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# THE CHARLOTTE POST

"Charlotte's Fastest Growing Community Weekly"

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THE CHARLOTTE POST - Thursday, November 22, 1979

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## HUD Rebates

# Low-Income Tenants

# To Get 60 Million Dollars

### Food Stamp Participation Increases

RALEIGH-- Major changes in the food stamp program that took effect in January and March of this year have resulted in a 1 percent increase in the number of low-income people in Mecklenburg County participating in the program.

In July 1979, there were 33,014 residents of the county participating, compared to only 32,607 in July 1978. The total value of the stamps issued in July 1979 was \$1,107,047.

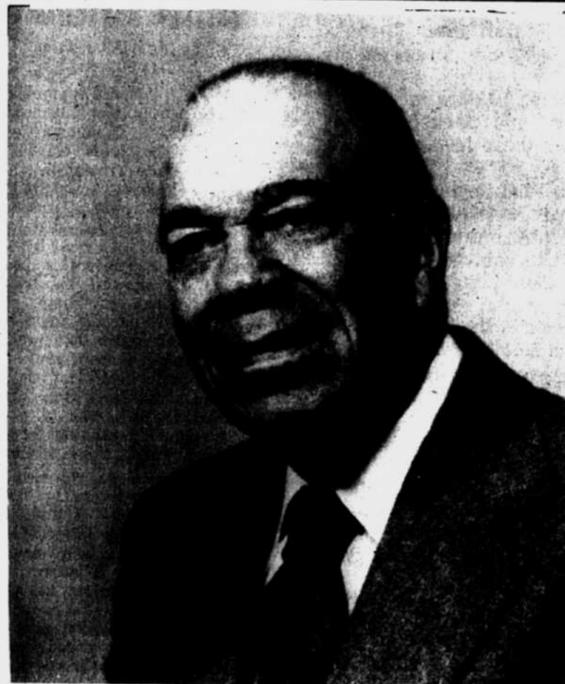
Even with this increase in participation, there are still 43,449 people in the county who are eligible for the program who are not participating based on estimates from the Division of Social Services of the N.C. Department of Human Resources.

Many changes have taken place in the program this year as a result of food stamp reform legislation enacted by Congress in 1977.

John Kerr, chief of the Food Assistance Section of the Division, cited two changes, however, as the most significant in determining the number of participants. "The elimination of the requirement that people have to pay a certain amount of their money in order to get a larger amount of food stamps became effective on January 1. Participants now receive a smaller amount of stamps at no charge. Lowering the eligibility level to the federal poverty level on March 1 had little effect on the number of recipients in North Carolina because the vast majority participating already had very low incomes," he indicated.

Kerr said that statewide there were 510,375 people participating in the program in July 1979, compared to only 375,011 a year earlier. This was a 36 percent increase. "We still have 490,725 people across the state with incomes low enough to qualify for food stamps, based on estimates by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, who are not participating," Kerr said.

The total cash value of food stamps issued statewide in July 1979 was \$16.5 million. He estimates that over \$200 million in food stamps will be issued during the current state fiscal year, which ends June 30, 1980.



WALTER G. BYERS  
...Retired educator

## Omegas Name Byers "Man Of The Year"

By Susan Ellsworth  
Post Staff Writer

The Pi Phi Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity last week chose educator Walter Byers as its "Man of the Year."

Byers, whose fraternity membership has spanned 53 years, has served in every office of the Charlotte branch.

He was principal of the Fairview School in Charlotte for the 25 years prior to his retirement in 1970. Byers also served as principal at O.R. Pope Elementary School in Rocky Mount, N.C. for eight years; he was principal for two years at Tarboro Elementary School, taught and was principal for one year in Battleboro, N.C. and was assistant principal and teacher for five years at the Highland School in Gastonia, N.C.

A graduate of Shaw University, Byers also received an M.A. degree from Columbia

University's Teacher College and later studied at the University of Wisconsin.

Byers was president of the Charlotte's Teacher's Association before integration.

Among his community involvements, Byers is a member of the board of trustees and superintendent of Sunday School at First Baptist Church.

He is a former member and chairman of Housing of the Mecklenburg County Council on Aging.

