



West Craven Highlights

News From Along The Banks Of The Neuse



VOLUME 12 No. 22

JUNE 8, 1989

VANCEBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

PHONE 244-0780 OR 946-2144

(UPSP 412-110)

25 CENTS

SIX PAGES



Mo Krochmal photo

Home again

If you are a bird known for living and hunting near sounds and oceans, what better place to live than on a buoy in the middle of a feeding ground? These ospreys built a nest on a channel marker, close to food and water. Home is easy to find when it's about the only thing around on the river for

hundreds of yards. Those passing near the nest are tolerate — barely. Mom and Pop osprey will warn visitors who get too close. It won't be long and, hopefully, some baby ospreys will be calling the high-rise nest home.

Foundation Strives To Help In Battle Against Drugs

By Greg Stroud
Staff Writer

It seems wherever you go today, communities are faced with the problem of drug abuse. Most tragic is the fact many of these users are children. The nation is slowly becoming aware of the problem and government agencies and law enforcement officers wage what they call a "war on drugs." One Grantsboro couple intends to see that the war is won. Jesse and Linda King have started an organization, the We Are America Foundation, with a goal to

stop drug use through a program of drug-awareness education aimed at young children, ages 5-10. They also assist other agencies and groups working toward the eradication of illicit drugs in our society.

This year alone, the United States government will spend over \$9 billion dollars on efforts to stop the drug problem. Of this amount, only 6 percent will go toward education and rehabilitation.

"We believe the key to solving the drug problem is education. And not just aimed at the older kids, but at little guys like this," said Mrs. King while proudly holding 7-year-old Joey, who was adopted from their daughter, Tiona. Joey has been with them since he was 6-days-old. Tiona is now serving 5 years in an Oregon prison for drug-related crimes.

The Kings are committed to the program. The Kings have single-

handedly managed the foundation's efforts by manning booths at schools, shopping centers and festivals. They provide information by telephone on the effects of drugs and drug abuse 24 hours a day. They have also overseen the production of coloring books designed to be introduced in the classroom and completed at home with parents.

The foundation just completed their coloring book project in Pam-

lico County. Through the support of local businesses and organizations, over 1,300 coloring books were distributed to Headstart through fifth grade children. The coloring books contain art work done by Vanceboro students in art classes at West Craven High School and by King. Involved with the project were Russell Akers, Travis Manley, Chris Ames, Tim Ford, Pete Taylor, Toby Wooten, David Brown and Jason

Sasser.

Funding for the foundation comes solely from businesses, concerned citizens, and from the pocket of the King family. The Kings sold their house, two cars, and many personal items collected over a period of 26 years in order to further their anti-drug campaign.

The Kings have personal reasons for being involved with drug education. Mrs. King's former husband beat her 4-month-old baby so badly it resulted in brain damage, includ-

See DRUGS, Page 5

Officials Have High Hopes

New Power Plant Will Burn Timber, Aid Local Economy

By Greg Stroud
Staff Writer

Plans are under way to locate a timber-burning power plant in Craven County. The site for the plant will be outside New Bern on U.S. 70.

The 45-megawatt waste-wood fueled power plant will be owned by Craven County Wood Energy Limited Partnership. Partners are HYDRA.CO Enterprises, headquartered in Syracuse, N.Y., and U.S. Energy Corporation of Washington, D.C.

The plant will bring about \$82 million dollars into Craven County in construction and start-up costs, and will provide over \$350,000 in tax revenues annually, according to Tom Thompson, executive director of the Craven County Development commission. The plant will also provide jobs for about 170 people locally, said George Dimick, a member of the Council of 100 and the mayor

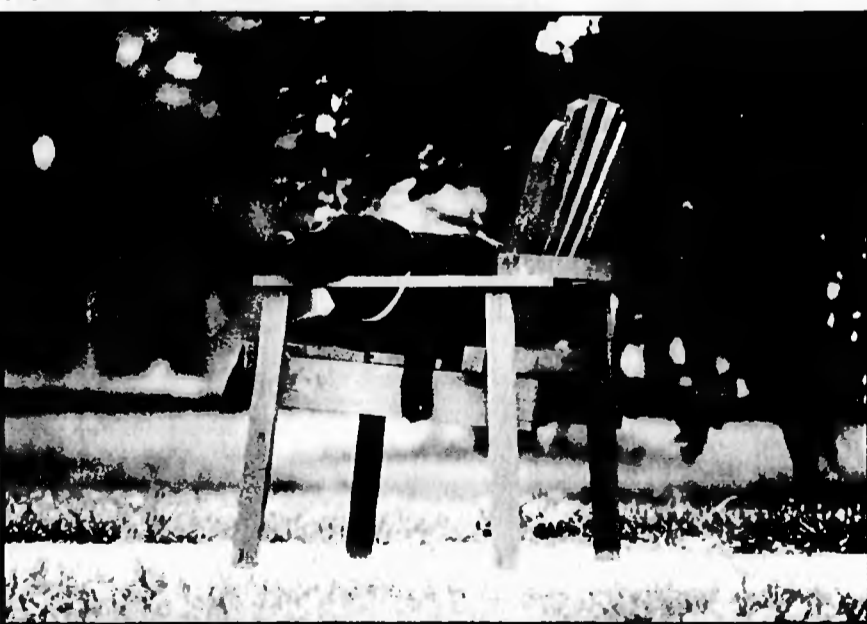
of Ernul. The product produced, electricity, will remain in Craven County.

