

# Mayor Roy Harrell Sends Letter To State Legislators

(Editor's Note: Edenton Mayor Roy Harrell sent letters to three state legislators Monday asking for a hearing on the "effect of high utility bills on our citizens." The letters were sent to Sen. Marc Basnight, Rep. Charles Evans and Rep. Vernon James.

Harrell, who is outraged because of the increasing cost of electricity, said he wrote the letters because "someone at the state level must take a look at this problem."

The text of Harrell's letters is as follows:)

I have for some time now made a study of the utility bills in my area and, frankly, it is even more shocking than I originally suspected.

I find that each month we send out \$3,100 electric bills; at the end of a waiting period of twenty (20) days, we still have approximate-

ly 600 people who have not paid their electric bills. We notify them that they are about to be cut off and approximately 300, or half, find the money from somewhere. However, the other 300 or so customers are in trouble.

Of course we work with these people whenever possible, but many of them are senior citizens who are spending their entire social security check on their utility bills. I know of one case, in fact, where the woman brought her bill to me and it was for \$183.00 and her social security check was in the amount of \$180.00.

Needless to say, in view of the latest report in our News and Observer, the presidents of the three major electric companies have received fantastic salary increases over the past year and it's time someone with courage look-

ed into the cost of electricity in our state.

We have studies on the Bald Eagle, Gill Nets, day care and many other worthwhile subjects; however, shouldn't someone look at the effect these outrageously high utility bills are having on our good citizens in North Carolina.

I am asking that you do whatever you can to have a hearing on the "effect of high utility bills on our citizens", as soon as possible. I tell you for a fact that some citizens are going without food, heat, and medicine — and this just is not right!

I understand that we are to expect another rate increase in our area shortly. I hope that I read even sooner than the effective date of the increase that you have taken steps to investigate CP&L, Duke Power and Vepco, as to their

reasons for the rates they are now charging. I know we have a Power Commission, but we need someone to look into these costs who has the interests of the citizens of North Carolina at heart. I am sure that you will agree with me when I say that somewhere along the way, someone has fallen down on the job in looking out for the interests of the people!

I would be happy to appear at this hearing and testify as to the effect the "high utility bills" are having on citizens in my area.

I am sure that you will take a close look into this matter. I hope to hear from you shortly.

Sincerely,  
Roy L. Harrell, Mayor  
The Town of Edenton

## Mobilization Exercise

The 100 men of the North Carolina Army National Guard's Detachment 1 Company C 1st Battalion (MECH) 119th Infantry from Edenton will move to Fort Bragg, NC May 3-5 as part of a mobilization exercise involving the entire 13,000 member North Carolina Army and Air National Guard.

The exercise, called HICKORY RESPONSE-85, is designed to test the Guard's ability to respond to a federal call-up as well as to evaluate Fort Bragg's readiness to receive a massive influx of troops.

The exercise is thought to be the largest mobilization training exer-

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### Was O. Henry Framed?

For the second time, the United States Department of Justice has declined to institute proceedings for a posthumous pardon for William Sydney Porter, better known as O. Henry, who spent time in a Texas prison after being convicted of embezzling money from a bank where he worked as a youth.

We do not know whether the short-story writer, who grew up in Greensboro, was guilty or not. He may have been framed. But that seems to have nothing to do with whether he deserves to have his name cleared. Refusal to seek a presidential pardon for him is based by the Department of Justice on "the legal principle that a pardon, like a deed, must be accepted by the person to whom it was directed."

That seems to say that, in William Sydney Porter's case, the only way he can expunge his record is to rise up again, not on the third day, but on the 75th anniversary of his death in New York at the age of 47.

There are people who believe that Porter was innocent in the embezzlement case. One of them was Judge Trueman O'Quinn of Austin, and O. Henry admirer, who had made a study of the case and sought to have O. Henry pardoned and failed.

We came across another believer in Porter's innocence when we were a reporter in Greensboro back in the 1930s. He said he was the last survivor of the old Dalton gang, a band of outlaws operating in the southwest. This Dalton came to Greensboro and put up at the old O. Henry Hotel. He said he wanted to come to O. Henry's hometown to tell his story.

According to Dalton O. Henry spent some time with the Dalton gang in Mexico while fleeing from the law and convinced him of his innocence. Dalton said it was a frame, with the shortage being blamed on a young 19-year-old teller. We published the story, but we never had a chance to check it out.

