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Bunn's Phil Hagwood Saves An Out-of-Bounder
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Autopsy Shows Merritt Suffered Heart Attack

Sheriff William T. Dement revealed today that results of an autopsy performed on the body of Brooks Merritt, 62-year-old Moulton man found dead near a wooded area two weeks ago, showed the man died of natural causes.

Dement said the report indicated that Merritt suffered some type of heart attack.

Mr. Merritt had been the object of extensive searches by Sheriff's officers, friends and neighbors and the National Guard before his body was discovered by two hunters on February 8. He had been missing from his home since January 10.

Dement had said from the beginning that he did not believe any foul play was involved in the death, but ordered an autopsy performed to be sure.

Grand Jury Says County Underpays

The County Grand Jury, reporting to Superior Court Judge James H. Pou Bailey last week, said it had found, "upon investigation", that "our county employees are underpaid and additional help is needed in some departments." The reference was made "in comparison with surrounding counties." No further explanation was noted.

The report, signed by Ralph E. Beasley as Grand Jury foreman, also thanked the Judge, Solicitor, County Officials and W. L. Faulkner for help in their work.

The Grand Jury found certain needed improvements at Youngville High School, and at Bunn Elementary school. Most complaints dealt with bathroom facilities and floor conditions. Mention was made of some poor lighting in certain areas of both schools.

The jail was described as "clean" but in "very poor condition". "County is in need of a new jail building", the report states.

The driveway to the Welfare department also came under some criticism. Describing it as being in "poor condition", the Grand Jury recommended the road be "repaired or paved."

It was also stated that "complaints have been heard that some school bus drivers are following too closely and turning around in spaces not suitable or large enough for buses."

deadly weapon. 20 days in jail, suspended on payment of \$15.00 fine and costs.

Danny Lee Pearce, w/m, assault. \$15.00 fine and costs.

Douglas Nicholson, c/m/19, non-support. Not guilty.

Wilbert Otis Epps, c/m/30, non support. 18 months in jail, suspended and placed on probation for 5 years and to pay costs and \$15.00 per week for support.

Earlie Sutton, n/m/27, exceeding safe speed. To pay costs.

Gene Henderson, worthless check (2 cases). Nol pros with leave.

Willie Yarbrough, inadequate support of wife and child. 12 months in jail, suspended on payment of costs and \$7.00 per week for support.

Robert Doyle, w/m/35, nol pros.

Bunt (NMN) Arnold, w/m/64, See COURT Page 5

Egg Throwing Reaches Disturbing Proportions At Franklinton

Franklinton Police Chief Leo Edwards announced Wednesday that his department is offering a \$25 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone guilty of throwing eggs at vehicles and homes in the Franklinton area. Edwards said he has received 17 reports of egg throwing during the past weekend. He added that he suspects there were a number more incidents not reported.

"The biggest problem is eggs being thrown at automobiles", the Chief said. In the past, he explained, that those caught throwing eggs at cars were taken to their parents for punishment. He says from now on out they will be indicted.

Edwards told of one instance where a storm door was shattered by thrown eggs at a home in Franklinton. He said

this type of vandalism has become a major problem in the area.

He commented on another problem which is giving his department and Franklinton merchants headaches. "Shoplifting. We're getting burned up by minors shoplifting", he said.

"In the 1967-68 school year, we caught 14 shoplifters. Already this year, we've caught thirty. All are minors with the majority of those caught being under 16 years old", Chief Edwards added.

He said that in the past such cases were taken home and punishment was left to the children's parents. "From now on", he stated, "they will be turned over to the Juvenile Judge. He said his department and Franklinton merchants are going to get tough on shoplifting.

Franklin's Gross Farm Income Down \$4 Million

Franklin County's gross farm income was down approximately four million dollars in 1968 when compared to the all-time high of \$22,897,496 reached in 1967, according to C. T. Dean, Jr., County Extension Chairman. The 1968 income amounted to \$18,819,993.

Dean stated the drop in income was not from the lack of interest or effort by Franklin County farmers but was caused by the long drought and extreme heat experienced last summer.

Commodities suffering the most from the adverse weather were tobacco, soybeans and corn. In fact, income

from all crops in 1968 was \$12,232,476 compared to \$16,751,477 in 1967.

"The heat did almost as much damage as the lack of moisture," Dean said in explaining the low income for the year. "We've had dry years, but I don't recall when it has hit quite this hard. The drought cut crop yields on everything harvested after mid-summer. The dry weather was so severe on pasture and forage crops that some cattlemen were forced to sell on a low market."

The figures for 1967 and 1968 represent two extremes, since the 1967 income was the highest in several years. County agricultural income has been increasing gradually for a number of years.

On the bright side of the picture income from livestock is increasing each year. Cash receipts from livestock and livestock products was \$4,082,160 in 1968.

