

Rep. Messer Writes About Legislature

On Thursday of this week a hearing will be held on a bill to abolish capital punishment. This bill is introduced in every Session of the General Assembly, and each time it gets a few more votes. There are twelve (12) persons on Death Row at Central Prison, including Marie Hill, a woman, but no one has been executed in

North Carolina since 1961. Since Governor Bob Scott has expressed his opposition to the death penalty, there is no possibility of an execution during the remainder of this administration. Decisions by the U. S. Supreme Court have given persons convicted of capital crimes so many appeal options that it is difficult to

exhaust them to the extent that an execution can be made. So, for all practical purposes, capital punishment is dead anyway. Each person on Death Row is costing the taxpayers of North Carolina many thousands of dollars each year. Each one is entitled, according to the Supreme Court, to an appeal all the way to the U. S. Supreme Court. The state has to provide and pay for lawyers for these appeals. The state also has to fight these appeals. This legal service is all very expensive. If all these death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment, the cost to the state would be \$3,500 per person per year. That is the cost for keeping one person in Central Prison for one year. Of considerable interest to the municipalities of North Carolina is the proposal to double the amount of Powell Bill money going back to municipalities. This money can be used for roads and streets within city limits. There appears to be no opposition to this proposal. In its efforts to better control the problem of poaching, the Wildlife Commission has recommended that Big Game Tags be issued to all hunters and that a tag be placed on any big game animal that is killed. It would be illegal to transport an animal without such a tag. If House Bill No. 111 should pass—and it probably will—it will be unnecessary to report



E-1 STEWART E. SHELTON, son of Mr. and Mrs. Evert Shelton, of Route 7, Marshall, will complete basic training on April 8. Shelton, who entered service on Feb. 8, is stationed at Fort Jackson, S. C. He graduated from Marshall high School in 1970.

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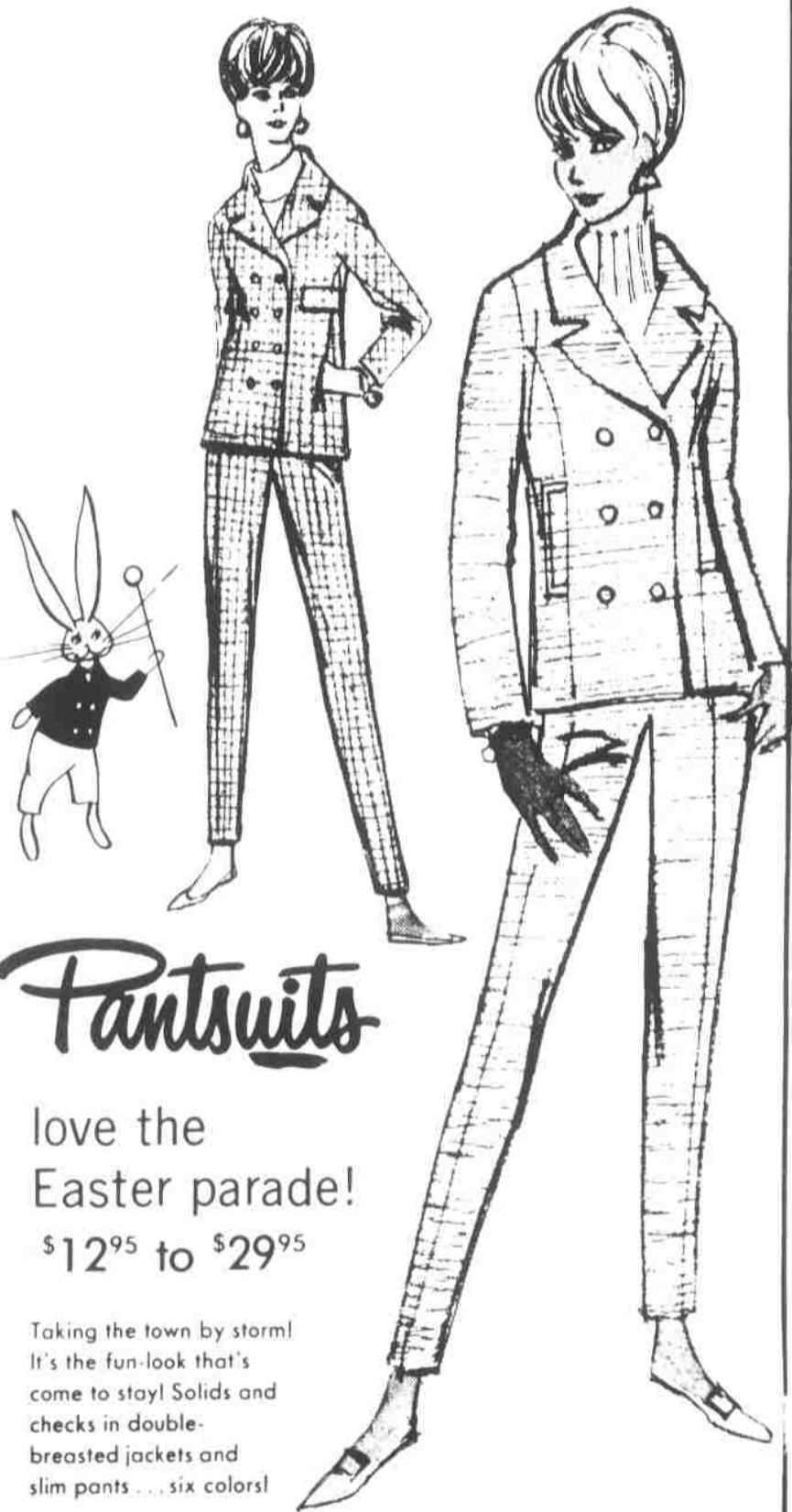
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