

Conference Champs Face Southern Nash, Friday

The Big Orange

Does it seem like every time you're late for work you get stuck behind a school bus? It's not just your imagination.

A five-year comparison of the total number of school buses in operation (regular and exceptional children) shows a gradual increase from 11,447 in 1975-76 to 12,208 in 1979-80. The statistic is one of many compiled from county transportation supervisor's annual reports to the Office of Controller, State Board of Education.

Although there were more school buses on the road last year, they were transporting more than 1,500 fewer students than the previous year. During 1979-80, some 741,188 pupils were transported to and from school each day - 17,113 of them (2.3 per cent) by contract transportation. Sixty-nine per cent of the total public school enrollment was transported to school last year; 73 per cent of all transported pupils were of the elementary school level. The average bus had a seating capacity for 54 pupils and a passenger capacity for 67 students.

All school buses covered almost 102 million miles last year, traveling 564,847 miles daily. The average bus traveled 8,267

The total cost of school transportation was more than \$65-million including contract transportation and replacement buses in 1979-80. The total cost of contract transportation was more than \$4-million. The average cost of transportation by school bus, including bus replacements, was almost \$5-thousand per bus for the 1979-80 school year, \$27.59 per bus per day and \$84.36 per pupil for the school year.

Real 'Hostages'

Currituck Outer Banks are not nearly as popular as the area to the south in Dare County. As things are now going it could be that taxpayers in Currituck County wish the thin strip between the south and the Atlantic would just go away.

Access has always been a problem. It was getting better for a time. Now the entire problem of access is being overshadowed by a \$5-million civil lawsuit.

Things are bound to get worse before they get any better. And most of it is not the fault of those who stand to lose the most - the "hostages" who reside on the mainland and pick up the tax bill.

Little by little progress appeared to be made on the access matter. In July, 13 families out on the Currituck Outer Banks were granted access across the Back Bay Wildlife Refuge by the U.S. Congress. Sen. Jesse Helms and Rep. Walter Jones sponsored legislation which caused the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allow passage through the refuge under certain conditions.

At the same time, the N.C. Department of Transportation has been at work on a highway and/or ferry plan for a southern access. The big problem encountered centers around private ownership, including large parcels owned by environmentalists or organizations.

Private developers have cried "foul" for a long time. Recently one Coastland Corporation of Virginia Beach, Va. - backed up the cries with a \$5-million damage suit against Currituck County. A new federal law provides the basis for such action.

Just prior to the suit, however, the feds announced intentions to purchase the Currituck Outer Banks. Some \$100-million is involved. The N.C. Coastal Resources Commission and Marine Science Council recommended the action.

The federal purchase is in the best interests of all the citizens of Currituck County. Any other way the county goes it will cost more to provide services to the developed property than is returned in taxes. Therefore, the taxpayers are the real "hostages".

What effect the Coastland suit will have on the federal proposal is not known.

For years and years the folk living on the Currituck Outer Banks have traveled across the beach to the Tidewater area of Virginia, across an area known as Back Bay Wildlife Refuge. These citizens have gone to the Norfolk area to shop, to get medical at-

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CHAMPIONSHIP GAME — Staff photographer Luke Amburn captured some of the action at last Friday night's Edenton Aces - Ahoskie Cougars grid contest in which the Aces took the Northeastern 3-A Conference championship with their 25-0 victory. In the left photo, fullback Henry Drew is shown grinding out yard-



dage against Ahoskie. At right, assistant coaches Randy Hollowell, left, and Tom Bass, right, are shown with head coach Jimmy Addison celebrating the big win. This Friday night, the Aces will host Southern Nash High School.

The Edenton Aces became the Northeastern 3-A Conference champions last Friday with their 25-0 victory over the Ahoskie Cougars. The Aces will host Southern Nash High School this Friday night in the first game of the play-off series.

The Aces gained a 3-0 lead prior to halftime when Thomas White booted a 23-yard field goal. Neither team was able to get more than one first down in the first half of the contest.

Ahoskie fumbled early in the third quarter to give the Aces excellent field position on the Cougars' 17 yard line.

On third down, quarterback Steve Hoiley passed to Thomas White, who made a diving catch to put the Aces on the one. Henry Drew bulled his way in to score and White kicked the extra point for a 10-0 lead.

The Cougars were unable to

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Mayor Casts Deciding Vote; Rezoning Denied

A petition from developers Earnhardt and Burroughs to rezone 20 acres south of U.S. 17 on N.C. 32 from residential to shopping center was again denied by the Edenton Town Council, Tuesday night, following a heavily attended public meeting on the matter. The council was split 3 to 3 on the issue with Mayor Roy L. Harrell casting the deciding vote.

Favoring the change in zoning were councilmen Willis Privott, Allen Hornthal and J. P. Ricks. The motion was opposed by councilmen Gil Burroughs, W. H. Hollowell and Steve Hampton.

At the opening of the public meeting, Mrs. Judy Earnhardt, widow of the late W. J. P. Earnhardt, Jr., pointed out that a 1968 long-range planning study designated the site in question as

being best suited for commercial development and that it had retained that designation throughout each five year update.

Also she referred to a 1980 ARPDC landuse survey that supported commercial development of the bypass and showed that citizens in general want more shopping facilities in the Edenton area. Support for commercial development, Mrs. Earnhardt said, was also shown in a Chamber of Commerce questionnaire circulated this year.

