

Program Desires Growth

Big Brothers, Big Sisters Target Area

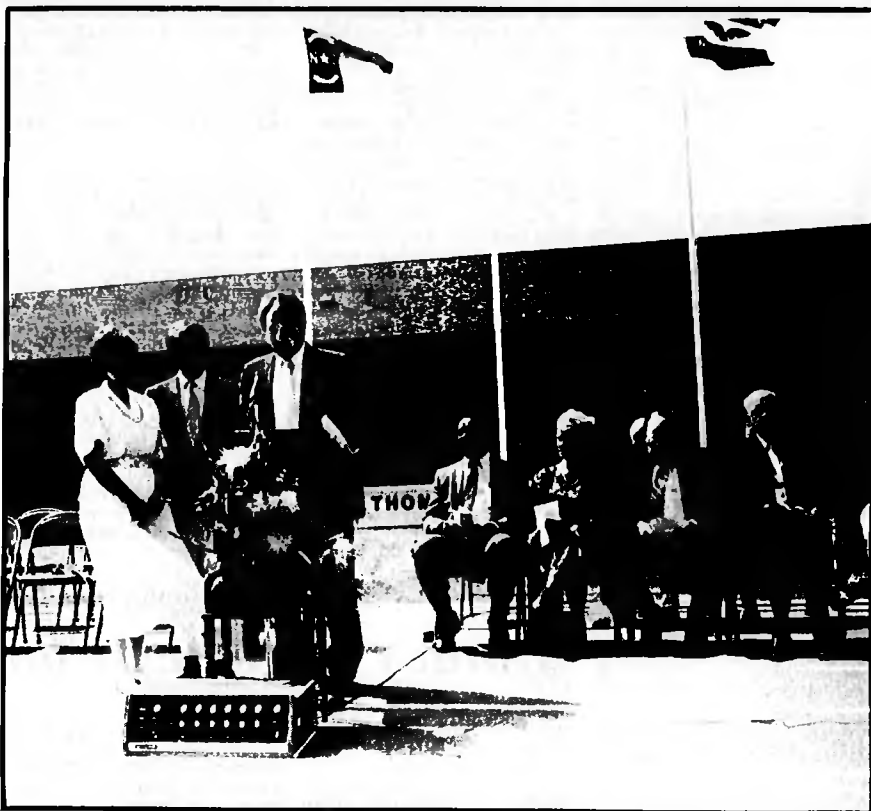
Just a few hours a week can make a big difference in a child's life, says Cleo Hennon.

Ms. Hennon, spokesman for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Lower Neuse, said children in the Vanceboro area may soon benefit from the program if plans proceed as scheduled.

"We have been getting a number of referrals from Vanceboro," said Ms. Hennon. The Big Brother/Big Sister program matches a volunteer adult with a child from single-parent families. Ms. Hennon said the program has 48 matches in the county. And she wants Vanceboro to join the program.

"Only in the last six months have we been getting referrals from the Vanceboro area. I don't know if it's because of publicity, but we are glad to have the referrals," said Ms. Hennon. Although

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The Thomases, left, receive resolution from Quinn

Field House Is Dedicated To Thomases

Joseph and Linda Thomas have left a visible sign of their influence on public education in Craven County. But it is their influence that can't be seen that has helped improve education in Craven County.

That was the message echoed by many at the dedication of the Thomas Field House at West Craven High School on May 18. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas no doubt would have preferred the hoopla been given someone else. But educators, legislators, students and parents came Saturday to honor the dedication of the couple to education in Craven County.

Sen. Harold Hardison, D-Lenoir, was featured speaker at the dedication. Hardison noted the Thomases' contributions to education in his speech. Joe Thomas is a former state senator.

In a telephone interview Monday Hardison said, "He has done an awful lot, but not only in

education but for the whole area down there." Hardison, a candidate for lieutenant governor in the 1988 gubernatorial race, praised Thomas for his work as a legislator, especially efforts to improve roads in eastern North Carolina.

Hardison said Thomas was known for his "very active work and commitment to education and with his area's total development."

Hardison said Thomas was "missed in the Senate" and legislators were seeking to involve him in some way in "active politics up here at the Legislature." Thomas, said Hardison, had good rapport with legislators and was well thought of in the General Assembly.

The resolution adopted by the New Bern-Craven County Board of Education noting the Thomases' contributions said in part:

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Lancaster Repays NCSU, With Interest

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The following are statements from R.A. Lancaster on the history of the scholarship and from Robert Irvine, a R.A. and Millie Lancaster Meritorious Scholar. The first statement is from Lancaster.

