

THE NEWS - RECORD

Sales Tax Ruling Stuns Legislators

Organization of the House in the General Assembly was completed this week, one highlighted by the State Supreme Court's ruling that the local option sales tax adopted in 1969 is null and void for the 25 counties which adopted it.

The legislators begin searching for ways to resume collection of the tax as the counties affected faced budget crisis of major proportions. Warnings were sounded, however, that it probably would be up to six months before any authorization could be adopted that would stand up under the court's objections.

Rep. Ernest Messer of Canton, earlier named chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health, Welfare and Correctional Institutions, was named vice chairman of Manufacturing and Labor and a member of committees on Congressional Districts, Higher Education, Special Service and Employment Security, and Conservation and Development.

Rep. Liston Ramsey of Marshall was named chairman of the State Legislative District Committee, vice chairman of Finance and Election Laws, and is a member of committees on Education, Banks and Banking, Local Government and University Trustees.

Ramsey and Messer filed a bill last week asking a \$200,000 appropriation for the establish-

ment of a Mitchell, Avery, Yancey County Technical Institute.

Gov. Bob Scott proposed Friday that the assembly

empower the boards of county commissioners to (1) levy the one-cent sales tax on their own tax statewide as asked by the motion or (2) submit the question to the voters for a

decision. Scott said he would opposed any move to enact the tax statewide as asked by the Buncombe delegation. In a test case filed by the

Hajoca Corporation of Asheville, the court ruled that the tax was null and void in that it taxed in Buncombe goods purchased for delivery in a non-

tax county; also that the election was held statewide but the outcome was not put into effect statewide.

Scott formally put forward his budget proposals last Thursday and ran into stiff objections from educators, more than 1,000 of whom assembled in a N. C. Association of Educators rally.

The NCAE wants an appropriation of \$203 million to provide a 30 per cent pay hike during the biennium to bring teachers salaries up to the national average. Scott asked for a 10 per cent increase costing \$63 million.

One sign at the rally proclaimed: "I suffer from low pay, three-month lay-off, no hospitalization and no paid holidays."

Scott said other state employees are below national norms and that the state's per capita income and ability to support higher salaries are below the national average.

Credit Risk List Alerts Businessmen

Check and Balance of Western North Carolina is publishing a monthly book about local residents who have long overdue bills. The firm uses a computer so all information provided by participating local business and professional people is current.

Although not a credit rating concern nor a collection agency, the Check and Balance organization has proven in less than four years a definite "curb" to bad credit decisions and an aid in recovering "delinquencies" without additional

charges for service.

"Any merchant or firm can save money by using the system," states Mrs. Mary Ponder, Account Executive.

"We guarantee in writing that over the course of a year, if the subscriber utilizes our program, monies will be recovered that are normally thought uncollectible or our company will reimburse any expenditures on the part of the subscriber," Mrs. Ponder said.

Of a confidential nature, hand

from many sources that never before had reported their delinquent accounts.

Recoveries are based on the premise that most people will take care of outstanding obligations rather than risk publication.

Mrs. Ponder of Marshall is the wife of Lawrence Ponder and a former teacher in the Walnut School. She accepted the position with Check & Balance several weeks ago and has several clients in Madison and Buncombe counties.

New Members To Be Seated By OEO Tonight

The Opportunity Corp. of Madison-Buncombe counties announced last Thursday that three new members from Madison County will be seated on the 24-member board at its meeting tonight (Thursday). Lawrence M. Kelly, executive director of the

OEO agency, said Zeno Ponder, Robert Edwards and Harold Anderson, who were appointed by the Madison County Board of Commissioners, will replace former State Sen William Powell, board chairman, William Zink and Walter Harrell.

Kelly said the question, on which he got a ruling last Thursday from the legal division of OEO in Atlanta, was whether "public appointees" were to serve a certain term or at the discretion of the appointing body—the commissioners.

The Atlanta office ruling, he said, was that the appointed members were to serve at the commissioners' discretion.

Appeal Upheld

The North Carolina Supreme Court has notified the Clerk of Superior Court of Madison County that the verdict of manslaughter against Donald Ledford in the death of Wade Shook, of Mars Hill Route 3, has been reversed.

Ledford, a resident of Tennessee who was employed at Bald Mountain, was tried in a special term of superior court here last June with Judge W. K. McLean presiding. A jury found him guilty of negligence as his car struck Shook, an 80-year-old resident of the Smith Creek area. Ledford was sentenced to a 5-7 year term. An appeal was taken and the Supreme Court upheld the appeal.

New Tax Listing Deadline

Emery Metcalf, county tax supervisor, announced this week that time has been extended from the end of January until February 15 in

which to list your taxes. The extension of time is due to a late start in listing and the heavy schedule of listers who have not had sufficient time to

list taxpayers.

Metcalf stated that the same listers will continue as previously named.

President Nixon Lauds Farm Productivity Record

President Nixon recently praised American farmers for providing this country's people the best food in the world at a lower percentage of family income than is provided for any other country in the world. For this, he said, the nation owes American agriculture a very great debt.

He cited the fact that the area of the American economy that has had the greatest growth in productivity is American agriculture, and said this has not been adequately reflected in agricultural income.

This report on the President singling out American agriculture for high praise was supplied by Mallie Brown, chairman of the North Carolina Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation (ASC) Committee. Brown said, "I believe not only farmers but others as well will be particularly interested in these comments by the President. We who help administer farm programs for the U. S. Department of Agriculture have often reminded our urban friends

that Americans are the best fed people in the world at the lowest real cost because of the efficiency of American agriculture. It is heartening to have the President state this and other basic facts about agriculture."

In his remarks, President Nixon referred to the new Commission on Productivity, with a membership of top leaders representing American industry, labor, the academic community, and agriculture, saying that, "a very significant point was made, not only in the first meeting, but in the second and third. On every occasion, it was this: That area of the American economy that has had the greatest growth in productivity and that has the highest productivity per man hour, any way you want to rate it, is American agriculture."

Upon hearing this fact, the President said he checked further and found that "we are the best fed people, but at the lowest cost, the lowest percentage of our income, of

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Wedding Ceremony for Cats

Groom Blackie and bride Mimi glance at each other as they go through a marriage ceremony conducted by Anthony Manning, in Ilford, England. He reads a passage from Genesis about the creation of animals while Richard Green sits at the piano, waiting to play the wedding march. It's all part of the free service offered by the newlyformed Cats' Association for Rights of Life. Said founder Manning: "We simply want to help people to understand their cats better. They are not getting the respect they deserve." After the wedding, the pets' owner, a spinster who requested anonymity, said: "I'm sure that Mimi will soon have kittens by Blackie and I think it's more fitting if they are married."