Ralph Parrish, zoning administrator, reported that at the September 3 meeting of the Planning Board, the petition was voted down by a 3 to 1 margin.

Joe Lee, a local businessman, told the gathering that he had served as planning board chairman for several years, had

discussed the matter at length and in the past had not favored a shopping center at that location. However, he said he now supports the idea because of increased employment opportunities, additional tax revenues and expanded shopping facilities that could draw more people to Edenton.

Erwin Griffin, a property owner adjacent to the site, pointed out the several vacancies in downtown Edenton as evidence that the community could not keep another shopping center alive.

Michael J. McArthur, a county resident, cited the need for additional motel facilities to accommodate a growing tourist industry. He said that as a Highway Patrolman, he had encountered a large number of people who wanted to stay in Edenton but were unable to find adequate lodging.

Burce Creekmore of radio station WCDJ observed that since the petition was last brought before the Town Council when a representative of the K-Mart Corporation and the J. J. Cretien Co., a development firm, was present, K-Mart has built and is preparing to open a store in Elizabeth City. He said the store employed about 80 persons and that it would "be interesting" to see how many of those employees were from Edenton.

Creekmore added that K-Mart must be expecting a good draw locally because of the advertising

campaign that will be held in Edenton prior to the grand opening.

Mayor Harrell asked developer Bernard P. Burroughs if he had ever received from K-Mart, on its letterhead, a letter indicating the company's intent to locate here.

Burroughs replied that he "would be happy to answer the question in private or in executive session". He added that he was not authorized to speak for either K-Mart or J. J. Cretien Co.

Councilman Ricks commented that the intersection of U.S. 17 and N.C. 32 is a "classic example of business property" too noisy for residential development. He said passing tourists see "a couple of signs" but have little incentive to

pull off the bypass to visit Edenton unless its their destination in the first place.

Councilman Hornthal, in making the motion to rezone the tract, said his opinion remained the same, that competition cannot be legislated.

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Armed Robbery Trial Proceeds

The Superior Court trial of George Lee Revell, charged with the August 11 armed robbery of the Fast Fare on Broad Street, entered its second day of testimony Wednesday, amid stepped-up security precautions imposed by Judge David E. Reid after local officers received a tip concerning a possible violent confrontation in the courtroom.

Shortly after lunch recess Tuesday, Judge Reid excused the panel of 12 jurors and informed persons in the courtroom of the situation.

"It has been brought to my attention that someone in the courtroom besides an officer may be carrying a gun," he stated. "For that reason, I am asking everyone to leave the courtroom. Those wishing to return will be searched before entering."

Each of the 22 spectators present returned after being frisked. Police Chief J. D. Parrish and Sheriff Troy Toppin said two

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Wayne K. Blair

Insurance Fraud Suspect Arrested

Wayne K. Blair of Blair Funeral Home in Edenton has been indicted by the Chowan County Grand Jury on a number of charges relating to life insurance fraud. District Attorney Thomas S. Watts reported that Blair was arrested by officers of the Edenton Police Department Monday afternoon and was released under \$25,000 secured bond.

His arrest was the result of an investigation conducted by Eugene Hartzell, an investigator with the N.C. Department of Insurance, the District Attorney's office, and Sheriff Troy Toppin.

Blair is charged with false pretense, making a false insurance application, preparing a false insurance claim, preparing a false insurance claim certificate and two counts of common law forgery.

Watts told a reporter the claims were made on a life and accidental death policy issued to a deceased or possibly fictitious person. An irregularity was brought to the attention of the Department of Insurance by the United Family Life Insurance Company of Atlanta, Ga.

Officers Investigate Shooting Incident

An investigation into the shooting of a Hobbsville man last Friday night is in currently underway by the Chowan County Sheriff's Department.

According to Deputy Melvin Evans, Milton Ulysses Leach, 32, underwent emergency surgery at Norfolk General Hospital after being shot above the left elbow during an argument at the home of Willie B. Twine of Route 1, Tyner. The shooting is alleged to have occurred between 9:30 and 10 o'clock.

Deputy Evans said the incident may have been the result of a disagreement over a card game in Gates County. He declined to name any suspects pending issuance of an arrest warrant.

Leach was taken by the Gates County Rescue Squad to Albemarle Hospital in Elizabeth City before being transferred to Norfolk, Va.

Being held under \$2,000 bond for two counts of breaking and entering and larceny is Leon Staton of Route 3, Edenton.

Deputy Evans said Staton is alleged to have taken furniture and other household items from the home of Samuel Stritz, Route 1, and from a storage shed at Bennett's Mill owned by Ernest Kehayes, Pembroke Circle, Edenton. Total value of the stolen items was estimated at less than \$1,000.

The properties, all of which were recovered, included two televisions, rugs, a radio, a sofa, a dresser, a coffee table, a charcoal grill, bedsheets and pillow cases.

The Sheriff's Department acted on a tip from an informant, Evans reported.

A probable cause hearing has been scheduled for next Tuesday in Chowan County District Court.



INSTRUCTORS BEING INSTRUCTED — Members of rescue squads in Chowan, Perquimans and Gates counties gathered at the ARPDC building in Hertford last weekend to train as instructors for a cardiopulmonary resuscitation program that will be offered to the public beginning January 1. The goal of the Chowan County EMS is to educate 417 county residents in CPR, a life-saving technique that practically any one can learn. The course will consist of nine hours in classroom and exercise.