### Dead On Arrival?

Rep. Robert Brawley, an Iredell County Republican, no doubt accomplished his main purpose in introducing a bill calling for a constitutional amendment limiting the Speaker of the House to two consecutive terms — getting his name in the papers and on the air.

But in drawing his bill he revealed the sort of naivety hardly expected of a third-term member of the General Assembly. By calling for an amendment to the constitution rather than a simple statutory prohibition, he put himself in position of having to round up a three-fifths majority of all the members of each house whereas a statutory prohibition could be enacted by a simple majority in each house.

It is difficult enough for a member of the majority party to round up 72 affirmative votes in the house, with the speaker and leadership helping. It is a foolhardy undertaking for a member of the minority party, with only 38 colleagues on the floor, to presume to offer a constitutional amendment embarrassing to the speaker with any hope of getting it passed.

The kindest thing that can be said about Rep. Brawley's proposal is that he did it only for the publicity mileage it produced. But, then, you can never be sure. Back during Jim Hunt's second term as governor a vacancy developed in the office of Secretary of Transportation and Rep. Brawley, then a second-term Republican, wrote the governor a letter seeking the appointment. This continues

Most members of the legislature would have passed that off as an effort on the part of the representative from Iredell to be funny. But he told his colleagues that he was serious, being an engineer and a builder. He said he felt he would make a good secretary of transportation. He did not seem to realize that there are qualifications other than being an engineer and builder which a secretary of transportation had to

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SUMMERTIME—Callie Aylesworth, right, and Connie Jones, both of Edenton, took advantage of the hot weather Tuesday by putting on their summer clothes and playing in the water. Temperatures early this week reached well into the 90s.

## District Court Session Held

Chowan County District Court was in session April 23; the Honorable John T. Chaffin

### Smith, Guest Speaker

Roy J. Smith, General Secretary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, will speak at the Edenton Baptist Church Sunday (April 28) at the 7:30 worship service.

A well known Baptist leader, he is a graduate of Wake Forest University and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and was granted the Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree by Campbell University in 1982. He was pastor of two churches before being associated with the State Convention. In 1962 he was recognized as "Rural Minister of the Year" and his church as "Church of the Year."

He is a much requested speaker throughout the Southern Baptist Convention and has written for several magazines of the convention.



Roy J. Smith

presiding over the criminal term.

Patrick Owen McCullough was found guilty of driving 65 in a 55mph zone. He was ordered to pay a \$35 fine and cost of court.

Ellis Hinton was found guilty of DWI. He was sentenced to 90 days suspended for 2 years on condition he pay a \$150 fine and cost of court. He is to attend ADET school, perform 48 hours of community service and surrender his drivers license; he appealed.

Melvin Eugene Cofield was found guilty of possessing marijuana. He was ordered to pay a \$100 fine and cost of court.

Nancy Ann Moore was found guilty of shoplifting. She was sentenced to 90 days suspended for 2 years on the condition she pay a fine of \$100 and cost of court. She is to remain off the premises of TG&Y for two years.

Rudolph Henry LaPoint was called but failed to show on a charge of driving without an operator's license.

Patricia Welch Armstrong was found guilty of driving without an operator's license. She was sentenced to 30 days suspended for 2 years on the condition she pay a fine of \$50 and cost of court.

Ivey Lee Basnight pleaded guilty to a DWI charge. He received a 6 month commitment.

Martin Bateman was found guilty of ten counts of passing worthless checks. For five of those counts he was sentenced to 6 months suspended for 2 years on the condition he pay a \$50 fine and court costs in each case. For the other five counts he was sentenced to 6 months suspended for 2 years on the condition he pay a

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## Proposed Settlement Approved By Council

A proposed settlement agreement between the Town of Edenton and Albemarle TV, Inc. was officially approved by Edenton Town Council during a special meeting held Monday, April 22. The town and the cable company are currently engaged in litigation concerning the operations of the television system within the town and the extent of the town's regulatory authority over the company's operations.

If Albemarle Cable TV accepts the terms of the agreement drawn up by Chris Bean, attorney for the town, and Allan Gitter of the firm

### Level Rose; Rate Down

RALEIGH — For the second year North Carolina's level of employment rose and the rate of unemployment dropped, according to Bob Campbell, Director of Public Information for the North Carolina Employment Security Commission. The average annual unemployment rate fell from 8.9 percent in 1983 to 6.7 percent in 1984. The annual average national rate fell from 9.6 percent in 1983 to 7.5 percent in 1984, which still left the national rate substantially above the North Carolina rate.

