



THE CHOWAN HERALD



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Time For Second Shot

Voters of North Carolina will likely be called upon within the next two years to pass upon several proposals to change our constitution. One that is being kicked around again in the legislature is to lengthen the terms of members of the General Assembly to four years.

Such an amendment was soundly defeated at the polls back in the early 1980s, but we feel it is time to resubmit it to the people. We voted for the longer terms back then and the reason we did so is more compelling today than it was then.

That is the soaring cost of elections. During the time we served in the house, we made it a practice not to accept contributions from Political Action Committees with an ax to grind in the legislature. But, by the time we retired, the cost of financing an election in even a single-seat district was becoming a burden.

But it was nothing compared to what it is today. One member of the current house reported spending \$65,608 on his campaign. Another reported spending \$55,057. Expenditures of \$20,000 and \$30,000 were not unusual. In fact, the average for the 120 members for the 1988 election was \$12,971.

Senators, of course, have to run in larger districts, and their campaign expense reports show it. One reported spending \$117,990, of which he still owes \$65,000. Another spent \$87,212, and still owes \$18,000. The average for the 50 senators was \$20,164.

A glance at where all this money is coming from pretty well reveals whose interests are most likely to receive tender, loving care by the lawmakers. Health care contributors kicked in a total of \$285,429 to the winners.

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ARRESTING OFFICERS--These police officers, with the aid of the new mobile traffic radar, made a drug arrest Sunday and netted more than \$1,800 worth of cocaine and a .22 caliber rifle, styled along the lines of the U.S. military's M-16 rifle. The confiscated weapon, which has a collapsible stock, was fully loaded with 13 long rifle hollow point bullets. Officer T.E. Palmer holds the weapon that he found in the suspect's car. He is flanked by Sgt. McCoy Parker and Officer Bill Phillips.

Traffic Stop Nets Cocaine

By JACK GROVE

Use of a recently acquired mobile radar unit yielded more than just a routine traffic arrest by Edenton Police Sunday.

Officer Bill Phillips was on patrol at 8 p.m. and operating the radar when he observed a 1977 Nova driven by Paul Gregory, Jr. speeding 49 in a 35 mph zone on Virginia

Road near Chowan Hospital. Gregory turned left on Badham Rd. where he stopped for the officer in front of Fueston Wood Products Co.

Phillips said that while he was writing the speeding ticket, Gregory paced the street, cursing. Then Phillips saw him go around the corner of the building for a few seconds and return. "When this hap-

pened, I suspected he dropped off something," said Phillips. By this time, Patrolman T.E. Palmer and Sgt. McCoy Parker had arrived on the scene as backups.

"After he left, we searched the area to see if he left something. Officer Palmer found the stash," Parker said. The stash turned out to be a plastic bag containing six separate plastic packets of cocaine. It was found in an air duct on the north side of the building.

Parker said that the drugs were returned to the hiding place after "we decided to stake it out."

The officers took positions of concealment and Gregory returned in about ten minutes and retrieved the cocaine. Parker said that Gregory "stuck it behind the license plate, made a U-turn and ran smack dab into Officers Palmer and Phillips," who were called in by Parker.

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Escape Prevented

The Chowan Sheriff's Department Tuesday made sure that an "escape artist" in their custody couldn't run while in court for a first appearance hearing on breaking and entering and larceny charges.

Nelson Isaac (Trick) Jones faced District Court Judge John T. Chaffin in leg irons. Sheriff Fred Spruill said that Jones has a history of escapes, the most recent being last Thursday when he escaped from a holding cell in the Perquimans County Courthouse.

Perquimans authorities returned him from Atlanta, Ga.

where he had been incarcerated. Spruill said that he had escaped three times from the Atlanta jail. At the time of last week's escape, he was facing a first appearance on breaking and entering and larceny charges in Perquimans.

Following a six-hour hunt, Jones was recaptured in a thicket of pines near a Hertford apartment complex on U.S. 17 Bypass.

Spruill said that the Chowan charges concern a break-in at Coastal Concrete on Feb-

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Bennett Takes New Position

The Edenton Post Office has lost its second postmaster within two years with the departure of Steve Bennett on Friday. Bennett came to Edenton on March 12 of last year and instituted many programs to serve the public, improve employee morale and give the Post Office a personal touch.

Bennett has assumed the position of Superintendent of Postal Operations at the Sanford, N.C. Post Office. He said that the transfer was due to a family situation that necessitated the move.

He is succeeded by an interim Officer in Charge, Mrs. Nela Horton. She comes to the local post office from the position of Associate Office Coordinator in the Raleigh Sectional Center. She makes her home with her family near

Wendell.

A postal official said that an OIC normally runs a post office from three to six months while the U.S. Postal Service selects a permanent postmaster.

