

Appeals Court Reverses Vepco Ruling

Noted And Passed

The Edenton Aces begin the 1980 grid campaign Friday night at Elizabeth City. The Aces take on arch rival Northeastern in what has become the game of games.

Special note should be made of the kickoff from this game — 7:30 o'clock. The Aces on September 13 will host Perquimans. Kickoff is 8 o'clock.

If you show up in Elizabeth City on Friday night, at 8 o'clock you may miss a quarter of the contest. Remember, this game only, kickoff at 7:30 o'clock. (Ethel, we've tried!)

Bad economic conditions along the Public Parade and throughout the country didn't keep "The Lost Colony" at Manteo from experiencing a 15 per cent increase in attendance. The 40th anniversary season drew 90,000 customers to a superb production that had the critics raving.

We have not seen the results of other outdoor dramas in Tar Heels, but judging from the Outer Banks attendance good reports are expected.

People are going to take a vacation, no matter what. They are putting their sights more and more on sites with historical significance. The best there is right along the Public Parade, yet repeated efforts have failed to produce whatever is needed to slow them down between New Bern and Williamsburg, or Bath and Manteo.

Sure, adequate lodging and restaurants would help. This is not a panacea. There is a string somewhere among us which must be pulled. First it must be found from past experiences there will be adequate hands to do the pulling. Ninety thousand people in not a mere season, but an entire year, through Historic Edenton, Inc., would do wonders to the local economy as well as for those leaving the smokeless dollars behind.

Consumer Woes

There is no good news this week for consumers along the Public Parade. The same day Vepco announced a 100 per cent increase in wholesale fuel charge, Carolina Telephone Company filed a \$25.5-million rate increase request with the N. C. Utilities Commission.

Vepco's announcement came hard upon the company's public report that it has, at last, all four of its nuclear generating units in operation. There are at least two things to keep in mind. First, the wholesale fuel charge reflects fuel costs incurred two months earlier (not present costs); and second, that while Vepco does at the moment have four nukes on line, it only has one operating at or near full capacity.

Edenton, like other municipalities buying electricity from Vepco for resale, passes the fuel charge on the customers. So, the consumers are being placed in another bind after a few months of relief.

The Carolina Telephone request is a little different, although the end result is the same. While we will be paying a little more for

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Virginia Electric and Power Company won a round in the N.C. Court of Appeals Tuesday and consumer advocates will ask the Supreme Court to review the decision.

The decision shot down an order by the State Utilities Commission that Vepco refund \$1.6-million to its North Carolina customers and reduce its fuel-adjustment rate. Vepco said the amount involved at this time is near \$6-million.

The court ruled that the utilities commission lacked authority to consider the company's efficiency

when deciding fuel-adjustment rate cases. Management officials may be considered only during general rate cases, the court said.

In August, 1979, the commission ordered Vepco to make refunds for bill payments that the company collected between February, 1979, and July, 1979, and to reduce its fuel-adjustment charge by about \$4.1-million a year.

Vepco has been allowed to continue to collect the higher charges while the case is on appeal. Therefore, the decision will

have no immediate effect on rates for Vepco's customers in 23 Northeastern North Carolina counties.

The decision was also a defeat for the Public Staff of the utilities commission, Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., and Operation Overcharge. The state body submitted the order after an exhaustive investigation of Vepco, ordered by Gov. Hunt at the insistence of Operation Overcharge, a lay group seeking lower electric rates.

Other matters regarding Vepco's operation and charges are

pending.

William W. Berry, Vepco president, issued a statement which noted:

"It is important for our customers in North Carolina to understand that Vepco is addressing the issues that were before the commission through aggressive management of its day-to-day and long-term operations.

"Vepco is committed to continuing its efforts to hold down the cost of electricity by improving

the efficiency of its generating units with continued conversion of units that burn expensive oil to coal, and through operating and maintenance improvement programs at both fossil and nuclear power stations.