Byers has been associated with Model Cities as an education planner and coordinator. He supervised the Helping Hand Scholarship Program. For the past five years he has directed the career conferences for Junior High Schools at Johnson C. Smith University.

Byers is married to the former Selma Barnes; they have one daughter and two grandchildren.

### Refunds To Average \$500 Per Tenant

Washington, D.C. -- Three quarters of a million low-income tenants overpaid their rents in "Section 236" government-subsidized housing between Feb. 1, 1975 and Sept. 30, 1977.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development will reimburse these tenants \$60 million in rent overcharges.

Refunds of up to \$500 per eligible tenant will result from a settlement in 11 class action suits filed on behalf of "Section 236" tenants against H.U.D.

Nationwide 4,500 individual housing projects are affected, according to Ms. Vicki Williams, settlement information coordinator for the Western Center of Law and Poverty.

In North Carolina, 76 low-income housing areas are "Section 236" housing projects.

Charlotte residents living in the Booth Gardens, Greenhaven Town Houses, Charlotte Little Rock No. 2, Orchard Apartments, and the Village Town Houses are eligible for the rent refunds.

Ms. Williams said claim forms and instructions were sent to "Section 236" housing managers nationwide beginning the week of Oct. 22, and by the end of November all current residents in those housing projects should have been notified.

Claim forms will also be mailed to former tenants who have moved if the project owner or former tenant supplied a forwarding address.

To receive refunds, eligible tenants must return the completed forms no later than Jan. 31, 1980, to the Clerk of the U.S. District Court, P.O. Box 60864, Los Angeles, California, 90060. Former tenants who have lived in "Section 236" housing and wish to obtain a claim form can call the claim processing center's toll free number (800) 824-7980; the number is (800) 852-7532 if calling from California, and (916) 929-6285 if calling from Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

All claims will be processed and evaluated, and all checks will be sent at one time, in June of 1980, according to Ms. Williams, eligible tenants, on the average, will receive approximately \$15 a month, for 32 months.

The nationwide class action suit was brought in 1976 against HUD, which had refused to follow a congressional mandate to distribute funds to "Section 236" project owners to subsidize increased tax and utility costs being borne by the low-income tenants. A tenant in Carson, California was the first named plaintiff in the nationwide case. The Western Center is a grantee of the Legal Services Corporation, a private nonprofit organization established by Congress to provide free legal assistance to the poor in civil matters.

At least 40 other lawsuits -- many of them filed by LSC funded legal services programs -- were brought before the nationwide class action suit was filed to compel HUD to pay the rent subsidies. In April 1975, the Legal Aid Bureau of Baltimore, on behalf of eligible clients, brought the first suit. The next suit was filed by Connecticut legal services attorneys on behalf of a statewide tenant class. Suits were also filed by other legal services attorneys including the LSC funded National Housing Project in Berkeley and the Legal Aid Foundation of Long Beach, California.

The 1978 settlement, which was agreed to by former HUD secretary Patricia Harris, directs the distribution of the rent refunds.

### Food Production, Marketing Cost To Continue Rising

Washington - Rising costs for producing as well as processing and marketing food in 1980 are likely to keep upward pressure on retail food prices to consumers. At the same time such pressures will put many agricultural producers in a difficult cost-price squeeze, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Agricultural Outlook, to be released by USDA's Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service, points out that the rising costs will mean further increases in consumer food prices. Retail food prices in 1980 should rise 7 to 11 percent. Most of the rises will be caused by increases of about 10 percent for labor and packaging and continued sharp increases for energy used in processing and marketing. Transportation costs also will be significantly higher.

Gross farm income should increase slightly from 1979 record levels. Continued strong -- especially for exports -- is expected to increase cash receipts from crops.



BABETTE SUMMERS  
...Ranson 9th Grader

## Babette Summers Is Beauty Of Week

By Teresa Burns  
Post Staff Writer

With the economy the way it is today, our 9th grade beauty of the week, Babette Summers, would like to see the cost of merchandise go down.

One way in which people may stop inflation, according to Summers, is to "...stop spending so much money on unnecessary things."