Dean said that even though farm income was down in 1968, he feels the future for Franklin County is good. Franklin County farmers are looking forward to a better year in 1969. Tobacco, which accounts for about two out of every three farm dollars, should be able to maintain its relative position - at the top. One of the features of the acreage-poundage program is that you can carry under-marketed tobacco over to the following year. Franklin County farmers have a carry-over of 1,200,945 pounds from the 1968 crop.

The Franklin County Extension staff is already at work laying plans for reaching the \$25,000,000 gross farm income goal by 1971. That goal was set forth in the "Target Two" program begun two years ago. Winter meetings have already been held on tobacco, swine and beef cattle. Other meetings are planned on soybeans, grain crops and cucumbers.

Efficient spending of the farm income is the goal of Extension Home Economists. They have classes planned in clothing, foods and management. With the homemakers and farmers working together to improve family living, the future looks bright indeed.

Courthouse Gets New Plaque

Franklin Clerk of Court Ralph S. Knott shows the new bronze plaque mounted on the front of the courthouse. The plaque denotes the \$200,000 renovations completed late last year. True to custom, the plaque bears only the names of those directly connected with such construction. It lists the Board of County Commissioners, attorneys to the Board, the architect and the contractor. Knott, along with others, was a prime mover in getting the bond issue passed which will finance the construction. An open house is being planned, according to reports, so that the public can visit and see the greatly improved facility in the near future.

Dean: "Two Of Every \$3 Comes From Tobacco"

Speed, Church Oppose Tax On Tobacco

Both members of the Sixteenth District House delegation have gone on record as being opposed to a tax on tobacco as proposed by Governor Bob Scott last week. Rep. James D. Speed of Franklin County, in a statement released today, said, "It has been and remains my conviction that the proposed tax on tobacco would hurt not only the tobacco industry but also the economic well-being and livelihood of many thousands of our citizens."

Rep. John T. Church of Vance County, who with Speed represents the Franklin-Vance-Warren District, is also opposed to such a tax. In a statement earlier this week, Church said, "We are still opposed to this particular tax and will continue to oppose it". He explained that he and other legislators visited with the Governor to urge that he not ask for a tax on tobacco.

It has also been learned that members of the Franklin County Scott Committee wrote the Governor urging that he not recommend such a tax. The Farm Bureau has also gone on record in opposition to a levy on tobacco.

C. T. Dean, Jr., County Extension Chairman, said this morning, "During the past few years tobacco has ranged from around \$9,000,000 to more than

\$14,000,000 per year" here in Franklin County. He said the golden leaf "accounts for about two out of every three farm dollars and anything that affects this income will have a tremendous impact on our economy."

Dean said the proposed tobacco tax brings up an "iffy" question. "If it causes less tobacco to be used then, of

course, this may depress prices or create a surplus which could call for an acreage-poundage reduction," Dean added.

He also said the proposed tax could have "a psychological effect" on other states causing them to increase their

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All Roads Lead To Louisburg At Tournament Time

By Clint Fuller
Managing Editor

Crowds of basketball fans are converging on the Paul Elam gym this week as the annual round-ball marathon known as the Franklin County Basketball Tournament is being played. Icy roads postponed a Monday night start, but chilly air has not dampened the spirits of fans who have attended the first two nights thus far.

Gold Sand fans were disappointed as both their teams were eliminated in Tuesday's opening rounds. But the elimination of Gold Sand brought joy to Louisburg and Bunn fans as their teams advanced.

Wednesday night, Louisburg's joy came to an abrupt halt as their boys,

blew a seven-point first half lead to fall to Wakeon. But Wakeon fans were deprived of total rapture as their girls fell to Bunn in overtime.

Tonight, Franklinton and Youngville get their chances as the Rams tackle Bunn in a semi-final game and Youngville gets a go at Louisburg girls in the opening game. By past experience, Youngville girls and Franklinton boys are favored tonight.

The crowds have been orderly and the Louisburg police and Rescue Service are doing their usual fine job of serving. Some new things have been added. There is an organ played by Richard Person, a Louisburg student, that is adding to the fans' enjoyment

of the event. A flashy scorer's table is in place-borrowed from Bunn and Coach Tommy Twitty of Louisburg, acting the efficient host, has set up a hospitality room for visiting coaches, the press and school officials.

The climax to the five-night event will take place for the girls Friday night in their championship game and for the boys Saturday night. Awards for All Conference players, All Tournament players, Most Valuable Player in the tournament and others will be presented at the end of Saturday night's championship contest.

The tempo is expected to be stepped up as the teams enter the semifinals and championship contests.

However, two very close games have already been played and all four games have been thrillers. A basket with 14 seconds won Tuesday night's game for Louisburg and a basket with 16 seconds left gave Bunn a tie Wednesday night which they used in overtime to take the win.

The most looked forward to game is the dream contest between Youngville and Franklinton boys-if, that is, they meet. The two squads tied for the conference championship and both have excellent material this year.

So, all roads lead to the Paul Elam gym this week and there is still some room left for the late comers, in case anyone is interested.



Bunn's Kathy Cheves (21) Scraps Wakeon's
Gayle Pearce As Susan Liles Looks On

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