"I am confident that these programs will contribute to the economic vitality of Northeastern North Carolina by providing adequate energy supplies at reasonable costs. This unquestionably remains the goal of both Vepco and state officials."

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NO LONGER OPERATING — According to a report, low enrollment forced Chowan Academy to close its doors. The board of directors of the private school decided a week ago that at least 100 students were needed to operate. Only 76, however, were enrolled at that time.

Chowan Academy Is Closed

Citing insufficient enrollment to continue operation, the Chowan Academy Board of Directors voted August 27 to close the school down. It was one of two private schools operating in Chowan County.

Hertford attorney James D. Singletary, representing the academy, said he had just begun sifting through the mass of paper work and was unable to shed much light on the problem except to say that the academy would not be reopening.

He said about 76 students were enrolled, and that the board of directors felt at least 100 students were needed for the school to operate. Singletary said it was his

opinion that the faltering economy during the previous year had left parents unable to meet the tuition costs.

The attorney declined to speculate on the academy's financial status before giving it a thorough study.

Most of the teachers that had been contracted would be eligible for unemployment compensation, he stated.

Earlier, Thomas Gregory of Hertford, former headmaster, said staff members and directors had been cautioned not to make any disclosures about the matter.

Singletary reported information on the closing would be available after he has had a chance to review the situation.

Annual Meeting Set By FLBA

The annual meeting of the Federal Land Bank Association of Ahoskie is to be held on September 11 at 8 P.M. at the Ahoskie High School.

The Federal Land Bank Association is a completely farmer owned cooperative that serves farmers and ranchers with long-term credit in the following counties in Northeastern North Carolina: Hertford, Bertie, Northampton, Gates, Pasquotank,

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Unemployment 8.1 Per Cent

Unemployment in Chowan County reached 8.1 per cent in July, up from 6.9 per cent in June but a long way from 23.7 per cent experienced last month in Caldwell County.

The state rate of unemployment in July was 8.1 per cent, only slightly higher than the national unadjusted rate of 7.9 per cent.

Unemployment figures for other Albemarle Area counties for July are as follows:

Camden, 7.7; Currituck, 5.6; Dare, 3.3; Gates, 8.2; Hyde, 5.9; Pasquotank, 8.6; Perquimans, 8.6; Tyrrell, 10.2; and Washington, 6.7.

The high rate of joblessness in counties such as Caldwell is the result of seasonal temporary layoffs in the furniture industry, according to the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina.

Seasonal layoffs in the textile and apparel industries, summer job seekers unable to find employment, and more layoffs, shutdowns and reduced work schedules at large manufacturing plants across the state contributed to higher unemployment in July than June in 76 of the state's 100 counties.

For Vocational Teachers

Supplement Proposal Tabled

Action on a salary supplement for vocational education teachers was tabled by the Edenton-Chowan Board of Education Tuesday night until a study has been made of all teacher supplements, as requested by the Chowan County commissioners.

The vocational teacher supplement, said Dr. John Dunn, superintendent, is part of the salary package for all school personnel approved by the 1980 General Assembly. It would mean an additional \$35 monthly for vocational teachers in positions that require regular work beyond the normal school program.

Dr. Dunn explained that for a number of years, vocational teachers had been earning more money than regular classroom teachers. Those in vocational education, he said, have argued that without either a supplement or additional salary increment, they would not be receiving the same percentage of pay increase as other teachers.

Under the proposal, vocational teachers would have to work a minimum of 3½ additional hours per month to qualify for the supplement. The voluntary program could mean \$350 more per year for each participating staff member.

Earlier in the meeting, Gil Burroughs, an instructor at John A. Holmes High School, en-

Open House Set

Open House September 14, celebrating the 40th Anniversary of mobilization of the Edenton Unit of the National Guard is looking more impressive with each passing day. Old soldiers making trips in excess of 1,000 miles to participate.

