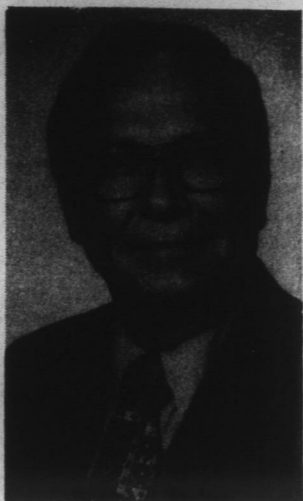


# The Carolina Review

**A BETTER FLIP...** Gov. Jim Hunt's excellent political instincts surfaced again last week when he performed a more masterful flip - flop than North Carolinians have been seeing of late. Faced with a funding shortfall, the governor recommended (to the board of trustees overseeing state employee medical care benefits) that the new health benefits package should be cut back. The package was only recently enacted and was set to take effect on October 1st. State employee leaders had considered the liberal health benefits as one of the few plums extracted from the governor and lawmakers in several years. The package had been described as the best in the nation for state employees. Even with the governor's recommended cutbacks, the benefits were still considered more liberal than plans in many other states and private firms. But to state employees and teachers, currently under a salary freeze (for merit and longevity), the cutback seemed a little much. They cried foul and called their legislators. Legislative leaders immediately called the governor on the carpet - suggesting he might be tampering with the law to rescind a benefits package enacted by the General Assembly. "About all we've done this

week is work on this insurance thing," Hunt said. Hunt said last Thursday. So what is the governor going to do about this "insurance thing?" "We're going the other way," responded Pearce. Sure enough, the governor announced he would recommend the full package re-instated. At the same time, he warned that a day of reckoning was coming. "The General Assembly will have to find the money somewhere," Pearce said. "By tightening down the screws a little more, we can make it until January - when the legislators can look at it for themselves," Pearce continued. The legislators won't like what they find. When they convene in January, the benefit package will be in the midst of an \$11 million shortfall. Without additional legislative funding, the package would be out of sync another \$50 million in the fiscal year 83 - 84. Sources in the legislature and the governor's office agreed that the package has been underfunded from the beginning. So, unless the legislators decide to tough it out and make the cuts themselves, they'll have to find more money for the fund. **HUNT'S FLIP - FLOP...** Many Republicans are sure to suggest that Hunt's abrupt change of direction closely resembled

the current Republican fad in Washington of flip and flop. However, most observers - admittedly Democrats - never made the comparison. First, as he occasionally does, the governor took an unpopular position with state employees by recommending the benefit reduction. The state workers were angry. Far from being angered, the taxpaying public saw the action as stern and needed fiscal leadership. But the legislative leaders got into the act. Then, instead of appearing cold and uncompromising, the governor agreed to re-instate the full package until the legislators could look at the problem. With that agreement, he was able to keep his leadership role and still calm the storm. The governor was at once the stern defender of the taxpayer and also the compassionate benefactor - capable of compromise. Excellent political instincts.



James O. Mattox

## Teachers And Insurance

Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., is to be commended for his leadership in restoring the hospital-medical insurance program to the level envisioned by the 1982 General Assembly, Loretta M. Martin, president of the North Carolina Association of Educators, says. "Teacher morale is bound to be better across North Carolina in view of the Governor's action," Martin said, adding she had "never seen teachers more upset about any single issue than they were concerning the rollback in medical benefits."

She said the Governor's action "is one bright spot in what has been a bleak year for teachers." Martin noted that the salaries of teachers are frozen this year and that even experience increments were not granted. She said North Carolina, which in recent years had risen as high as 24th in the nation in average teacher salaries, dropped to 35th last year and will undoubtedly go even lower during the current year.

"We stand in real danger of dropping into the 40's if we do not act soon to improve the salaries our teachers are paid," she said. Governor Hunt's action in asking that the medical insurance program be restored could mean a saving of \$450 to an individual teacher. The proposed plan would have increased both the deductible and the co-insurance liability of individuals and would have worked an extreme hardship on teachers, Martin said.

NCAE led the protest against the medical insurance cuts, and teachers across the state were vigorous in their protests.

## 1982 Child Care Workshop

CHAPEL HILL - Jo Ann Halsey of Jackson-Feild Home in Jarratt, Va. is attending the 1982 Chapel Hill Workshops for Child Care Personnel being held at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill the week of July 11 - 15.

Participants have the opportunity to enhance their child care skills by meeting with leaders in the field of group child care and with colleagues from other agencies. More than 50 people from across the country are participating in a variety of lecture, panel, film and workshop sessions.

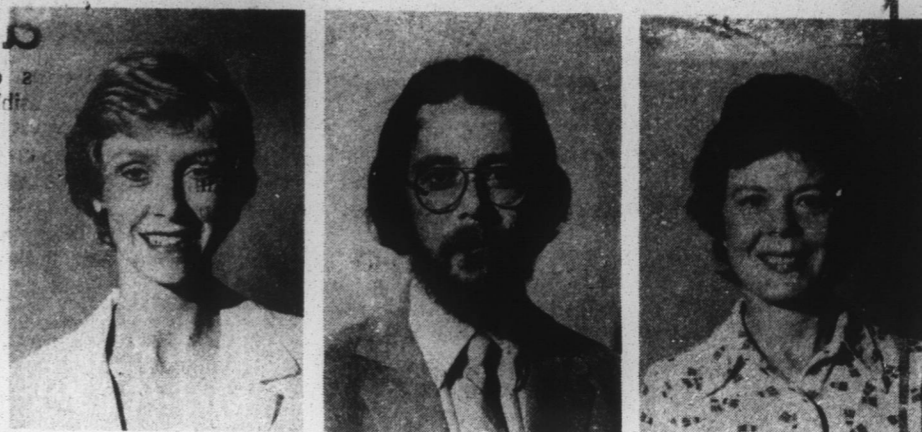
The workshop is sponsored by Group Child Care Consultant Services of the UNC-CH School of Social Work. Workshop proceedings will be published in the "Chapel Hill Workshop Reports for 1982" and distributed internationally.

## Revival

The Rocky Hock Baptist Church will be holding its fall revival September 19-24. The guest preacher will be the Reverend James O. Mattox, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Rutherfordton. Mr. Mattox is not a newcomer to this area, as he served for six years as pastor of Hertford Baptist Church from 1954-59.

The revival services will begin Sunday morning, September 19, at 11:00 A.M. Sunday evening at 7:30 P.M., and meet Monday through Friday nights at 8:00 P.M.

Gospel preaching, special music, and congregational singing will be featured. Nursery facilities and workers will be provided. The public is cordially invited to attend.



**PROMOTED** - Three College of The Albemarle administrators recently received new position assignments. Each will assume new duties and additional responsibilities as a result of the lateral transfers. Pam Whitley has been named Director of Resource Development, the position previously held by the late Harriette M. Crump. She also will continue her activities with the college Business and Community Relations program which she has directed since December, 1981. Bob Hartis will serve as Title III Coordinator. The Wilson native will be responsible for closing out current Title III activities and coordinating new grant activities that begin on October 1. Linda Combs, former part-time Career Resources Center coordinator, succeeds Sharon Noblitt as Director of Cooperative Education. Noblitt resigned from the position in July.



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