

Decide

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where North Carolina stands relative to the nation. Now, what does the 2000 Census tell us about where our state has been going?

Perhaps the most important trend is in average household income. Here the news is good. In the past ten years, North Carolina's average household income, measured in constant purchasing power dollars, increased 6%. This was twice as fast as the national increase.

But there's some bad news. The percentage of persons in poverty in North Carolina rose from 13% in the 1990 Census to 13.2% in the 2000 Census. Although a minor increase, it was contrary to the national reduction in the poverty rate.

And, if you think it's taking longer to drive to work, you're not imagining this - data from the Census supports you. The 2000 Census reports it took the average North Carolina worker 22.6 minutes to travel

to work, 2.8 minutes more than reported in the 1990 Census. Although there was also an increase in the national commuting time, the jump was less than in North Carolina.

An important reason for this difference is the more rapid population growth in North Carolina. In the past ten years, North Carolina's population increased 21% compared to the national increase of 13%. There's simply more of us on the roads and highways driving to work.

I've only scratched the surface on comparisons and trends available from the new 2000 Census. The wealth of information makes it impossible to make any sweeping, general conclusions. However, one fact is certain: North Carolina is changing. You decide if the change, on net, is good or bad.

(Walden is a William Neal Reynolds Professor and Extension Economist in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at North Carolina State University who teaches and writes on personal finance, economic outlook, and public policy.)

Lawrence Academy opens August 20

MERRY HILL - School bells are ringing once again for students enrolled at Lawrence Academy. Teachers will return Wednesday, Aug. 15.

Lawrence Academy's elementary building will begin the year with a new name. At the Spring Festival on April 28, Lawrence Academy dedicated the building in honor of Ronald and Susan Harrison of Plymouth, NC.

Hood Ellis, chairman of the board, presented Mr. and Mrs. Harrison and daughters with a commemorative plaque to be installed on the elementary building in their honor and in recognition of their generous contributions to Lawrence Academy over the years.

Headmaster, Dr. Ed Carter, anticipates a successful beginning for the 2001-2002 school year and encourages everyone to support the Warriors in their



Hood Ellis (left), chairman of the board, talks with Ronald Harrison, Margaret Harrison, Susan Harrison and Catie Harrison.

first home football game, Aug. 31, at 7:30 p.m. against Trinity

Christian and first tennis match against John A. Holmes

High School, Edenton, on Aug. 28, at Holmes.

Martin

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them in comfort as the train made its way to Charlotte with short stops in Burlington, Greensboro, High Point, and Kannapolis.

The conductor checked by a couple times to be sure everything was in order. Several volunteer assistants were also very friendly. Later, I took a break to get a cup of coffee and a bowl of cereal in the snack bar and then made a couple of calls on my cell phone.

I arrived in Charlotte prepared and rested.

And on the way I became a big-time convert to rail travel.

When the train schedule fits my work needs, I am going to use it again.

Unfortunately, that is not going to be very often. Except for the Silver Palm service between Rocky Mount and Fayetteville, there are only two day-time passenger trains: the Carolinian, which travels from Raleigh to Charlotte in the morning and then goes back in late afternoon and early evening, and the Piedmont, which travels all the way to Rocky Mount in the morning and returns to Charlotte in the evening. With so few opportunities, most of us just take it for granted that the train is not going to be helpful. And we don't bother to check. That is unfortunate because sometimes the train could work out to be a good option.

Then there is the problem of time. It does take longer than the automobile and certainly longer than air travel if you

are going all the way from Raleigh to Charlotte. Former Governor Hunt set the goal of a two-hour rail connection between Raleigh and Charlotte. If the state ever reaches that goal, there will be lots more train travelers. But there are many rail crossings and the train has to slow down as it passes through cities. When I complained to someone that it seemed like it took an eternity to go through Greensboro, he explained that the speed limit for trains in that city is lower than it is for automobiles.

Finally there's the problem of location and transferring passengers from one method of public transportation to another. The train stops in most of the big cities are not within walking distance of bus stations or airports, nor are they within walking distance of most anything. Rail Stations aren't anywhere close to the major airports. If they were, the rail service and the airlines could forward passengers to each other. Traffic on railroads would increase significantly if there were better linkups.

The extension of rail lines into airport terminal facilities would be an expensive and complicated proposition. But in Raleigh-Durham, Greensboro, and Charlotte the rail lines actually pass within a few hundred yards of the airports.

After two days of work in Charlotte, I caught the 5:40 p.m. train back home. Without a lot of work to do, I enjoyed the scenery and another look at a part of North Carolina that you do not see from highways.

And I will tell you all about that train trip in next weeks column.

Parent

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a yearly basis. It is crucial for your child's success that they see you and the teacher communicating on a regular basis.

