

## Public Parade

### Sending A Message

It is true, Edenton found no takers recently when it put its stock up for sale and sought to secede from the Eastern Municipal Power Agency; but there is sympathy along the Public Parade for what the mayor and town council were trying to do.

Let's look for a minute at the background of the municipal power agencies as they have developed.

Both the western agency, known as North Carolina Municipal Power Agency No. 1, and the eastern model, which later came into being, were based on the theory that North Carolina municipalities which owned their own electric systems could profit through the joint ownership of power generating stations owned by Duke Power Company and Carolina Power and Light. It required an amendment to the constitution to enable these municipalities, acting as a unit, to enter in joint ownership of generating stations with the power companies. Such an amendment was passed by the legislature and later adopted by the voters.

When joint ownership proposals were being sold to the General Assembly, and later to the citizens of the several municipalities, it was explained that the municipal power agencies would simply acquire ownership of a part of generating facilities and contract with Duke and CP&L to manage them.

This would entitle the municipal power agencies to get their electricity at cost, which would be cheaper than the wholesale rates then being charged them by Duke and CP&L. The power would then be retailed to the municipal customers at a lower rate than they were currently paying.

The western power agency was the first to complete its purchase, which is being financed by revenue bonds. The eastern agency completed its transaction at a later date, and by the time the interest rate on revenue bonds had increased. But it was still considered a good deal.

Well, what has happened since that has soured some of the original supporters of the plan?

For one thing, the two power agencies are taking on all the aspects top-heavy bureaucracy. They are planning big central offices and are seeking authority to employ a whole establishment of consultants, engineers, accountants, rate experts, attorneys and financial advisers.

This threatens to eat up the margin of savings which ownership of generating facilities was supposed to make possible in the first place.

Not content to let the power companies manage the jointly-held facilities—which they would have to do anyway—the power agencies now seem bent on setting up a system of parallel management.

It is up to the mayors and city councils of the electric cities to regulate their own power agencies. They can do this by the caliber of the delegates they send to the power agencies. If they continue to send rubber stamps, who quickly become captives of the agency staffs, then two agencies will continue to go their merry way.

But if more cities follow the example of Mayor Roy Harrell and his Edenton council, then the agency managers may begin to get the message.

### Welcome

There is a new, energetic face along Cheapside this week. We are very pleased to welcome our childhood friend, Bill Vogedes, to the Public Parade.

We are doubly pleased that he brings with him his charming wife, who is already a familiar face to Edentonians, the former Ginger Byrum. She is the daughter of West and Hattie Byrum of Pembroke Circle.

Bill comes to town at a time when we naturally reminisce about  
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# THE CHOWAN HERALD



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## Parents And Teachers Protest Treatment Of Principal Underwood

by Ron Anderson

Over thirty concerned parents and teachers attended a public hearing held during a regular School Board meeting on Monday evening. The hearing concerned the closing of Swain School, but the fate of the school's principal, Gilliam Underwood, became the focal point of the evening.

As part of the School Board's \$4.7-Million Capital Improvement Plan, Swain School is scheduled to close after the 1984-85 school year and be turned over to the county. Students from the school will then be relocated to D.F. Walker Elementary School. The Alternative School will remain at the Swain location.

The parents and teachers listened as Superintendent John Dunn explained why the state Division of School Planning has been suggesting the closing of the school. Some reasons given were: a) the school does not meet current safety standards, b) there is not enough space for a physical education program and c) overcrowded conditions.

The public accepted the necessity of the closing, but protested the

deal the Board of Education is offering the school's current principal, Gilliam Underwood.

At last month's School Board meeting two motions were made concerning the principals of both Swain and Walker Schools: 1) to authorize Superintendent Dunn to offer Ralph Cole principalship of the combined D.F. Walker and Swain Schools when consolidation occurs and 2) to authorize Supt. Dunn to offer Gilliam Underwood assistant principalship of the combined schools.

A principalship is a 12-month position, while a vice-principalship is a 10-month position. Also, the pay scale allowed by the state for a vice-principal is lower than that of a principal.

Gilliam, who has served 15 years in this school system as opposed to Ralph Cole's 12 years, has a total of 27 years' service in North Carolina schools.

Included in their offer of vice-principalship to Underwood, the School Board has suggested a way to protect his full retirement benefits for 30 years of service. Their suggestion is that he finish his

next year's principalship at Swain, serve as Vice-Principal at Walker during the 1985-86 year and use his accumulated sick leave to make up the final year.

During the "public speaks" portion of Monday's meeting, Underwood expressed his disappointment at being offered an assistant principalship position and the sugges-

tion to use his sick leave to make up his 30th year of service.

"I have more service than any principal in the system," said Underwood. "I do feel my service has been more than satisfactory. I will not use my sick leave for my 30th year of service."

Dr. Dunn told Underwood, "We've tried to develop a plan to

assure you that you could reach retirement time without a penalty of salary. I assure you the board has no intention to tell you to retire. We hope you will stay with the system. You have plenty of years left."

Underwood said that he would accept the vice-principalship and  
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## Hospital Budget Will Result In Rate Increase For Patients

by Maru Amburn

County Commissioners Monday approved a Chowan Hospital annual budget which will result in a 9 percent increase in patient rates.

The 1984-85 rate increase, based on an average of 38 patients per day, will amount to \$9.2 million in gross revenues of which \$2.3 million must be written-off to Medicaid and Medicare adjustments and bad debts.

The commissioners also acted on a proposal from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to pave the Morristown Road off Highway 32 North.

According to hospital administrator Marvin A. (Johnny) Bryan, the budget represents the second rate increase in two years. Last October, Bryan said, the facility increased its rates by 4 percent.

A rate adjustment was necessary due to changes in Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement policies and inflation, Bryan said in a telephone interview.