It took me eight years to earn a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from N.C. State. Times were difficult when I graduated from high school in Craven County in 1925 and went to State. I was supposed to graduate with the Class of 1929, but I had to stay out of school and work off and on.

In 1928 I returned home to run the family farm while my father was ill and in 1930 went to Virginia to work in the Newport News Shipyard as an electrician's helper. The "Boat Works" was my initiation into a lifetime in shipbuilding, construction, design and operation.

At the beginning of fall term 1931, I was able to return to school with a job in the dining hall and collecting tickets at the college games, and a loan from the college treasurer, A.F. Bowen.

Toward the end of the second quarter of my senior year in 1933, I found I didn't have quite enough to take care of my expenses. I finally went to see Mr.

Bowen and told him my problem: I was \$100 short and wouldn't be able to register for the last quarter and graduate in June unless I could find the necessary \$100. He arranged a student loan and I graduated in June 1933.

With my degree I went back to Newport News to work in shipbuilding again. During the next 35 years I worked with the Maritime Commission and the Texas Consolidated Steel Corporation. During World War II, I served with the U.S. Navy as assistant

engineer on the aircraft carrier *Yorktown* and as chief engineer on the battleship *California*. After the war I continued my engineering career with the Army and later the Navy until I retired in 1968. My wife Millie and I now live in Fort Myers, Florida.

I will always remember the help allowed me to complete my education. In 1981 Millie and I decided to endow the R.A. and Millie Lancaster Meritorious Scholarship at N.C. State.

I wanted to establish the scholarship for two reasons. First, I

wanted to help students to return the support that was given me. The second reason is patriotism. Students of the caliber receiving this and other meritorious scholarships will be the future leaders of our nation. I want to make sure these young people of ability receive an education that will make them good leaders.

Millie and I have also endowed a scholarship at East Carolina University in honor of her sister, and we've endowed a loan fund in the N.C. State Alumni Association. Most recently, we set up a unitrust at N.C. State. The income from this trust will be paid to us while we are living, but will then go to support one or more Distinguished Professorships in engineering. And, the university is in our wills.

Some people say: "You must really love N.C. State." I look at it this way: Where would I ever have gotten if Peele, Page and Daniels, and that whole Watauga Club group and others hadn't established this university in the 1880s and built a good foundation for education? I have an opportunity to strengthen the foundation they laid and to be part of something of lasting importance.

Irvine's statement
I continually remind myself how lucky I am. It's a luxury to have to work at an outside job while you're going to school. The

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Loan To '33 Grad Inspires Endowment

By ALEXA WILLIAMS
Editor
Statelog

A \$100 loan that enabled a struggling N.C. State University engineering student, who is a Craven County native, to complete his senior year in 1933 has led to the largest transfer of assets from a living individual in the history of N.C. State.

An investment portfolio, valued at \$327,885 and owned by R.A. Lancaster and his wife, Mildred, of Ft. Myers, Fla., has been transferred to the North Carolina Engineer-

ing Foundation.

The assets will be managed by the Engineering Foundation with earnings paid to the Lancasters until their deaths, when the assets become a permanent endowment to the foundation.

Lancaster is a retired marine engineer. He is a 1933 graduate of N.C. State and his loyalty to the university dates back to his days as a student.

Lancaster was forced to drop out of N.C. State on several occasions to earn the



Morris picks on banjo at festival

Picker Puts Together 50 Years Of Pluckin'

By MIKE VOSS
Editor

Theodore Morris saying he has "been trying" to pick a banjo is like saying the Boston Celtics have "been trying" to win basketball games in Boston Gardens.

And like the five members of the Celtics working close as a team, the five strings on Morris' banjo work pretty well together also. Well enough for Morris to be as well known for banjo playing in these parts as the Celtics are for basketball. Only the UNC Tar Heels might have a better basketball reputation, but their first string couldn't keep up with Morris' five strings.

