

Business Index Continues To Rise

The level of business activity in North Carolina continued to rise at a modest rate in April for the fifth straight month, according to the Wachovia Business Index.

The April preliminary figure of 138.8 was 0.2 per cent higher than the previous month's revised level of 138.5 and 3.4 per cent above the index level of a year ago.

An increase of 1.8 per cent in checkbook spending as measured by bank debits plus a slight increase in non-agricultural employment of 0.1 per cent brought about the modest increase in the Index.

The adjusted unemployment rate dropped

0.4 per cent in April from 6.7 per cent to 6.3 per cent while the national rate remained unchanged at 7.5 per cent. The state's unadjusted rate for April was 6.0 per cent.

Employment in the durable goods sector rose 0.2 per cent from the previous month, led by an increase of 0.3 per cent in furniture. Nondurable goods employment rose 0.6 per cent, stimulated by increases of 0.7 per cent in textiles and 4.7 per cent in tobacco.

Major non-manufacturing sectors of trade, government and services remained stable from a month ago and were above their levels of a year ago. Construction employment was down 1.6 per cent from last month and was down 1.1 per cent from April, 1975.

Increase in car and truck sales contributed to the overall spending increase registered in April. Car sales rose 12.6 per cent, an increase of 32.1 per cent from a year ago. Truck sales were up 27.7 per cent in April for a rise of 44.3 per cent from April, 1975.

The Wachovia North Carolina Business Index measures the level of activity in North Carolina on a monthly basis. Using 1967 as the base for 100, it reflects indicators of employment, production and spending in the state's economy. All figures are seasonally adjusted for expected seasonal fluctuations. The Index has been published by Wachovia Bank and Trust Company for over a decade as a measure of the economy.

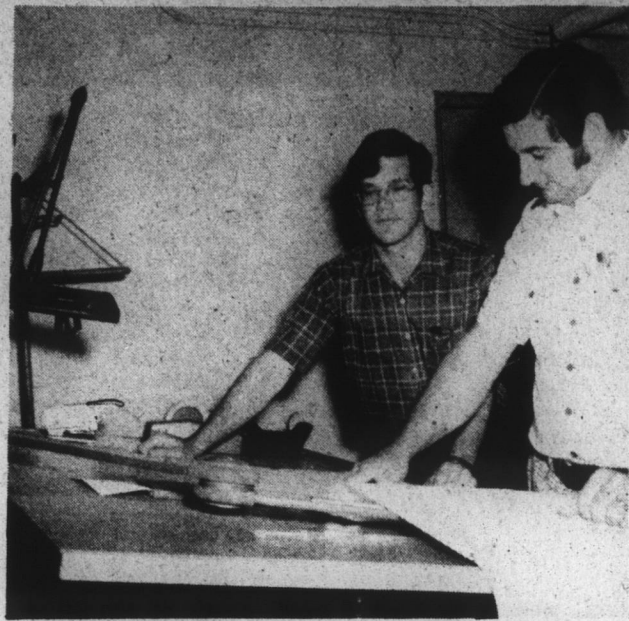
Talent Sought In Poetry Contest; Cash Prizes

A \$1,776 grand prize will be awarded in the Bicentennial Poetry Contest sponsored by the World of Poetry, a monthly newsletter for poets.

Poems of all styles and on any subject are eligible to compete for the grand prize or for 49 other cash or merchandise awards.

Says contest director Joseph Mellon: "We are looking for poetic talent of every kind and expect 1976 to be a year of exciting discoveries."

Rules and official entry forms are available by writing to: World of Poetry, 801 Portola Dr., Drawer 221, San Francisco, Ca. 94127. Contest deadline is July 31.



WORKING IN AREA—Steve T. Simmons is a summer trainee in the Edenton Area Office of the Soil Conservation Service. The N. C. State University student is pictured here with Harry Gibson, SCS engineer.

Conger Designing UNC Repertory Theater Costumes SCS Trainees Are Employed For Summer

GREENSBORO—Joseph H. Conger, III, of Edenton, is among the approximately 40 members of the summer repertory theater company at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

A member of the summer faculty at UNC-G, Conger is costume designer for "Stop the World, I Want to Get Off". He is also costume supervisor for the other two plays on the summer repertory schedule.

Conger, son of Mr. and Mrs. Conger, Jr., of West Gale Street, Edenton will be an instructor in design at the University of Montevallo in Montevallo, Ala., beginning in August.

The repertory theater will present three plays June 9-30 in Taylor Building theater on the UNC-G campus. They are "Tango," a bizarre comedy concerning anti-parental rebellion; "Stop the World, I Want to Get Off," a Broadway musical; and "H.M.S. Pinafore," the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta.

"Tango" will be performed June 9, 10, 15, 19, 22, 25, and 28. "Stop the World" will be presented June 11, 12, 17, 20, 23, 26 and 29. "H.M.S. Pinafore" is scheduled for June 14, 16, 18, 21, 24, 27 and 30.

