

January Target Date For Second Phase of City's War On Rats

Rats don't like cheese.

They like filth, garbage, sewers, trashcans, dumped table scraps—and other generally unsanitary spots.

They breed best in junky, moist places, but they aren't choosy; they'll live about any place they can find food.

In High Point, the Model Neighborhood harbors a great number of rats.

The conditions there are ripe for the rodents to breed and live—and where the conditions aren't so bad, chances are they are across the street or even next door.

Last spring Model Cities, with the cooperation of the High Point Public Works Department and Guilford County Health Department undertook a rodent control and stream clearance project in the Macedonia area of the Model Neighborhood.

Health department personnel worked six weeks to complete a house-to-house survey and bait the area. The entire area was baited three times and another segment a fourth time.

Public works officials assessed that 90 percent of the rodent population in Macedonia was killed.

However, because many residents did not follow the clean-up campaign with keeping their lots garbage-free, the rats are back.

So the war on rats in the Model Neighborhood is going to be continued.

PHASE TWO

Phase two of the rodent control and stream clearance project will get underway in January. Project administrator Jim Fulbright of the Public Works Department, the operating agency for the Model Cities project, has announced that his department and the county health officials have set the

first of the year as their target date to begin.

The second phase of the war on rats will not be confined to a particular neighborhood, or even to the Model Neighborhood itself if necessary. Where harborages exist near a Model Neighborhood lot, sanitarians will treat them as if they lay inside the Model Cities boundaries.

The first step in the rodent control project is a door-to-door survey, again conducted by Health Department official Ed Baker and his crew of sanitarians. They will give each resident within the Model Neighborhood a check list of household and property improvements they can make to help combat the rat problem themselves.

Residents will be asked to indicate such things as garbage cans, junked cars, dog pens, weeds, improper sewers, sheds, and outdoor toilets—anything that might lead to rats.

Afterward, a return visit will be made to see whether the resident has cleaned up his property and made the suggested improvements.

In about 10 days, a general rat baiting and cleanup campaign will be undertaken by the city—to get rid of junk, debris and underbrush on the property, and clean out streams nearby at the same time.

The entire operation, including a continued baiting program, is expected to last about six months.

The effectiveness of the war on rats, however, will depend upon the Model Neighborhood residents themselves.

"The main thing in a program like this is education," says Ed Baker. "We aren't going to be too far-reaching if the harborage conditions build up again.

"So long as a rat can find food, he'll feel at home."

LITTLE COOPERATION

One of the biggest draw-backs in the spring campaign, according to Clyde Weeks, sanitation enforcement officer who coordinates the rodent control project, is "lack of neighborhood co-operation."

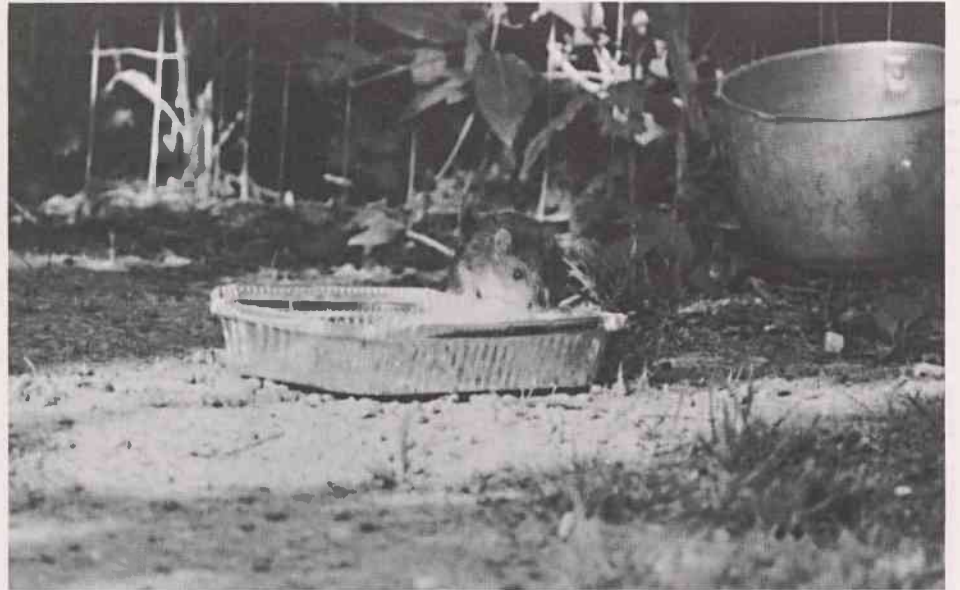
"Oh, they were tickled to death to have us clean up," says Weeks of the Macedonia residents. "But they made no effort to speak of to keep it up. They did clean up at the time, but they didn't maintain the garbage pick-up or continue to keep their junk out of their yards.