Old uniforms from as faraway as Virginia, heavy equipment from Ft. Bragg, and Ahoskie, will be on hand, plus numerous items from World War I and World War II both American and foreign.

Should anyone have any old uniforms or equipment they would like to share with others during open house at the Edenton Armory, please contact PSG Carroll W. Jones at 482-2521 or 482-4305 or SSG Albert C. Everson at 482-8138 or 338-2174.

"Great care and security will be provided, and your thoughtfulness will be appreciated as well as enjoyed by others," it was stated.

couraged the board not to adopt the package, saying "it would have a serious impact on the morale of classroom teachers", specifically pointing out those that act as advisors to various school organizations and take on extra responsibilities without compensation.

"It is basically a put-down on the classroom teacher", he commented.

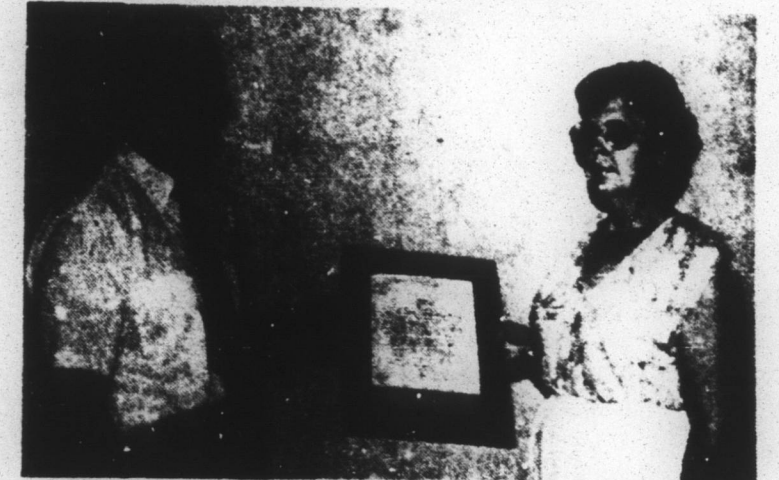
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Gross Sales Noted

Chowan County recorded gross retail sales in June totaling \$4,299,037, according to statistics recently released by the State Department of Revenue. Gross sales in North Carolina for the same period neared \$3-billion.

Gross retail sales in other Albemarle Area Counties included:

Camden, \$819,369; Currituck, \$4,276,348; Dare, \$14,405,952; Gates, \$1,501,891; Hyde, \$1,771,992; Pasquotank, \$13,699,698; Perquimans, \$2,416,040; Tyrrell, \$1,294,443; and Washington, \$5,402,181.



LATE COMMISSIONER HONORED — The efforts and achievements of the late Lester T. Copeland, Chowan County Commissioner representing the Third Township, were cited in a resolution recently adopted by the Chowan County Democratic Party. Last week a framed copy of the document was presented to Mrs. Copeland by county party chairman N.J. George.

E. L. Hollowell Draws Praise

MURFREESBORO — E.L. Hollowell, retired Edenton industrial executive, was singled out for praise here Monday at the \$2.7-million Jesse Helms Physical Education Center at Chowan College was dedicated. U.S. Sen. Harry F. Byrd, Jr., of Virginia delivered the dedicatory address and Sen. Helms was humbled by the tribute.

Dr. Bruce E. Whitaker, college president, said the college relies heavily on Hollowell "when we head for success in any program." Hollowell is a member of the board of trustees and headed the "Accomplishing Our Mission" program which was given a healthy boost by a \$500,000 anonymous contribution. One of the conditions of the matching grant was that the facility bear Helms' name.

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U. S. 17 Upgrading Sought

RALEIGH — Leaders from all along the 300 mile stretch of U.S. Highway 17 through Eastern North Carolina visited with Gov. Hunt Friday to continue their efforts to get their highway four lanes along its entire route.

