



**PROJECT CONTRACTS SIGNED** — Contracts long awaited construction of a new Chowan County court and detention facility were officially signed Tuesday night. At right is N.J. George, chairman of the county commission. Seated at left is Walter G. Baker, seated left, represented Barnhill Contracting Company, the general contractor. Standing are Everette Fauber, Jr., architect, and James Burgess, project superintendent.

**Public Parade**

**Hats Off!**

The skill of area firemen has been given the acid test in the last couple of weeks. In each instance, they came out with exceptionally high marks.

First, Edenton Fire Department masterfully contained an early evening fire which destroyed the millwork building of M.G. Brown Company adjacent to Filberts Creek.

Secondly, the Hertford Fire Department scored high Tuesday in containing a fire which destroyed Winslow Oil Company and other properties.

In each instance, mutual aid played a major role in the successes and to minimize loss. This is commendable and shows that need is not limited nor hampered by county lines.

If the same spirit of cooperation and concern can become the creed of other professionals, then the good life along the Public Parade and throughout Northeastern North Carolina can be made better. The good is never so that it cannot become the best!

Our hats are off to the firemen and support personnel who make such a tremendous contribution to the area.

**Looking Ahead**

Farmers along the Public Parade and throughout Tar Heelia will be looking ahead for something better in 1978. The last crop year left a lot to be desired in most quarters.

But in looking ahead they can draw on the experience of the past. Here is a summary of the 1977 crop highlights which may open some old wounds but, nevertheless, can act as a starting point for the future:

- Flue-cured tobacco production down 19 per cent from 1976.
- Burley tobacco up 15 per cent.
- Corn down 44 per cent.
- Peanuts down 4 per cent.
- Cotton down 17 per cent.
- Soybeans up to 26 per cent.

The largest single factor affecting last year's crops, according to N.C. State University extension experts, was the summer drought. Corn was hit a double blow—dry weather and aflatoxin.

There are some sharp contrasts between state and national figures. The U.S. cotton crop, for example, was 31 per cent larger than in the previous year. National corn production was up 2 per cent compared to North Carolina's big decline. Soybeans were up 33 per cent in the U.S.

**From The State**

Expenditures from the State Public School Fund totaled over \$816-million during the 1976-77 school year, according to figures compiled for the annual audit report of the State Public School Fund. The total represented a 10.9 per cent increase in spending over the 1975-76 school year.

The audit report of the State Public School Fund included only state contributions to the operation of North Carolina's public schools. It does not include

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**Board To Hand Down Decision**

Eastern Carolina Health Systems Agency's board was expected to make a decision Wednesday night on whether or not to sanction the application of Northeastern Rural Health Development Association to obtain federal funds for establishment of satellite health clinics in the Albemarle Area.

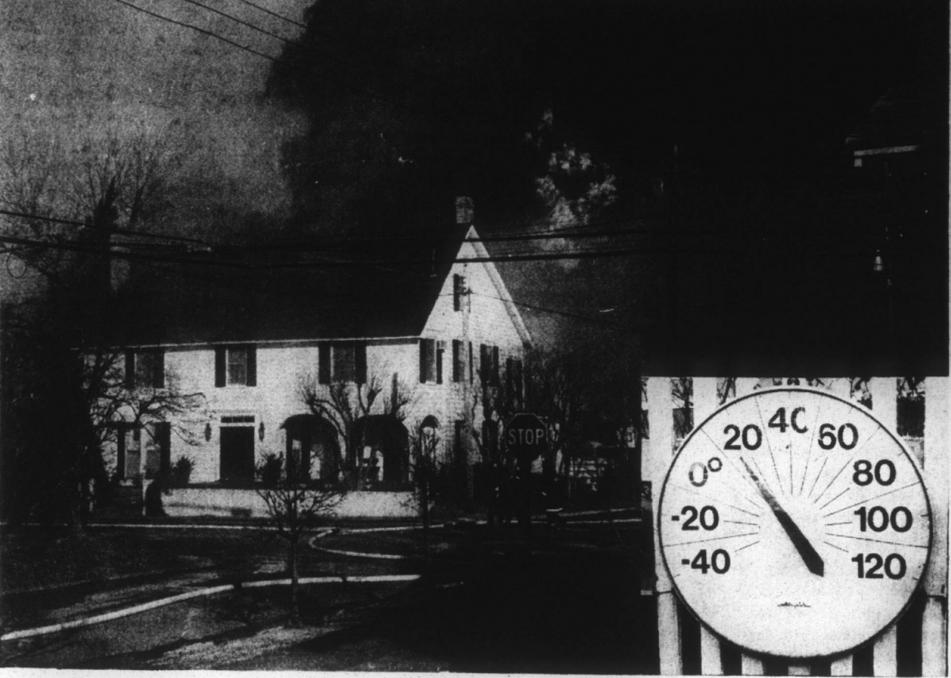
The board's action will follow a recommendation by the Project Review Committee which held a public hearing in Hertford last Thursday night. Mrs. Ruth Cherry, committee chairman, said the committee received "abundant" information to make a recommendation.

