

### Medical Meeting Jan. 6th

The monthly meeting of the Albemarle Area Medical Assistants was held January 6 at the Medical Village in Elizabeth City.

The meeting was called to order by President Alleene Thompson. Invocation by Chaplain Barbara Biggs. Minutes of the last meeting recorded by Penny Teague, Secretary, were read and approved.

A Nominating Committee for 1978 officers were chosen with Barbara Biggs serving as chairperson. Final plans were made for the Annual

Bosses' Night Banquet to be held January 22 at Anglers Cove.

An award will be presented to the doctor who will be chosen, Boss of the Year. Also, an award for Medical Assistant of the Year will be presented. The possibility of the AAMA sponsoring a seminar in November was discussed.

Benediction was given by President Thompson and the meeting was adjourned.

Refreshments were served.

### Federal Excise Tax Lowered 1%

Good news for New Year's — local telephone users will have some extra money thanks to a drop in the federal excise tax on telephone bills from 6 per cent to 5 per cent January 1, the Norfolk Carolina Company announced today.

Telephone customers in 1977 will save approximately \$275-million at the lower rate, compared to what they would have paid had the tax remained at 6 per cent, according to estimates by the U.S. Independent Telephone Association. Some \$51-million of that amount will be saved by customers of the independent telephone companies.

The association represents the nation's 1,600 non-Bell System telephone companies serving almost 28-million phones — one out of every five in the nation. Congress first imposed the tax on telephone bills

during World War I as a "temporary" measure. Although repealed briefly after the war, it was reinstated during the Depression and at one time rates were as high as 25 per cent on long distance calls and 15 per cent on local service.

Several years ago Congress acted to eliminate the tax, which stood at 10 per cent for almost 20 years. Now the rate drops 1 per cent each year until it is eliminated in 1982.

The tax has cost consumers billions of dollars and the Independent Telephone Association estimates the U.S. Treasury will receive almost \$2-billion from the levy in 1977.

On behalf of its customers the telephone industry fought the tax, calling it regressive and citing the unfairness of taxing a basic necessity — especially for the poor and elderly.

### Spotlight on HEALTH

#### A NEW POPULATION EXPLOSION

The head louse has recently re-emerged as a national health problem. Reports are coming in from the Center for Disease Control of the U.S. Public Health Service, family doctors and school nurses.

Pediculus capitis (the medical name for the parasite) is cropping up on heads of children — and in some adults as well, with little respect for social or economic status. Epidemics of head lice have caused the temporary closing of schools in many parts of the country.

A recent article in the Journal of the American Medical Association observes that head lice are encountered in preschool children of both sexes. However, "as soon as children attend school, the frequency decreases rapidly in males but continues in females," it reports. Persisting itching of the scalp is the most significant symptom, and this is often accompanied by infected scratch marks or what appears to be a rash. Head lice are communicated by shared hats, combs and brushes.

The condition is best diagnosed by a physician or nurse because the same symptoms can be indications of other conditions as well. The diagnosis can be confirmed with the aid of a magnifying glass when small silvery eggs (nits) are observed attached to individual hairs.

In checking the scalp, health personnel pay particular attention to the nape

of the neck and the area behind the ears—locations where the lice mainly live. Occasionally, they may migrate to the beard or eyebrows.



Most physicians prescribe Kwell, a shampoo containing gamma benzene hexachloride, for best results. It is simple and pleasant to use and usually one shampooing is sufficient. However, a second treatment may be recommended a week later to treat any newly hatched eggs.

All washable clothing, towels and bed linens should be machine washed, using the hot cycle. Contaminated clothing that is not washable should be dry-cleaned.

A special spray is available in pharmacies, for use on inanimate objects—contaminated mattresses, furniture, rugs and other household objects—to help prevent reinfestation. Called R&C Spray, it has demonstrated 100 per cent control in 48 hours of the adult and nymph (larva) stages of lice and equally total control of hatching eggs. It should never be used on the body, or on pets.

### IRS Office Answers Questions On Taxes

This column of questions and answers on federal tax matters is provided by the local office of the U. S. Internal Revenue Service and is published as a public service to taxpayers. The column answers questions most frequently asked by taxpayers.

Q—Several homeowners in my neighborhood applied for a grant from the city under our community development plan to enable them to restore their homes. Is there tax due for money received for this purpose?

A—Payment of grants made to further legislatively funded benefit programs for promotion of general welfare, such as grants to low-income

#### Energy News

Coal production is expected to increase from 603 million tons in 1974 to about 1040 million tons in 1985. However, production will not increase this fast if long-term utility demand is uncertain and if major environmental and transportation issues are not resolved.

The fuels used to generate electricity have shifted in recent years, with the nuclear share of electricity production growing sharply from 4.5 per cent in 1973 to about 8.6 per cent in 1975.

homeowners for the restoration of their homes, are not a part of gross income, but considered general welfare in nature and nontaxable. For more details contact the local agency responsible for your community development plan.

Q—I visited an IRS office, and requested an application for an employer identification number because I'm starting a new business. While there, I was given some information in the form of a kit concerning the tax obligations related to my type of business. Is this a special procedure of the IRS?

A—More than likely you received a set of materials called Your Business Tax Kit, Publication 454, that is compiled for each new business person who applies for an employer identification number. It is a routine but important procedure for the IRS to provide individual tax information to people starting a new business because each individual may require different tax information.

Usually, the package is presented by an IRS representative with a complete explanation either at an IRS office, at the

taxpayer's place of business, or at the taxpayer's home.