Local officials said they are excited about the project. Vanceboro Mayor Jimmie Morris said, "The plant will be a big asset to the community. It is the largest industry to locate in Craven County in quite a number of years. We are very happy that they will locate here and believe they will make fine corporate neighbors."

Dimick is pleased at the number of jobs, fulltime and part-time, the plant will produce. "It will provide jobs for some individuals that might not otherwise find work," he said. He said the corporate officials coordinating the project are "really top notch people."

A spokesman for the partnership said, "We are pleased with the site in Craven County. We have had to

See PLANT, Page 5



Lee Schwelzer photo

Dog's life

It's not quite the best throne in the world, but for Princess Leah this chair is a place to snooze and enjoy being the master of all she surveys. The canine monarch belongs to Jim and Debbie Hines of Ernul. Sunday afternoon snoozes are not uncommon for royalty, even the four-legged variety.

Changes Providing New Clues

Volunteers monitoring area river basins have reported a change that may provide a clue in the search for the cause of fish kills in the Neuse, Pamlico and Pungo rivers this week and last week.

Significant drops in the salinity of the rivers have been reported at every testing station in the estuary. Research at N.C. State University in Raleigh has shown that fish stressed by fluctuations in salinity are more susceptible to disease.

In the river at the Washington waterfront, a zero salinity amount was recorded in May by Tom Perlic, director of the monitoring program. This was down from 6.7 parts per thousand in January.

At Core Point, salinity measured 2.8 to 5 parts per thousand in May, down from a high of 20.9 per thousand in January. In Bath, the last reading in April showed salinity at 5.4 parts per thousand. This is down from a reading 20.4 in January.

South Creek salinity was 22 parts per thousand in January and the last reading was 5.6 parts per thou-

See CHANGES, Page 5

Texasgulf Settles \$5.7 Million Fine With \$1 Million Payment

By Mike Voss
Editor

Texasgulf and the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development announced today a \$1,001,907 out-of-court settlement of a \$5.7 million fine against the phosphate company.

R. Paul Wilms, director of the Division of Environmental Management, accepted the company's settlement offer of \$1 million plus \$1,907 in investigative costs June 2 after long negotiations between NRCD and Texasgulf.

The \$5,698,907 million civil penalty was for more than 1,500 alleged violations of air-quality standards. Texasgulf was informed of the fine by DEM on Dec. 17, 1988. It was publicly five days later.

Texasgulf filed a petition Jan. 16, 1987, challenging all of the proposed penalty and requesting a hearing before an administrative law judge.

Texasgulf acknowledged two emission "incidents"

but challenged the state's right to levy a penalty. It denied the others occurred.

Days after the assessment, Texasgulf reassigned some of its employees, including some in the environmental control area.

"The settlement agreement fully resolves the issue of a \$5.7 million civil assessment penalty levied against Texasgulf by the DEM in December 1988. Also, the agreement resolves all other outstanding air compliance issues between the company and the DEM," said J. Randolph Carpenter, director of public relations and governmental affairs for Texasgulf.

"The settlement covers alleged violations of the state's air pollution control laws, plus a permit revocation, and violations of Prevention of Significant Deterioration regulations and air-quality standard violations for sulphur dioxide subsequent to the original \$5.7 fine," said a news release prepared by NRCD.

On Aug. 3, 1988, Wilms revoked the air discharge permit issued to Texasgulf on Feb. 1, 1988 based on

Texasgulf's alleged submission of incorrect data in the permit application or the failure to advise that conditions under which the permit was issued had changed.

Texasgulf contested the penalty and the permit revocation. The settlement document states "... both parties believe that a settlement of all air permit and air act compliance issues now outstanding and unresolved would be in the interest of justice and consistent with a desire by the parties to concentrate on future efforts to ensure proper management of air emissions at Texasgulf's operations in North Carolina."

NRCD accused Texasgulf in its announcement of the \$5.7 million fine of altering its pollution control equipment without notifying DEM.

"Extensive discovery by DEM and Texasgulf has revealed no identifiable harm occurring to the environment or to human health as a result of the alleged violations," said Carpenter. He echoed NRCD's statement on resolving the issue with justice and fairness. "It is important the issue be resolved in a manner consistent

with justice and fairness," said Carpenter.

"We want to concentrate on the future and develop the spirit of cooperation we have with DEM," said Carpenter.

Carpenter said DEM acknowledges the settlement does not represent an admission of liability or guilt by Texasgulf for any violation alleged by the DEM.

"We believe we can now fully concentrate our efforts on present and future activities which actively demonstrate our commitment to assuring that our company is looked upon as the leader in corporate responsibility toward the environment. Let's continue our commitment for tomorrow," said Carpenter.

Last year, Texasgulf, environmentalists and state agencies worked at details of a discharge permit. They hailed the efforts on setting the permit requirements as a major step in cooperation among them to help reduce pollution. As part of the permit requirements,

See SETTLE, Page 5