

# "Elder Abuse is Studied

by Patty Courtright  
CHAPEL HILL—Elder neglect and abuse, a form of family violence that may result from the stress of caring for an elderly person over a long period of time, is a recently identified aspect of the "graying of America."

As the lifespan of Americans increases, the repercussions of prolonged elder care are felt by the elderly as well as by their family members.

But because the concept of elder neglect and abuse is so new, the current literature and research tends to be superficial, says Ricki Hudson, associate professor of nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"What we do know about elder neglect and abuse is minimal," she says. Most of the existing knowledge, which comes from a three-year research study conducted by the Boston Legal Research and Services for the Elderly, pinpoints caretaker stress as a major contributing factor.

Approximately 75 per cent of elderly people are emotionally and/or financially independent, and around 5 per cent are in nursing homes. The remaining 20 per cent are in some way dependent on other family members for their care, both physically and emotionally.

Typically, the abuser—usually a family member who lives with the elder—has been under prolonged stress. The stress can result from lengthy illness, financial problems, or alcohol or drug abuse. This stress is then compounded because there are no training, information or support services for family members to help them cope with the elder, Hudson says.

"Many times we forget that the abuser is also a victim," she says. This person is caught in a situation he or she is unable to handle and does not know where to turn for help.

Generally, the burden of care falls on a daughter or daughter-in-law, but it can also fall on an elderly spouse or son. When the caretaker is a woman, she is often faced with having to choose between the needs of an elderly parent and the needs of her husband and children. The resulting stress is tremendous, Hudson says.

Precise definitions of neglect and abuse have not been developed from the research, Hudson says. But neglect can be thought of as anything detrimental to an elder's well-being, and abuse is usually an intentional act. Overt acts of violence against the elder, withholding needed medication or emotional neglect can all characterize the problem.

Elder neglect and abuse is distinguished from crimes such as assault or robbery because the abuse is initiated by the caretaker, not an outsider. But the relationship between abuser and victim is so close that identifying the situation is very difficult.

First, people don't want to see the problem, Hudson says. They question whether it is their place to pry into the business of another family, so instances of neighbors or other outsiders reporting the problems are low.

To complicate the situation, the victim rarely reports the abuse—either from fear of the family member or fear of being placed in a nursing home. Many times, the abuser does not want an outsider in the home for fear that he or she will be judged. As a result, authorities who offer help do not have access into the home.

Also, the aging process itself can make it difficult to distinguish between a bruise that results from a fall and a bruise from an abusive act.

When a situation of neglect or abuse is identified, the credibility of the elder is often questioned. The abuser can easily reply that the elder is senile and doesn't know what he or she is saying.

One answer to the problem lies in alleviating stress by providing respite for the person who cares for an elderly family member. These caretakers should be able to turn to an authority for information, for answering questions that arise and for making responsible decision-making.

What is needed, Hudson says, is an expanded day-care program and a program where nursing homes take the elder for a week or so to give the caretaker a break.

Before people can cope with the elder neglect and the abuse problem, though, they must first learn to recognize its symptoms and causes, Hudson says. "In the future, if we don't recognize what is a warning, the situation will get worse."

## Programs For Youth

CHAPEL HILL—One-week camp programs to guide young people for careers in business, law, and computers will be held here next summer.

Intended for rising high school juniors and seniors (and spring graduates), the Sunday through Friday session are being offered by Tar Heel Career Camps, Inc., which staged a successful computer career camp in Chapel Hill for the first time last summer. The 1983 program is being expanded to include camps in business, law, and a second one in computers.

Approximately 20 hours of class and laboratory-type instruction will be given by professional faculties. Most afternoons and evenings will be occupied with planned recreation and selected tours of professional career interest under counselor and faculty supervision.

The five-day camps are planned as academic counterparts of the popular summer sports camps, according to Donald G. McLeod, THCC president and himself a semi-retired sales executive. Participants will be housed in the Granville Towers air-conditioned private residence hall near the University of North Carolina campus. "We believe these programs will be very beneficial for parents and their pre-college children in promoting their career interests," said McLeod.

The faculty chairman of the two separate but identical computer camps, June 19-24, and July 24-29, is John B.

# Tar Heel State Big Ice Cream Consumer

By Dr. J. W. Pou

If you are a typical Tar Heel, You consumed about 247 scoops of ice cream and ice milk last year.

This estimate, made by agricultural extension specialists at North Carolina State University, is based on an assumption of 40 scoops to the gallon.

Figures from the N.C. Milk Commission show that 26.3

million gallons of ice cream and 10.7 million gallons of ice milk were produced in the state in 1981. That's a total of 37 million gallons.

The state's population is 6 million. Per capita consumption of ice cream and ice milk last year, therefore, was 6.17 gallons, or nearly 25 quarts, or approximately 247 scoops.

Other data from the milk commission show that Grade A milk purchases at N.C. distributors from farm producers for the first six months were 1.9 per cent higher in 1982 than in the same months of 1981. That was an increase of 14 million pounds, to a total of 757.6 million.

During the same period, fluid milk and cream sales to consumers were down nearly 4 per cent from a year earlier.