"Just about all my life," says

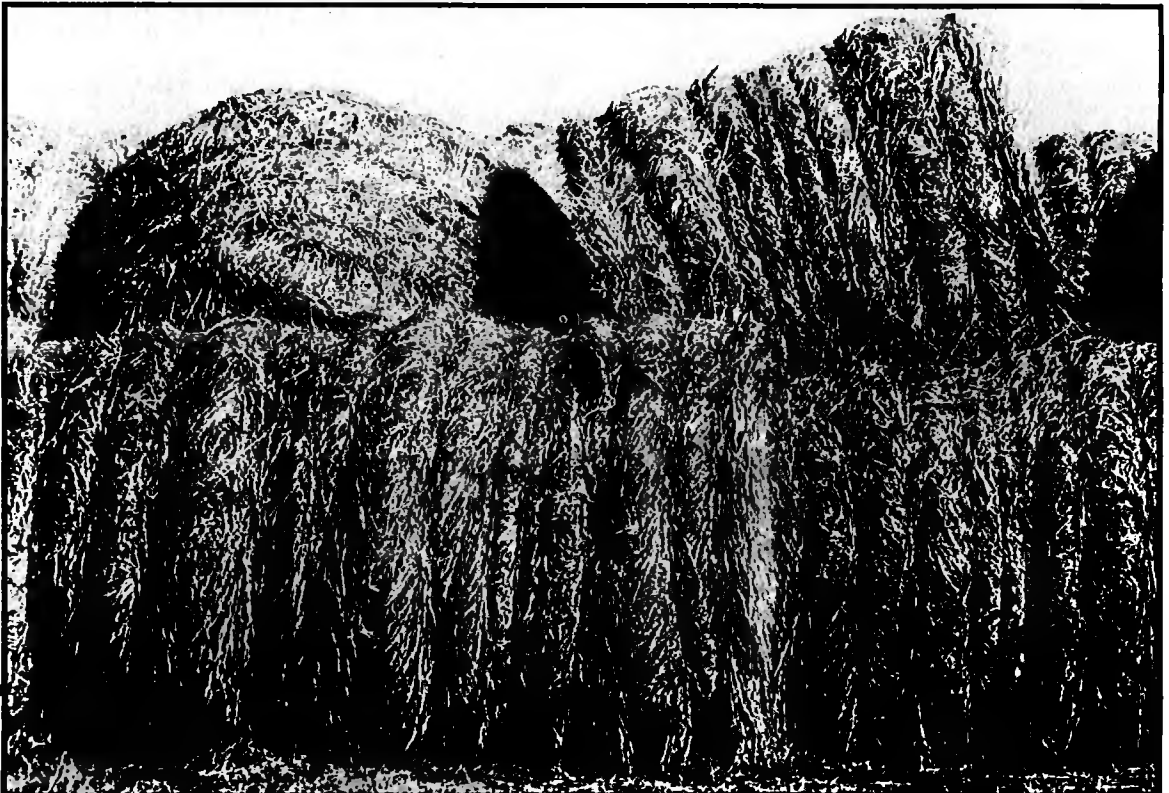
Morris of his banjo-playing days. The 65-year-old picker said he has been pickin' and pluckin' since about age 10 or 12. "I don't rightly remember when I started."

"There was just something about it. It got all over me when I heard and saw someone play," said Morris. And if the truth be known, there are probably some younger banjo players who "get it all over them" when they hear Morris on his banjo.

"No one in my immediate family played. I guess it was just born there," said Morris.

Although no one in his family played, it was an uncle that made

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Pass The Milk And Sugar

A sure sign of warm weather is the appearance of more and more hay baled and sitting in warm sunshine in area fields. This hay, with just a little imagination, looks like shredded wheat waiting for some cold milk, sweet sugar and a big appetite. While most humans might

find it lacking in taste, livestock will probably be glad to see the hay later this summer. Those who have to harvest, bale and haul the hay might think otherwise.

(Ric Carter photo)

West Craven Student Wins \$20,000 Award

Michelle Gaskins, a senior at West Craven High School, has been notified that she has been selected to receive a North Carolina Teaching Fellows Award.

Ms. Gaskins and 399 other award winners will receive a four-year scholarship in the amount of \$20,000. Ms. Gaskins plans to use the scholarship fund to pursue a study of education at East Carolina University's School of Education. She will be required to teach in the North Carolina public school system for at least four years after obtaining her degree.

The scholarships are designed to help promote careers in education for the state's most highly qualified students. The award program is funded by the N.C. General Assembly. This is the first year the program has operated.

Similar to the prestigious Morehead Scholarships, the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Awards will require participants to take part in extra-curricular and summer internships designed to enhance the students' personal and career development.

Shirley Eriksson, business teacher at West Craven, helped Ms. Gaskins prepare her application and review interview skills for the screening process set up by the awards commission.

"I couldn't have done it without her," said Ms. Gaskins.

Looking for to graduate, Ms. Gaskins said she is ready to begin her college education. "I'm excited about the whole thing. I just can't believe it. And I'm proud to represent West Craven," said Ms. Gaskins.