"In other words, when we quit, they quit," he said.

The new phase of the rodent campaign is funded jointly by Model Cities and the city of High Point. The baiting of the rats will be carried out by the Public Works Department under the direction of Fulbright and Weeks.

The bait boxes will contain a type of poison which will kill rats only if they eat it every day for six days. Only prolonged intake of large doses of this poison can harm pets or humans, according to Baker.

The rat found in High Point is com-



RAT BAIT, such as that in the pan, will be placed in large quantities within the Model Neighborhood beginning in January as part of the city's rodent campaign. (High Point Enterprise photo by Jim Stratford)

monly known as the wharf, barn, sewer or gutter rat. Different from mice, it can grow up to 18 inches long from nose to tail, and can weigh as much as a pound.

Rats, who live in colonies, have an average lifespan of 18 months. Within that time, a female usually bears eight to 10 litters of six to 16 babies each.

The female is capable, however, of bearing a litter every 30 days after she is four to five months old. Therefore, a female can easily produce up to 160 babies in her lifetime.

Multiplying the number of female offspring who in turn have litters, and so on, produces numbers Baker calls "staggering."

Outreach Services Offered By Citizen Participation

The new Citizen Participation office at 1305 Franklin Street has expanded its services, and has plans for more.

Milt Stallings, CP director, said the project can offer more outreach services now that it has its own home outside the Model Cities office.

Home economics classes are now being held to teach Model Neighborhood women how to deal with commodity, surplus foods. Jeannette Le-Grande, a member of the CP staff, will demonstrate ways to vary menus with these basic foods.

The Neighborhood Youth Corps is now working out of the CP office, helping Model Neighborhood teenagers between the ages of 14 and 16 to find parttime jobs.

Even if a substantial number of the rodents fail to reach maturity, the rat population can still grow out of hand with "no trouble at all," according to the health specialist.

Rats and their parasites are capable of transmitting 54 diseases, including several types of dysentery, food poisoning, typhoid and rabies.

To keep rats in check, says Fulbright, is a city-wide problem, and something that is going to take the cooperation of every resident inside and out of the Model Neighborhood.

"We don't have any Pied Piper," he said, "but we are encouraging people to give each other garbage cans for Christmas."

"PTA" meetings, patterned after those in schools, are held at the office once a month to involve NYC youngsters and their parents.

Vocational Rehabilitation counselor Gloria Sims is now at the CP headquarters on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. Her schedule will differ according to the demand for her counseling.

Thurman Dubose of the Model Cities' cultural arts center will be at the CP office on a regular basis to give instruction in drawing, music, and drama. In this second location, Dubose can hopefully reach more young people with his program, Stallings said. His schedule can be obtained at the CP office. (Continued on Page 3)

Know Your Rights

You can be arrested for . . .

1. A felony — a serious crime which may be punishable by death or imprisonment in the state prison (for example, murder, robbery, burglary).

2. A misdemeanor — any other crime punishable by imprisonment for two years or less, or by fine (for example, assault, disorderly conduct, trespass).

3. Violation of a city or county ordinance (for example, violation of a housing code or zoning ordinance).

4. A traffic violation (for example, speeding, reckless driving, drunken driving).

A policeman or law enforcement officer may arrest you . . .

1. When he sees you commit a felony or misdemeanor.

2. When he has reason to believe that a felony has been committed and that you are the guilty party.

3. When he has a warrant for your arrest. A warrant is issued by a judge or magistrate. If a policeman has a warrant for your arrest, he must tell you he has it.

Credit Tip

There are several purchase pitfalls families can fall into, especially families with tight budgets. Here are some warning signs for consumers, called the ten most unwanted extravagances:

1. Impulse purchases.
2. Bargain hunting for item not in your planned needs.
3. Unnecessary purchases of gadgets and souvenirs; books and encyclopedia for children before they can use them; and door-to-door sales items.
4. Large cars, too frequent trading, too many cars.
5. Homes too costly for income or too far from work; careless use of utilities, improper maintenance and upkeep and poor care of appliances.
6. Life insurance on the wrong per-

son. Insurance dollars should go on the wage earner's life to insure income if he should die.

7. Not planning ahead. Planning can keep you from buying things on impulse that you don't need, as well as help you save to avoid credit charges.

8. Not shopping around. Comparison shopping is the only way to know what you really have to pay for an item. A good way is to shop by phone.

9. Not waiting for a sale. Most items go on sale twice a year, so take advantage of the bargains.

10. Buying from irreputable dealers. Check references if you're not sure.

This buying tip was provided by Consumer Credit Counseling, Inc., 142 Church Avenue. Phone Barry Boneno at 885-0041.