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Shoe Plant Workers To Be For Extended Unemployment



CHARLES ERWIN of ESC briefed workers in their benefits.

Workers at the Melville Footwear plant in Hot Springs will be eligible for extended unemployment benefits when the plant closes some time this summer.

That was the word the employees received last week from Charles Irwin of the Asheville office of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission. Irwin and representatives of the Tennessee employment service briefed the workers on some of their benefits during a Friday meeting at the Hot Springs plant.

"I hope you'll never need this information," Irwin told the workers. "But it's good that you know what you're entitled to in the event you need to file for unemployment benefits."

Erwin said that the shoe plant workers will qualify for additional training and educational benefits as dislocated workers through the ESC and the Job Training Partnership Act programs.

Harvey Haines, president of Asheville Buncombe Technical College and officials of Walters State College in Tennessee also addressed the workers concerning advanced training at their schools.

Haines announced that A-B Tech hopes to offer some classes for Madison County residents at the Marshall Elementary School. The college president said he has met with the county school board concerning the project. Final approval of the proposal will be left to the county commissioners.

Regarding the benefits, Irwin said that they will qualify for assistance in obtaining new skills training, extended unemployment benefits and reimbursement for travel in search of employment. Workers who have to relocate will also be eligible for reimbursement of a portion of their moving expenses.

The shoe industry qualifies for trade act protection because foreign competition has increased unemployment in the industry to 22 percent. The industry has asked for a five-year limit on shoe imports that would allow domestic plants to produce half the U.S. sales.



SHOE PLANT workers listened as ESC and A-B Tech officials explained benefits available.

Robinson: WNC Deserves Parity

Western Carolina University chancellor Dr. H.F. Robinson told an economic development conference that North Carolina must bring western counties to a position now are for support and parity with the rest of the motion of economic development and nation.

Robinson said the two most important needs of the western region are more and better state must be designed to bring jobs and high-quality education to the western counties of appropriate education. The North Carolina to a position of goals, Robinson said, "reflect parity with the balance of the most pressing needs of this state and nation. While pro-region and the long-standing gress has been made on this desire of the residents of front, there remains a considerable gap between this more fully participate in the region and the rest of the economic growth the state is experiencing. We keenly feel that this region has not received the western counties are growing at a rate faster than the experienced by regions in the rest of the state, and cautioned Piedmont, including the that the reliance on textiles as a major employer has

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Research Triangle."

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County Blacked Out

Electric service to most of Madison County was cut off for an hour Monday afternoon because of a downed tree on Carolina Power and Light (CP&L) lines near Burnsville.

According to Charles Tolley, general manager of the

French Broad Electric Membership Corporation (FBEMC), power to the county was cut off shortly after noon when a fallen tree knocked out the line that serves Madison County from Burnsville.

The power outage caused



MARS HILL COLLEGE president Fred Bentley and Ron Eller attended meeting.

resulted in substantial unemployment during recessions.

Most unemployed workers and those entering the job

market for the first time are not prepared for the current advances in technology.

Robinson said. He said that

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Public Hearings, Meetings Set

The Madison County Board of Commissioners will hold their regular monthly meeting on March 5 at 5:30 p.m. in the Madison County Court House.

The Madison County Board of Education will hold their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on March 7 at 10:30 a.m. in the Madison County Court House.

The Mars Hill Board of Aldermen will hold their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on March 5 at 7:30 p.m., in the Mars Hill Town Hall.

The Marshall Board of Aldermen will hold their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on March 5 at 7:30 p.m. The aldermen will also conduct a public hearing at 7 p.m. to hear comments on a proposed application for Community Development Block Grant funding.

The Hot Springs Board of Aldermen will hold their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on March 5 at 7:30 p.m. The board will also conduct a public meeting at 7 p.m. to hear comments on a proposed application for Community Development Block Grant funding.

The public is invited and encouraged to attend these public meetings.

January Jobless Increase

Unemployment increased an increase of 40,000 workers across North Carolina in manufacturing jobs and January, according to figures almost 71,000 in non-released last week by the manufacturing jobs.

Employment Security Commission (ESC). Officials cited the largest annual seasonal influences in reporting an increase in joblessness to 8.1 percent in January, up from 7.3 percent figure in December.

ESC officials said that the increase was expected. Glenn Jernigan, chairman of the ESC, said, "Historically, this has been the pattern. Layoffs after the holidays affect those hired temporarily for retail trade activity. Adverse weather conditions influence the decline in construction jobs."

Jernigan also pointed out that the January, 1984 rate is well below the 10.8 percent jobless rate the state experienced in January of 1983. "It's more significant, I believe, to look at how many people were employed in January, 1984 than in the same month a year ago. There was

The average work week for manufacturing jobs also showed a slight decline during January, down to 39.6 hours from 40.9 hours recorded in December. The average hourly earnings of manufacturing workers reported a six-cent hourly increase in January, up from \$6.83 in December.

Jernigan concluded that the state's unemployment rate may remain high in February, but added that it could show a slight decline from the January level. ESC figures on individual counties should be released later this week.

Old-Fashioned Corn Shucking Brings Back Memories

By ELIZABETH SQUIRE

Seven cows stared in puzzlement last week while their feed supply was raided for an old-fashioned corn-shucking such as many area residents remember as a highlight of their youth.

Carolyn Coates Rice, who grew up near Marshall, supplied the corn and joined in the reminiscence about what corn shucking used to be like. Mrs. Rice lives in Pink Fox Cove off Reems Creek now.

When the field corn was dry in the field and more pressing work was out of the way, a family would harvest the corn and invite neighbors and relatives to a shucking. They'd invite young and old, whole families. Everyone would bundle up in warm clothes. The field corn might be harvested as late as November or December. There'd be lanterns hanging in the corn shed, the fun of a get-together and the fun of finding a prize in the corn pile.

Any boy who found a red ear could kiss the girl of his choice. Red ears were scarce, about

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SHUCKING CORN the old fashioned way, are left to right, Tracey Rice, Carolyn Rice, Justin Nease, Barbora Shane, out of Waynesville assisted in the shucking was off-duty police chief Ray Anders, Carolyn

CAROLYN RICE and Justin Nease are amused that even the rice dog, Ugly, wants to help at an old fashioned corn shucking.