went on to write: "Furthermore, this struggle by a few thousand North Carolinians could help shape the future course of utility-consumer relations all across the country."

"We consider this a precedent-setting case," said Harold T. (Harry) Judd, an attorney for the Department of Health and Human Services' U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs, which has intervened in this matter. "There's a very strong prospect that this case will establish a standard for performance... that consumers can weigh against any utility anywhere."

The LA Times writer observed: "When consumers in North Carolina began comparing utility rates, they found that Vepco's were by far the highest of the three utilities serving the state."

In June, Larkin Little of Greenville, chairman of Operation Overcharge, stated with justifiable pride that Vepco had requested no general rate increases in North Carolina since the formation of the grass roots group. Conversely, the company had sought five such increases in neighboring Virginia during that time.

At a recent meeting of Operation Overcharge's Executive Committee with members of the General Assembly representing the affected area, Dr. Robert Fishbach, director of the Public Staff, N.C. Utilities Commission, noted that at no time in the next 10 years is it forecast that Vepco will have rates in line with CP&L and Duke Power Company.

"We just don't see any improvement at all," Hege stated last week. "But we are going to stay with this thing until something is done about it."

That is the fighting spirit that has prevailed from the time Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce joined with colleagues in more than 20 counties. Although there is an absence of "big bucks" to operate Operation Overcharge the volunteers have found a possible substitute - it is called determination.

The Chowan Herald (USPS 106-380)

P. O. BOX 207, EDENTON, N. C. 27932

Published every Thursday at Edenton by The Chowan Herald, Inc., L. F. Amburn, Jr., Editor and Publisher, 421-425 South Broad Street, Edenton, North Carolina, 27932.

Entered as second-class matter August 30, 1934, at the Post Office of Edenton, North Carolina, under Act of March 3, 1879.

L. F. AMBURN, JR.
EDITOR & PUBLISHER

E. N. MANNING
GENERAL MANAGER

R. FLYNN SURRETT
MANAGING EDITOR

J. EDWIN BUFFLAP
EDITOR EMERITUS

JANE B. WILLIAMS
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

SUSAN BUNCH
OFFICE MANAGER

Subscription Rates

One Year (outside N.C.)	\$10.00
One Year (in N.C.)	\$9.36
Six Months (outside N.C.)	\$6.50
Six Months (in N.C.)	\$6.00

Edenton, North Carolina, Thursday, January 1, 1981

So says the VA... BLONDIE by Young & Raymond

HOW WHAT COULD WATCHING THE EAT POSSIBLY REMIND YOU OF BLONDIE? THAT VETERANS WITH VA LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES SHOULD PAY THEIR PREMIUMS ON TIME.

Contact nearest VA office (check your phone book) or a local veterans group.