If this solution seems too difficult to achieve Summers philosophy (not only about money matters, but also about life in general) is "Once you don't succeed, try again!"

"If you don't succeed, I think you should try harder the next time," Summers said.

And whatever Summers participates in she tries to do her best. She's athletic but still possesses the charm of a young lady. Playing basketball, volleyball and running track are just a few of Summers favorite past-times.

She is also a member of the McCrorey Branch YMCA drill

team, a Varsity cheerleader at Ranson Junior High School and recently was elected Ranson's 1979 Homecoming Queen.

Summers stays busy. Currently she is involved in Johnsons C. Smith's Upward Bound Program and is a member of Mount Carmel Baptist Church where she sings on the choir and is a junior usher.

Being active and dealing with people, Summers has a feel about the best qualities in a person. "I admire a person if they know how to treat you fairly and aren't phony," she explained.

Her favorite person is her mother, Mrs. Louise Stinson.

"I most admire my mother because of the things she does for our family by herself," Summers said.

Summers lives with her brother, two sisters and her mother at 1715 Dedmon Drive.

Despite her youth, our beauty seems to be very aware of the world around her. And this is a sure sign of maturity.

## USDA Tightens Fraud Controls In Food Stamp Program

WASHINGTON -- People who get food stamps fraudulently will have to pay them back under a rule proposed today by officials of the Department of Agriculture.

Currently, people convicted of fraud are dropped from the food stamp program for 3 to 27 months. The new proposal would require them to either repay the value of the stamps in cash or agree to have their food stamp allotment reduced until the amount is recovered before they can join the program again.

The proposed rule would implement legislation (Public Law 96-58) passed by Congress in August. The final regulation is scheduled to go into effect in May 1980.

In addition to the repayment provision, the rule will allow states to keep 50 percent of all money they recover from fraud claims to help defray recovery costs. Recovered funds presently are returned to the federal government. "We expect this change will be a significant incentive to states to prosecute fraud more vigorously," said Carol Tucker Foreman, assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services.

The rule also requires food stamp applicants to obtain and

furnish social security numbers for all household members. Foreman said this will deter fraud by enabling states to use social security numbers to crosscheck food stamp applications with other wage and benefit records.

The department put other legislative reforms into effect earlier this year to tighten eligibility standards and reduce abuse.

The rule was published in the Federal Register on Wednesday, Oct. 31 and Friday, Nov. 2. There will be a 45-day comment period ending Dec. 14.

## Local Ministers: We Have Lots

## For Which To Be Thankful

By Teresa Burns  
Post Staff Writer

Maybe you've looked at the world's situation -- rising gas prices, American hostages in Iran and the Greensboro killings -- and thought "What is there to be thankful for?"

But if you take an optimistic look like several Charlottean pastors have, the conclusion may be startling.

"We can be thankful for the truth that we really have in the word of God to the point that we will be able to live by it," according to Elder Ralph Franklin of Brean Seventh Day Adventist Church.

"We can be thankful to witness for the Lord in these troubled days," he continued.

Rev. Joe M. Beck of the First Pentecostal Holiness Church had this to say, "What did the pilgrims have to be thankful for? What did the Europeans have to be thankful for in the 30 year war? God is with us, in us, and working through us in all circumstances of life."



Evangelist Letha Pratt  
...Thankful that she's saved.  
And Evangelist Letha Pratt of the Church of Open House of Deliverance Through Jesus Christ is thankful that she is saved and knows the Lord.  
"We are still free - even if death should come we can be free to go back to him," she said.  
Rev. Coleman Kerry of Friendship Baptist Church said that maybe the crisis will teach us something. "We need to appreciate



Rev. Coleman Kerry  
...Appreciate what we have  
what we have and not be extravagant. This is a wasteful nation - others can live off our garbage. We can thank the Lord for making us think about that."  
And what about people who suffer? According to Rev. Wilson Mitchell of Chappell Memorial Baptist Church, "...you'll find a lot of people suffering - they can be thankful just being here and living."

TURTLE-TALK  
  
Do not expect that EVERYONE  
WILL THINK YOU ARE PERFECTLY  
SATISFIED if you are  
PEOPLE. GOOL ONE OR TWO