"We're also trying to economize as much as possible due to the drop in census (occupancy) over the last year," the administrator added.

Rates for rooms remained relatively stable, while larger increases were seen in special services such as anesthesia and post-anesthesia recovery. Charges for anesthesia will increase by \$62.00 and charges for post-anesthesia will increase by \$22.00.

Rates for semi-private rooms will

increase from \$136.00 to \$141.00 per day while rates for private rooms will increase from \$142.00 to \$148.00 per day, Bryan told the commissioners.

Out-patients now constitute 40 percent of the hospital's business—three months ago they accounted for 18 percent, Bryan said.

The approved budget provides for a 3 percent across-the-board increase in hospital employee salaries to go into effect in April

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## Sound Slated For Water Quality Act

First District Congressman Walter B. Jones succeeded yesterday in designating the Albemarle Sound as one of four estuaries in the nation slated for a stepped up water quality enhancement program.

The Jones provision which must still undergo Senate consideration was included in the Water Quality Renewal Act of 1984, a four-year extension of the Clean Water Act. The legislation was approved June 26 by the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 405 to 11.

Albemarle Sound was added as a result of negotiations between Jones and the bill's authors over provisions which came under the jurisdiction of the Congressional panel Jones chairs, the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee.

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FADING BEAUTY—Although some garden plants, such as this sunflower, were battered and bruised by recent thunder storms, the rain brought welcome relief to area farmers whose crops had been suffering from the long dry spell.

## Howard Speaks To NC Senate Committee

by Maru Amburn

Among the participants in Saturday's hearing before State Senate committee on the proposed ban on phosphate detergents was Chowan County resident, Captain Al Howard.

Howard, speaking on behalf of the Chowan/Albemarle Water Action Committee, told the lawmakers that, "The Legislation will be sending a strong signal to the officials of the Commonwealth of Virginia that North Carolina will take every action necessary to restore the quality of the water in our public trust lakes, rivers and sounds."

Chowan County's water quality spokesman was among the over 200 people who crowded the auditorium of the Legislative Building in Raleigh as the Special Ways and Means Committee heard testimony from 22 supporters and 15 opponents of the proposed moratorium on phosphate detergents.

The bill would limit phosphates to 0.05 percent of the detergent by

weight. Many detergents currently contain as much as 6 percent or 7 percent phosphates.

Phosphate ban legislation overwhelmingly passed the House after being approved by the House Natural Resources and Economic Development Committee.

Sen. Bob Swain, D-Buncombe, chairman of the committee which must approve the legislation before it can be considered by the full Senate, said he would take up the bill by the end of the short session.

Phosphate detergent ban supporters contend that phosphates cause algae blooms that burden the state's waterways, robbing oxygen and killing fish. Ban opponents say a ban wouldn't get rid of enough phosphates to make any difference and that phosphate-free detergents don't clean clothes well. Also, opponents say agricultural runoff and wastewater treatment plants are bigger phosphorus producers and should be addressed first.

First District representative, Charles Evans a bill co-sponsor, said that a phosphate detergent ban

has widespread support. Evans cited a University of North Carolina poll which shows that 91 percent of those surveyed favored the ban.

"We need to listen to the people of North Carolina, not the well-financed soap and detergent industry which is headquartered out of this state," Evans said.

Captain Howard, who lives on the Chowan River, urged the panel to "act affirmatively on a 1972 recommendation for reducing the nutrient input to our public trust waters whether the sources be agriculture, industrial or municipal."

## McCarty Elected To Delegate Seat

RALEIGH—Dr. Barry McCarty of Elizabeth City was elected Saturday at a caucus of North Carolina delegates to the Republican National Convention To North Carolina's seat on the influential Committee on Permanent Rules and Organization.

McCarty, 31, is a Chairman of the Pasquotank County Republican Party and a candidate for the North Carolina State Senate from the First Senatorial District. He is also a vice president of the American Senatorial District. He is also a vice president of the American Academy of Parliamentarians and served as convention chairman of the 1984 state Republican convention.

McCarty won the seat at the caucus by a clear majority in a three way race over former U.S. Congressman Gene Johnston, chairman of the state Reagan-Bush Committee, and Pete Partridge, Chairman of the Eighth Congressional District Republican Party.

The Committee on Permanent Rules and Organization will meet prior to the 1984 Republican National Convention and consider recommendations for changes in the party's structure and governing instruments over the next four years.

## Insurance Company Changes Hands; Bill Vogedes To Assume Ownership

This week West W. Byrum relinquished control of his South Broad Street insurance agency after what he called, "a long and gratifying career."

Byrum's son-in-law, Bill Vogedes, 27, brings to Edenton insurance community his past experience as an underwriter for a major insurance company.

"My friends supported me over these last 26 years," Byrum said, "I know Bill will continue that fine relationship and work to serve the best interest of the insuring public."

Vogedes, who is now the youngest principal in Edenton's oldest agency, is married to the former Virginia Elizabeth (Ginger) Byrum. Vogedes is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Vogedes of Raleigh.

Mrs. Vogedes was the former Teenie Jones of Edenton.

A North Carolina State University graduate, Vogedes earned a degree in Economics and Business administration in 1979. He was employed as a commercial underwriter with United States Fidelity and Guaranty for four years and as a marketing representative with the Durco Agency for one year.

Vogedes expressed his pleasure with the opportunity to purchase a business and raise a family in the town where his mother's family has lived. He and his wife will live at 212 West Queen Street.

Also, Vogedes said he is interested in the community. "I would like to be involved in athletic support groups and working with young people."



CHANGE IN MANAGEMENT—West Byrum (left) congratulates his son-in-law, Bill Vogedes (right) who has purchased the family insurance business on South Broad Street.