The drop in the rate of unemployment among males in the state — from 7.9 percent in 1983 to 5.4 percent in 1984 — was driven principally by economic recovery in construction and manufacturing industries. The

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Womble, Carlyle, Sandridge and Rice, Winston-Salem, the company will dismiss its lawsuit against the town and members of Town Council. The Town of Edenton, in turn, will dismiss its counterclaim against Albemarle TV.

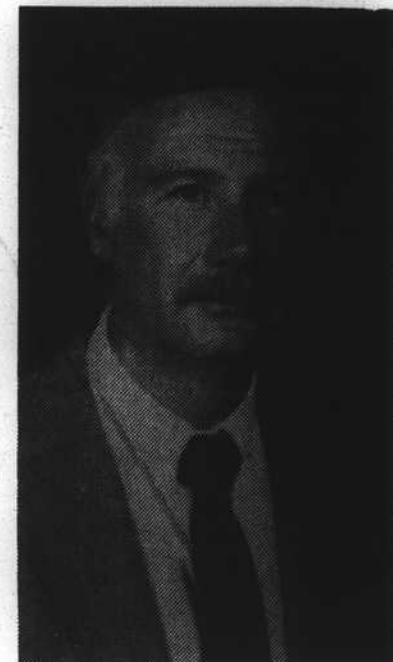
Under the agreement, the town will be approving the cable company's request to increase the rate of its basic service (One Star) to \$7.95.

Also, the settlement would change the franchise agreement between Edenton and the cable company to allow Albemarle Cable TV to raise the rate it charges for basic service as much as 5 percent without council's approval. This change is in compliance with the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984.

But the cable company must still have Council's approval to raise rates charged for the basic service above 5 percent.

The agreement further states that if the cable company makes a request for a rate hike for the basic service above 5 percent, council will have the right to request information regarding the cable company's properties, income, and expenses related to its cable operations in Edenton for the preceding year "so as to afford the Town Council a sufficient basis upon which to make an informed decision with regard to allowing or denying the rate adjustment request."

The proposed settlement agreement has been sent to Albemarle Cable TV, Inc.



Dr. John A. Francis

## Dr. Francis Joins Staff

Dr. Bernie Baker is pleased to announce that Dr. John A. Francis will be joining him in his practice of Obstetrics and Gynecology on May 1.

Dr. Francis, a native of West Virginia, currently resides in Currituck County with his wife, Doris, and their two sons, John Christopher and David Morgan.

A graduate of Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia, Dr. Francis received his doctorate from the West Virginia University School of Medicine at Morgantown. He completed his training in obstetrics and gynecology at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, Virginia in 1978 and became a Diplomate of the American Board of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in 1980.

After his residency, Dr. Francis moved to the Eastern Shore of Virginia where he established and maintained a solo OB/GYN practice for 5 years. While there he was instrumental in the development of the natural childbirth program and the outpatient surgery program for routine gynecology. In addition to his routine OB/GYN practice he cared for all the high risk obstetrical patients in association with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Eastern Virginia Medical School. During this time he was Chief

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## J.A. Holmes Site For Session With COA Admissions Staff

An informal meeting for persons who are thinking about continuing their educations will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Apr. 30 at the John A. Holmes High School Student Commons. The meeting is the final of four similar sessions that have taken place in three other counties served by College of The Albemarle.

"Our purpose is to discuss the educational programs and opportunities at COA with anyone who is considering enrollment after high school graduation, or returning to college following some years of absence," said Roy Winslow, assistant dean of admissions. COA has served Chowan County citizens for 25 years since it was chartered in 1960 as the first community college in the state system.

The assistant dean said the evening session not only will give high school seniors and their parents a chance to gain information about the college, but also will be more convenient for working adults and senior citizens to learn how they can extend their educations.

Five members of the college ad-

missions staff will be present at the gathering. Winslow said they will discuss admissions requirements, programs of study, academic requirements, financial aid, support services, guidance and counseling, placement, and student activities with anyone who attends.



HEART ASSOCIATION—Lolita Lawrence (center) activities director at Britthaven of Edenton, is shown presenting a check to Evelyn Keeter (left) treasurer of the Chowan County Heart Association for funds received from the recent Rock 'N Roll event held by Britthaven. Also pictured is Virginia Clore, administrator, Britthaven.