In June the number of Grade A milk producers in the state stood at 1,232, the lowest number since the milk commission was established in 1953.

The average blend price received by dairy farmers during the first six months dropped from \$14.94 per 100 pounds last year to \$14.79 in 1982. This is one of the few times such a drop has occurred in the 29-year

history of the milk commission.

There are about 130,000 milk cows on farms in the state. A decrease of 4,000 from the past two years.

During the past three years, practically no milk has been imported into North Carolina from other states.

Many of the pumpkins you see on the side of the road or the Jack-O-Lanterns you saw on porches at Halloween, are not really pumpkins. They are actually squash.

"Some kinds of squash have the same botanical classifications as the pumpkin, so the names are used interchangeably," says Dr. Bill Lamont, extension horticultural specialist at North Carolina State University. Squash stems are rounded, soft and more flared where joined to the fruit. Pumpkin stems are firmer, more rigid and star shaped.

Whether they're called pumpkins or squash, a lot of them are grown in North Carolina each year. Lamont says almost everybody has a patch of them and they totaled several hundred acres.

"Both farmers and city dwellers grow pumpkins,"

says Lamont, "but it is more common for farmers to grow them because pumpkins take a lot of room to grow and most people just don't have large enough gardens."

Pumpkins not only take a lot of room to grow, they also can grow to a very large size. The average pumpkin is 15 to 20 pounds. Some championship pumpkins have been reported as large as 175 pounds and some grown in North Carolina have just about reached that size.

Lamont says pumpkins are harvested August through

September and the color, size and rind determine whether or not the pumpkin is ready to be picked. "A pumpkin is ready if it has a deep orange color and the outside skin is hard if you press your nail into it."

Most pumpkins are sold for decoration and used as Jack-O-Lanterns at Halloween. The pulp of a pumpkin is edible when cooked and is used in pies, various pasteries and soup. Small sugar pumpkins are considered best for cooking.

## Cooperation Vital Asset

By John Sledge  
N.C. Farm Bureau Federation

It must be the pioneer spirit in many of us who have the goal to own a few acres of land that we can call our own. In the last few generations, citizens have become a nation of urban dwellers. The desire to get away from the city but yet live close enough to enjoy the many benefits a city offers has put severe stress on farmland.

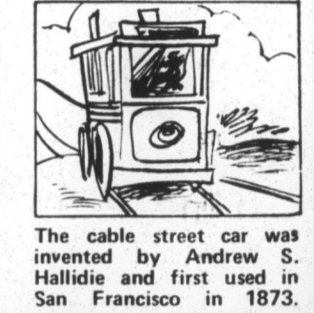
This has strained the ag sector severely in some areas. There are now about as many "part time" farmers as there are full time farmers, and more in many areas of the country. To the credit of both segments, they have proven a powerful force when working for the betterment of agriculture.

It's also a blessing, since the interrelationships between the rural and urban components of the economy have become increasingly complex and vital to one another.

It takes cooperation from all sectors to enable farmers to supply the food needs of this country and those of other nations.

America's advancement has been possible only because of agriculture's production which has freed the majority of the population to engage in other economic activities. Though not actually producing food, our citizenry still has a vested interest in it.

This is why issues such as food safety, nutrition, land use and agriculture policies have become as relevant to our "city" neighbors as they have always been to the ag community.



The cable street car was invented by Andrew S. Hallidie and first used in San Francisco in 1873.

## Convention Set

Chowan County Democratic Convention will be held Saturday, April 30 at 1:00 P.M. in the new Courthouse, announced Lueta Sellers, County Chair.

"County conventions are critically important to our political system. It is at county conventions that delegates elected at precinct meetings will be electing the county Party leaders and members to the State Executive Committee. These Democratic officials will lead the county and state in assuring victory for our Party's candidates, both at the local and state level, in the general election. The Democratic delegates will discuss important issues of concern to our county and its citizens who deserve the best possible government," said Chair Sellers.

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## New Directory Is Published

The new edition of the N.C. Camping and Outdoors Directory puts the reader in close touch with the Tar Heel State's almost endless range of outdoor activities.

Whether its rockhounding, skiing, backpacking, whitewater rafting, fishing, hang gliding, mountain climbing, hiking or any number of other activities the booklet contains information helpful in planning an outdoor adventure in North Carolina.

The latest edition includes more information than the previous booklet.

The state's parks, recreation areas, small state forests, national forests and the special areas contained in them are outlined.

Also included are sections on the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Blue Ridge Parkway and the state's many waterfalls. Some of the state's popular hiking trails are described with information helpful to the novice hiker or the seasoned backpacker.

Other activities include mountain climbing, snow skiing, rockhounding, horseback riding, bicycling, hang gliding, sailing, canoeing and rafting, water skiing, and fishing.

The boating and fishing access areas operated by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commissions are listed along with the privately operated campgrounds in the state.

To obtain a copy of the new directory contact the Travel and Tourism Division, 430 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27611, telephone 919 733-4171. The booklet is also available at welcome centers located along the interstate highways entering the state.

"Man comes as a novice into each age in his life."  
Nicolas Chamfort

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