The group met with Governor Jim Hunt in the old House Chambers in the State Capitol Building at 1:30 P.M.

"We thanked the governor for the recent action by his Administration to call for a study to determine the feasibility of bringing our highway up to interstate standards," William H. (Bill) Page of Washington, president of the Highway 17 Transportation Association in North Carolina, said, "and we asked him to expedite the study in any way he could."

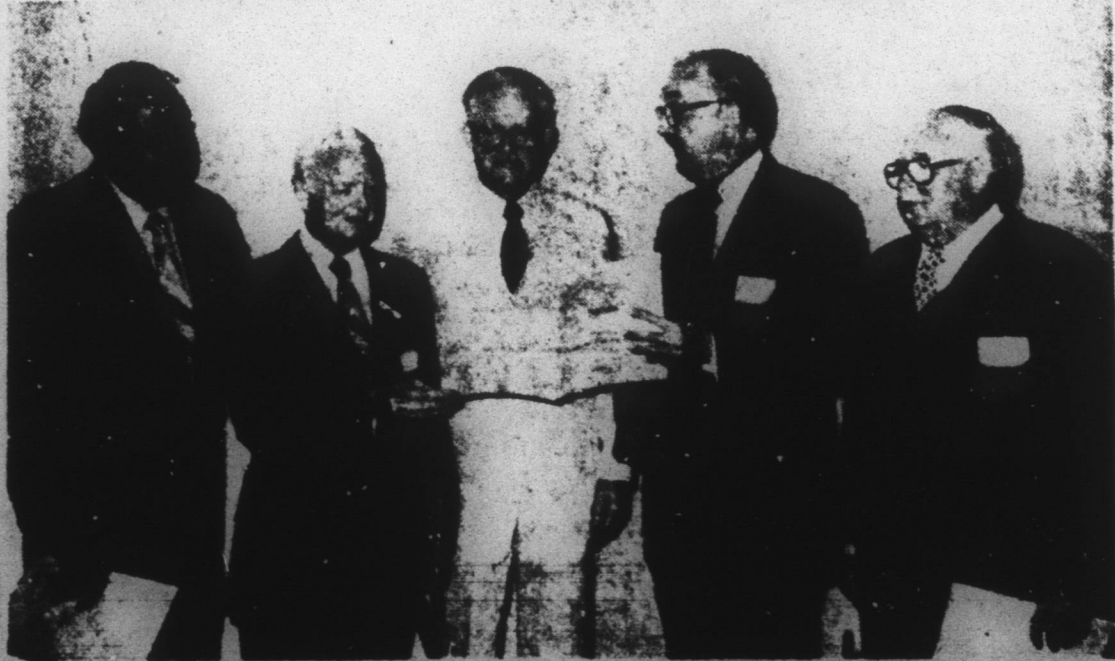
On August 7 at its meeting conducted in Washington, the Board of Transportation approved

a recommendation for the study presented to them by their Chairman, secretary of Transportation Tom Bradshaw.

Page praised the Board of Transportation for the action and said it continued interest expressed previously by both Governor Hunt and Secretary Bradshaw to upgrade the highway.

"Highway 17 is becoming more important every day," Page pointed out. "Our tourism is growing in this state and the most successful tourism since the Bicentennial has been historical tourism," he pointed out. "Deep Eastern North Carolina is loaded with history and we need to capitalize on it to build our economy," he said.

Page said the four laning of 17 would also spur industrial development throughout the entire region.



DEDICATION PRINCIPALS — U. S. Sen. Jesse Helms, second from right, was the center of attraction at Chowan College Monday when an athletic complex was dedicated in his honor. E. L. Hollowell of Edenton, right, headed the

\$2.7-million funds campaign. Others are, from the left, State Sen. J. J. (Monk) Harrington of Lewiston; U. S. Sen. Harry F. Byrd, Jr., of Virginia; and Dr. Bruce Whitaker, college president.