NRHDA seeks to establish satellite health clinics in Bertie, Tyrrell and southern Gates-northern Perquimans counties.

Some 300 people attended the hearing which saw scores of people in the area walk to the mike and support the application, primarily on the basis of the need. Only a few, primarily providers an Ahoskie hospital administrators, an Ahoskie physician, two Edenton pharmacists, two county commissioners and a hopeful, and the head of an existing Gates County project—spoke in opposition.

John Blanton, administrator of Roanoke-Chowan Hospital in Ahoskie, said the plan would

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**HERTFORD FIRE** — Fire from fuel tanks of Winslow Oil Company threatened the T. Erie Haste, Jr., residence most of the day Tuesday, destroying the garage and two vehicles. About 125 firemen from throughout the area fought the blaze in frigid weather, as evidenced by the insert. These pictures were taken at 9:30 A.M., an hour and a half after explosion rocked the area. (Staff Photos by Amburn).

**Disaster Strikes Hertford Firm**

By L.F. Amburn, Jr.

HERTFORD — It was 12noon Wednesday, some 28 hours after an explosion set off a fire here which probably will be labeled one of the worst in the history of Northeastern North Carolina. But there were many counting their

blessings and praising fire-fighters who "put their attack together like a well designed machine" to keep damage from being many times greater.

Mr. and Mrs. T. Erie Haste, Jr., who lived in a handsome Colonial home at the intersection of Grubb Street and Covenant Garden, were securing the remains of their dwelling. Fire which completely destroyed Winslow Oil Company, just 15 or so feet from their house, and Hertford Feed & Seed Company, ate up their garage, two vehicles and did lesser damage to the back of the house.

Fire Chief Charlie Skinner was surveying the site which was not fully contained well into the night where temperatures were near 15 degrees. He talked freely with newsmen on the scene and recounted how his crew of volunteers were joined by some 125 others from numerous departments who contained the blaze by pouring millions of gallons of water on superheated fuel.

He expressed concern over a half a dozen people who were injured, none seriously, as gasoline tanks exploded hurling debris high into the air and falling like rain in the general neighborhood. Chief Frank White of the Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department was among those injured by a blast about 2:40 P.M. Tuesday.

Chief White was standing across the street from the fire when the top of a steel tank blew into the air, hit in the Haste yard, struck a truck and then fell across him. The steel, doubled by the blast, barely missed Jim (Catfish) Hunter, one of the best known names in professional baseball who resides near here in Perquimans County.

Fire Chief Luther C. Parks and 10 men, armed with a local pumper, responded to a call of mutual aid just minutes after the alarm was sounded. They stayed on the site well into the night and returned Wednesday morning to

assist. Louis Craddock of Edenton, an employee of Winslow Oil Company, was one of three people who were caught in a warehouse when the explosion occurred. They jumped into the frigid Perquimans River to get to safety.