Q—Robbers broke into my home and stole several personal items valued at \$550. The items were not insured. How much of this loss can I claim as a deduction on my Federal income tax return?

A—A loss you endure due to theft of property held for personal use may be claimed as an itemized deduction on your Federal

income tax return. However, such a loss is deductible only to the extent that it exceeds \$100. This \$100 limitation applies to each instance of theft.

In addition, if requested by the IRS, you must be able to prove that you sustained a loss.

For more detailed information, see IRS Publication 547, Tax Information on Disasters, Casualty Losses and Thefts, available at IRS offices.

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### Insurance Request Less

RALEIGH — The N. C. Automobile Rate Administrative Office has reduced the amount of the rate increase request on private passenger auto liability insurance now pending in the State Insurance Department.

The requested average increase of 7.9 per cent was cut to 5 per cent. Rate Office General Manager Paul L. Mize said the filing was amended because his staff detected clerical errors in some company experience reports which were filed with the Insurance Department last July. The amendment also includes six months of more recent experience than the original filing.

Mize said, "We are gratified that we are able to amend the 1976 filing to

request a smaller increase in private passenger automobile liability insurance rates. We want our filing to represent as accurately as possible a fair and proper rate level. We hope that the commissioner will share our view that this is a proper analysis of the rate need.

"The commissioner's recent statement that the companies made a 5 per cent operating profit in 1975 on private passenger automobile insurance does not mean that increased rates are unnecessary for the future. As a matter of fact, the commissioner's 13.4 per cent auto liability rate reduction order now pending before the Supreme Court obviously would force the companies to operate at a substantial loss on auto insurance.

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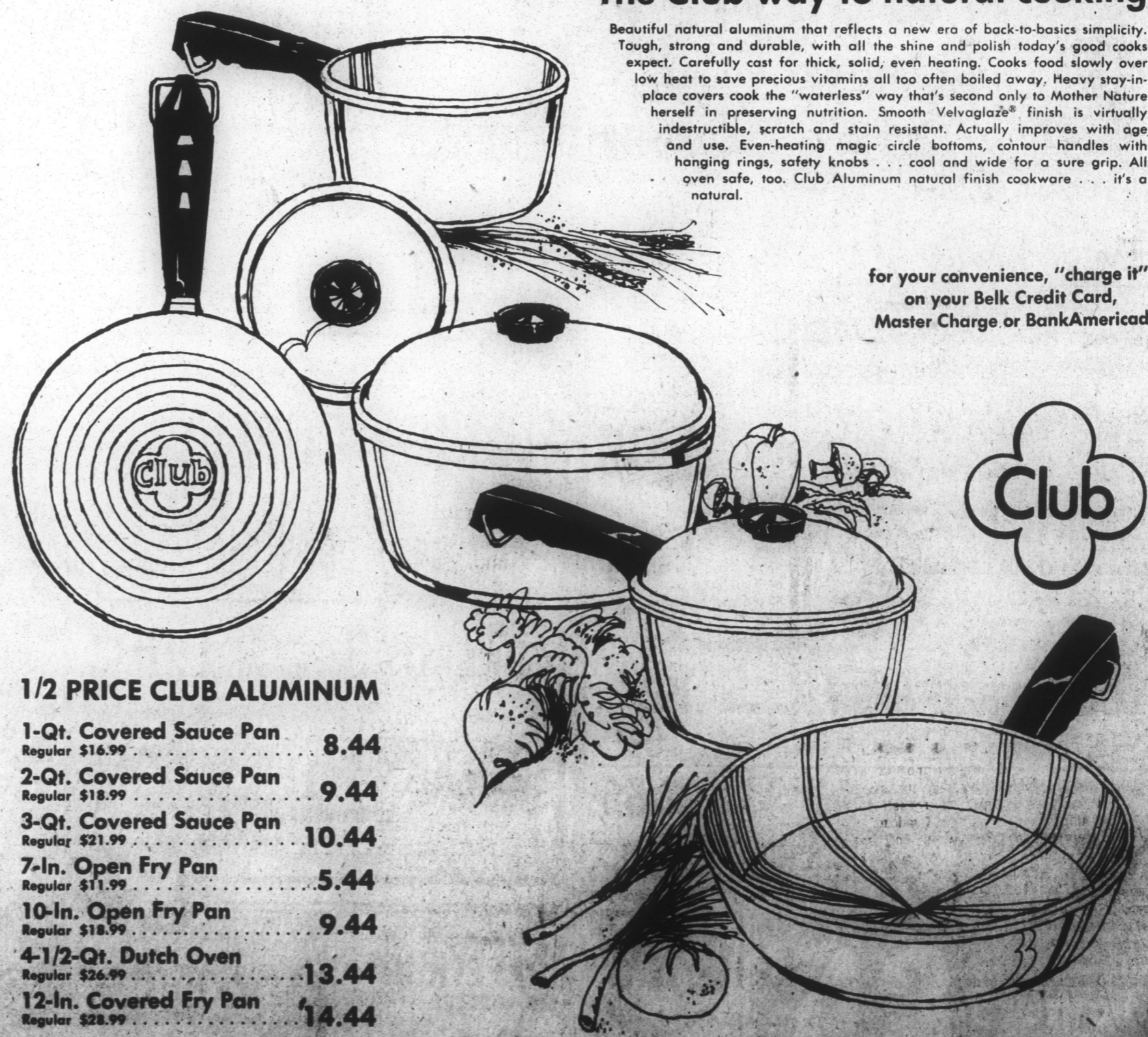
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