Curtain time is 8:15 P.M. except for 2:15 P.M. matinees of "Stop the World" on June 20 and of "H.M.S. Pinafore" on June 27. For ticket information, contact the theater box office at (919) 379-5575 from 10 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., weekdays.

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Assessment Plan Stirs Controversy

The proposed assessment for member governments in Albemarle Regional Planning & Development Commission created a stir recently at a board meeting at Camp Coleman in Currituck County.

Ray Beckler, acting executive director, presented a request for \$50,562 which is 58 cents per capita based on a population of 103,000. The new request includes local match for law and order and aging.

Beckler explained that last year aging was not funded locally and law and order was paid direct to the association and not through the regional organization.

In the past ARPDC has assessed only for EFA which last year was \$16,500 and \$17,800 is requested in the new budget. In the past member counties have paid 24 cents per capita and town's eight cents per capita.

W. B. Gardner, Edenton town administrator and former ARPDC chairman, questioned the formula used by Beckler to arrive at the assessments. He said Edenton's share last year was \$362 while now \$745 is being asked. Beckler explained that it was done on a population basis.

The law and order assessment drew the greatest discussion. It was placed at \$21,737, up from \$13,500. Beckler explained that the planner had been dropped by the state and the salary was to be picked up by local funds.

R. L. Spivey, chairman of the law and order group, defended the need for the position, saying there was too much work for one man to do.

Pasquotank County representatives said it is doubtful that they would pay a \$10,237 assessment to ARPDC. Chowan's assessment under the new budget would be \$4,171.

The acting executive director was instructed to have a complete breakdown of the assessments to submit to member governments.

"We want them to be able to choose the one's (programs) they want to participate in," stated Chairman T. R. Spruill.

W. Speight Burrus, auditor, reported on progress being made to correct accounting problems. He was instructed that in the future he contact the board when he encounters problems that cannot be corrected through the executive director.

At another point the board passed a motion asking the treasurer for an accounting monthly of progress being made in the accounting procedures and other items mentioned in a management letter from Burrus.

John Bell recommended a policy regarding providing information to consultants. It stated that the ARPDC information is available and consultants are welcomed to come to the office and obtain it. A fee will be charged for copies.

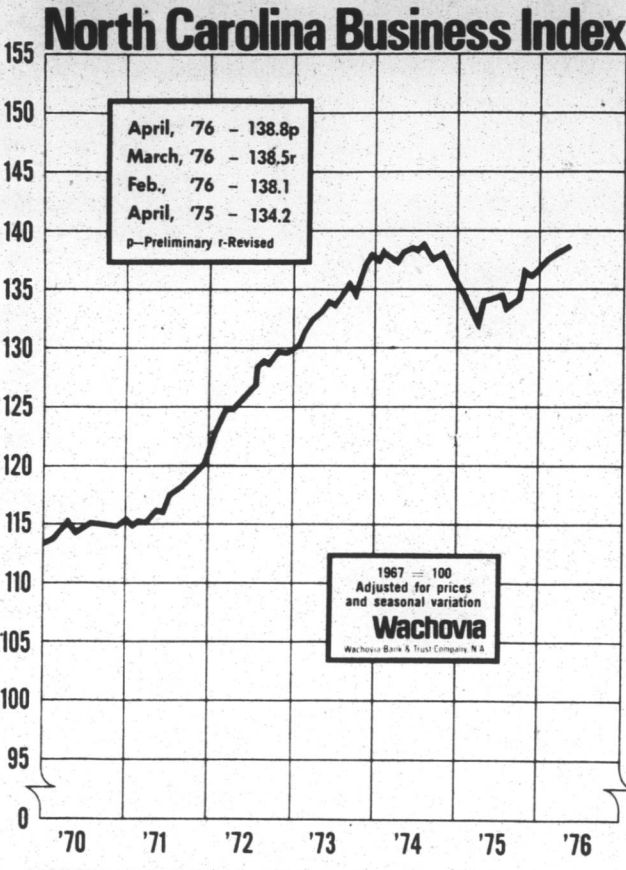
Bill Hartman reported that nearly 30 applications had been received for the executive director's position and screening will begin shortly.

Spruill said a committee will begin working on plans for the annual meeting next month and he named Hartman chairman of the nominating committee.

Babe Ruth League Penant Day Is Rescheduled

The Frenches Babe Ruth Penant Day has been rescheduled for Saturday, June 12 at 9:30 A.M. All Babe Ruth League players are eligible to compete in this event. Awards will be presented to first and second place winners in speed base running, accuracy throwing and fungo hitting. All Babe Ruth participants must be in uniform to compete.

Tennis lessons will be offered for all ages on June 14. Those interested must call the Recreation Department (482-8595) and sign up.



NORTH CAROLINA BUSINESS INDEX—The level of business activity in North Carolina continued to rise at a modest rate in April for the fifth straight month, according to the Wachovia Business Index.

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