Listen to your child's teacher. This person knows your child's habits in a way you may never have the opportunity to observe. In this way, he or she can offer valuable insight and suggestions for your young person's improved and continued success at school. Listen, take notes, and try any suggestions he or she may give. Even if you may not agree at first, it will give you helpful insight into that teacher's expectations.

Respect your child's teacher. Treat teachers as the professionals they are. Acknowledge the fact that, in most cases, they possess a body of knowledge

about their classroom that you do not. If you have a question or concern, address the teacher directly first without involving or informing your child. In most situations, your need for clarity need not involve your student. When your young person, as many are prone to do, makes the occasional complaint, make every effort to support the teacher to reinforce respect for authority in your child.

Take every opportunity to praise teachers when appropriate. Take a minute to write a note to the teacher or even the principal to commend a teacher for making a difference in your child's life when you feel someone has really made an impact on your child.

These four suggestions will put your child on the road to success in school. Be a parent who knows, listens to, respects and praises your child's teachers, and they might just be better teachers for it.

Named

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the All-American Scholar Award Program to offer deserved recognition to superior students who excel in the academic disciplines. The All-American Scholars must earn a 3.3, or higher, grade point average. These are awards few students can ever hope to attain.

"Recognizing and supporting

our youth is more important than ever before in America's history. Certainly, United States Achievement Academy winners should be congratulated and appreciated for their dedication to excellence and achievement," said Dr. George Stevens, executive director of the Academy.

Lindsey and LeeAnne are the children of Larry and Angela Lawrence of Edenton. Grandparents are Aleathia Lawrence of Edenton and Agnes Lindsey from Philadelphia, PA.

CPR

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Participants end the refresher course with a 45-question written test, on which they must score 80 percent or higher to earn recertification. The course uses the Red Cross CPR curriculum, according to Jewel Winslow, course instructor. Winslow is a Cooperative Extension agent and Red Cross volunteer.

"CPR training is particularly important when people care for children," Winslow said.

Scheduled for training are: Joan Blair, Robbin Felton, Carolyn Leary, Teresa Copeland, Sophia Hurdle, Debbie Harris, Joyce White, Sonya Holley and Joanne Lichtenwalner.

Archery 3-D shoot

The Albemarle Archery Club will hold a 3-D Shoot on Aug. 19 at Allen's on Hwy. 17, three miles south of Hertford. Sign-in will be held from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Entry fee is \$10 for this event, which is

open to all ages.

All proceeds from this benefit shoot will benefit the shooting teams in Chowan and Perquimans County schools. For more info, call 426-7811.

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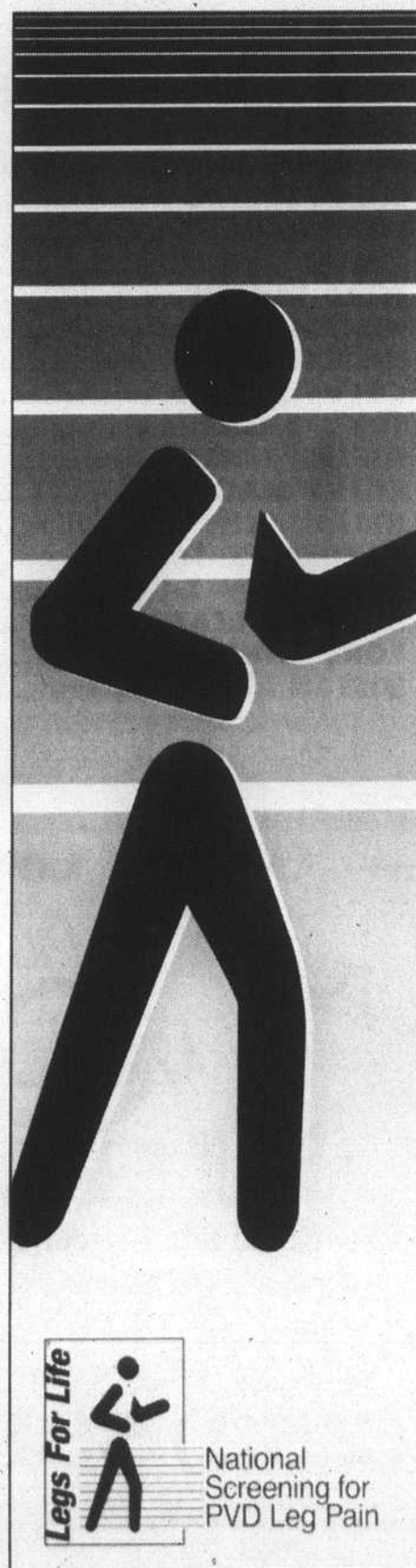
Come to a free screening

Saturday, September 15
ECU Family Practice Center
9 am - 2 pm

Leg aches and cramps might not be just another part of growing older. You may have Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD), a potentially serious condition that can affect your ability to walk. Early detection and treatment are important in controlling PVD.

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