Some of the accomplishments that Bennett left behind him in Edenton include: presentations for students at Walker School and tours of the post office for those students; beautification of post office grounds; employee recognition programs; promotion of Historic Edenton in the statewide postal newsletter; and participation in planning for the second day cover to be issued in Edenton honoring North Carolina's bicentennial stamp.

Bennett instituted community awareness projects a-

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ARRIVING AND DEPARTING--Edenton's Postmaster for the past year, Steve Bennett, is shown with newly arrived Officer in Charge, Mrs. Nela Horton, who has taken over direction of the local post office. Bennett is transferring to the Sanford, N.C. Post Office.

3rd Pull Hosted By Post 40

Truck And Tractor Pull Scheduled

American Legion Post 40 of Edenton will hold its third annual truck and tractor pull on May 6 and 7. The pull, to be held at the American Legion Fairgrounds on U.S. 17 Business, South, will begin at 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 6 and on Sunday, May 7 at 2 p.m. The pull is sanctioned by

the East Coast Tractor Pullers Assoc., a member of the National Tractor Pullers Assoc. Prize monies for this pull will exceed \$9,000, Legion spokesman E.C. Toppin said. He said that for the first time in eastern North Carolina there will be jeep pulling competition.

Returning for the second year will be the miniature car crusher, "Wolly Bully."

Admission for 13 and over will be \$8 and for 12 and under will be \$4. No glass will be allowed on the grounds and coolers will be limited to 16 inch size.



BIG CLICK--Professional photographer Jim Colman of N.C. Public Television was in Edenton on Friday to participate in the statewide "Big Click," an effort to record state citizens and scenes in one 24 hour period. Colman asked townspeople to gather at the Cupola House for a town portrait. This was the result at the dinner hour as seen from a street department cherry picker. Colman used a Chowan Herald camera for this shot. He took several of his own cameras aloft for other pictures.

Case To Go Back To Grand Jury

The legal process is continuing to have unexpected twists in the case of Robert Fulton Kelly, Jr., charged with sex offenses involving young boys at a local day care center.

Two weeks ago, the Chowan Grand Jury issued four true bills of indictment charging Kelly with four first degree sex offenses. It was subsequently learned that one of the jurors was ineligible to serve and Superior Court Judge Thomas S. Watts quashed the indictments.

Later that day, upon direction of District Attorney H.P. Williams, Kelly was arrested by the Edenton Police Dept. for the four alleged offenses. He was released under \$20,000 bond.

A first appearance hearing took place on the charges last week before District Court Judge J. Richard Parker who set a probable cause hearing in the court room of District Court Judge John T. Chaffin this week.

When the case came before Judge Chaffin Tuesday, District Attorney Williams moved for a continuance of two weeks on the basis that "We are not prepared to go forward on probable cause." He said that there were "more warrants on another victim" to be served against the defendant. Williams told the judge that his plans were to take the case back before the grand jury in the Special Chowan Superior Court session of May 8.

Defense counsel C. Christopher Bean argued against the continuance pointing out, "This investigation has been going forward since January" and that the state had had plenty of time to be ready for the probable cause hearing.

Bean continued that the case had "greatly divided the

community" and that his client had not yet heard any of the specific allegations concerning the charges. "The state, we would argue is trying to avoid a probable cause hearing."

The state, by obtaining felony indictments directly from a grand jury, sidesteps a probable cause hearing and the case goes directly to superior court without publicly revealing the state's evidence. (The defense can request to review the state's evidence through "discovery" motions before a judge.)

Williams commented that he didn't understand why Judge Parker had scheduled the probable cause hearing just a week after the first appearance. Bean responded by citing state criminal procedure statute 15A-606 that states that a probable cause hearing must be scheduled not later than 15 working days following the initial appearance and not sooner than five working days following initial appearance.

Judge Chaffin told Bean that it had not been five working days since the first appearance on the previous Tuesday.

Bean offered Chaffin a copy of the statute and when he said that he had read it many times, Bean read from the official commentary following the statute's wording: "In order to give the parties time to

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Rob Boyce Is Chosen

John A. Holmes High School Principal Rob Boyce has been named Principal of the Year for Region I in North Carolina. This marks the second time in five years that Boyce has been selected for the honor.

Boyce's reaction was one of total surprise. "I really hadn't expected that they would pick the same person again," he noted. Boyce has served as principal at the Edenton high school for the past eight years.

Boyce credits the "combined efforts of our teachers, students and community" for the outstanding reputation the Edenton - Chowan Schools enjoy throughout the state. "The teachers here are the hardest-working and most conscientious educators you will find anywhere," he said.

Boyce will compete for the title of Principal of the Year on the state level in May.