At one time there was a report that the fire had spread across the street to Reid Oil Company, but this was not the case. It was masterfully contained within the block.

The fire started as two tankers were being unloaded at Winslow Oil Company and employees were reporting for work. Some \$600,000 in records of accounts receivables were destroyed along with "thousands of gallons of product", trucks, tanks and other equipment.

One person on the scene Wednesday morning described it as "instant urban renewal."

The community responded quickly to provide food, hot beverage, and warm "break" sites for firemen.

Except for the curious who visited the scene, which looked like it had been struck by a tremendous ice storm, activity in downtown appeared to have returned to normal.

**Fees Raised**

Chowan County commissioners Monday agreed to double the retainer paid the county attorney. Merrill Evans, Jr., was appointed to the post during a reorganization of the board in December.

Commissioner J.D. Peele said Evans had agreed to serve with a retainer of \$100 per month. John W. Graham, who had served in the capacity for a number of years, was paid \$50 per month.

Peele and Chairman N.J. George had "a lengthy" conversation with Evans and recommended the increased retainer to the board. It is expected that Evans will take on some of the work now done for departments by fee attorneys.

In a departure from past procedures, Rev. George Cooke of Ballard's Bridge Baptist Church had been asked by Chairman George to have a brief devotional prior to the calling of the meeting to order. Mr. Cooke said the citizens of the county owe a debt of gratitude to commissioners and others who give their time for public service.

There were 45 agenda items, many of them for the information of board members, yet the meeting lasted less than an hour and a half. During the period, Bryon Kehayes was recommended for appointment to the board of Chowan Hospital and

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**School Gets \$4,164 Grant**

"The upgrading of services to that segment of the school population who are currently or might eventually be failing, not only in school, but possibly in society as well, will now be possible," according to Clara Boswell, director of the Alternative School recently established in the basement of Ernest A. Swain Elementary School.

Mrs. Boswell's statement was made in reference to a \$4,165 grant received this week by Chowan County commissioners from the Community-Based Alternative Division of the N.C. Department of Human Resources for use in the Edenton-Chowan Alternative School program.

"This money, along with the 20 per cent matching local funds

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**GRANT RECEIVED** — Chowan County this week received an additional grant for a newly organized Alternative School program in Edenton-Chowan Schools. Left to right are: Mrs. Clara Boswell, Mack Livesay, N.J. George and Dr. John Dunn.

**Symposium To Feature Experts**

The Edenton Symposium will feature nine lectures by experts in their fields on architecture, furnishings, history and restoration.

There will be tours, wine tasting, 18th Century music, a play about piracy in North Carolina during the early 1700's, two luncheons and a barbecued pig on the shores of the Albemarle Sound.

The dates for this event are April 6 and April 7.

Tickets for this special two-day event are \$50. For reservations and-or additional information please write: Symposium Information Historic Edenton, Inc.

**School Board Race Develops**

The Chowan County Board of Elections was busy this week as candidates filed for re-election and a race developed for the Fourth Township seat on Edenton-Chowan Board of Education.

Mrs. Gwen VanDuyn, Route 2, Windsor Woods, filed for the board of education seat being vacated by Morris Small. Before the day was out, Cecil W. Fry, Route 2, Country Club Drive, filed for the same position.

This is the only race to develop during the first days of filing, according to Mrs. Corrine F. Thorud, supervisor of elections.

Dr. J.H. Horton, Paradise Road in the First Township, filed

Tuesday for re-election to a six-year term on the school board. This will be the last term he will be able to serve.

C.A. Phillips, former chairman, filed for re-election to Chowan County Board of Commissioners from Fourth Township. Also seeking a second four-year term on the board is J.D. Peele of the Second Township.

Also, Rep. Vernon G. James of Pasquotank County told The Chowan Herald Tuesday he would be a candidate for re-election to the N.C. General Assembly.

Fry, until his recent resignation for health reasons, had been

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J.D. Peele



Cecil W. Fry



Rep. Vernon G. James



Mrs. Gwen VanDuyn