

Nation's Energy Crisis Hits Home

Northamptonians will sleep in cooler houses, work in cooler offices and stores, drive cars a bit slower and sit in cooler classrooms this winter.

The nation's energy shortage, the term applied to a general and gradual depletion of the natural fuel resources, has hit Northampton County.

It is not uncommon for gas stations to be completely out of gas on weekends or even as late in the week as Wednesday. Motorists daily are faced with the problem getting enough gas to commute to jobs and carry out routine chores.

Some drivers even have tales of being stranded in Seaboard with the tank on empty.

The President has called for a sacrifice on the part of motorists and ask that unnecessary driving be eliminated. He is also calling for lower speed limits.

Gov. Jim Holshouser has imposed 55 mph speed limits on all North Carolina highways. Workers from the Division of Highways of the Department of Transportation Wednesday were busy placing 55 mph decals over 60 mph signs on primary roads and over 70 on the interstate in Northampton.

The new lower speed limit goes into effect Saturday; however, the state will exercise a 10-day grace period to allow motorists time to adjust to the new maximum limit.

Reduced speed on the highway is expected to serve as a conservation measure for gasoline which is in short supply nationally.

A spot check on Interstate 95 Wednesday revealed that about one out of every four motorists is observing the reduced speed limit. In the left lane steady streams of impatient north and southbound cars were leaving the conservationists in the dust.

A check with several gas stations around the county indicated the fuel is not being delivered by distributors with as much regularity as last month. Many stations have been closing down on weekends to save gasoline for workers and not the weekend

pleasure riders.

All service stations are asked by President Nixon to close down at 9 p.m. Saturday and remain closed until midnight Sunday. The request is an effort on behalf of the administration to attempt to curtail Sunday driving. Though stations will be closed, no Sunday ban on driving has been imposed.

HEATING OIL

With temperatures in the balmy 70's and 80's this week, little attention has been placed on the problem of heating oil in the county.

Most companies are not taking on new customers. Some companies serving Northampton haven't taken on new customers since last year in anticipation of the shortage.

Residents are being asked to turn back thermostats in an effort to save heating gas and oil, the shortest of the fuels, economists say. Most furnaces and room heaters have been off for several days due to the unseasonable weather.

A number of businesses and industries have announced steps to cooperate with conservation moves in an effort to avert a situation in which homes and industry would be without oil.

Currently, oil drums at school buildings in the county are practically filled.

BUSES CONSERVE

Supt. Roy F. Lowry reported Wednesday that the situation with heating oil and coal is better than the gas situation. The system operates 93 school buses and the system only keeps a two-week supply of gas on hand. To date, the schools have not been refused gasoline by suppliers.

Lowry said he could not anticipate problems at this stage with gas to operate school buses.

Efforts are being made in the school system to conserve gas and oil. A recent memorandum to county principals asked that no more gasoline be used that was used in the second school month.

Students are to be at bus stops in time and drivers are asked not to wait for late students. The stops are to be .2 mile apart.

Bus engines are not to be operated while loading and unloading at school and students are asked to enter and leave buses as promptly and as safely as possible. In addition, drivers are to leave immediately after starting a bus in the mornings or afternoons.

Buses will be kept properly serviced to assure the best gasoline mileage per gallon.

The county has 39 buildings to heat on 14 campuses. The majority of the heating plants are oil fired furnaces; however, three large units are coal fired.

The system has 20,000 gallons of extra fuel to fall back on in storage, Lowry reported. Many schools principals have been told they are expected to get through the winter with their available oil supply.

The temperature in classrooms and other school facilities will be lowered to 68 degrees. Gymnasium temperature will be kept at 60 degrees and lowered to 55 when school is not in session.

Schools have been asked to utilize 20 per cent less fuel and electricity as last year.

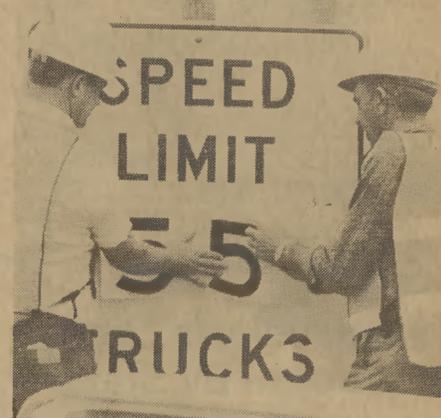
Though electricity hasn't become a problem, in this area, schools are still expected to observe efforts to conserve power, Lowry stated.

As few lights as possible will be burned in classrooms, libraries, and hallways and schools are asked to schedule as few night meetings as possible.

Lowry mentioned no plans to shorten the school term or the school day in an effort to save energy.

"During these times of shortages and crisis' let me urge everyone to do everything possible to conserve fuel and electricity. If all will take a Spartan attitude and try to make some sacrifices, rationing and school closings are not as likely to occur," the school

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SIGN LANGUAGE — Highway division employees O. D. Askew (left) and Tillery Dempsey of Ahoskie place a 55 mph decal over the 60 mph speed limit on this sign on Rich Square Road just east of Jackson. The new maximum speed, brought on by the energy crisis, is effective Saturday statewide.

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N'ampton Would Net \$128,000

County One Of Nine Without Local Option Sales Tax

JACKSON — Northampton County is one of only nine counties not participating in the one-cent local option sales tax, according to the latest quarterly report from the state Department of Revenue.

The county has the option to participate or not to participate in the program that could mean an additional \$128,000 in revenue to the county.

County commission Chairman Jasper Eley stated at a recent board meeting that the issue should have been on the November ballot for county voters to decide.

The law allows for a referendum on the matter or independent action by the county board of commissioners without a referendum.

Northampton voters voted down a similar proposal under a different law several years ago.

Commissioner Jack Faison said he feels the county is missing out on revenue and is gaining nothing by being a

sales-tax-free island while counties on all sides are earning sales tax.

Faison noted that Northamptonians are paying taxes in other counties they aren't paying at home.

Northampton is one of two eastern counties without the tax. Hyde, a count of about 5,000 persons, is not taking advantage of the tax.

Four counties in the piedmont, Stokes, Rockingham, Person and Scotland, and three in the mountains, Caldwell, Burke and Rutherford, have never enacted the tax.

State law allows commissioners to impose or call for a vote on imposing a one-cent tax per \$1 on general merchandise sold in stores in the county. The tax is reverted back to the county coffers and is shared with the municipalities.

The tax is collected along with the state's three-cent sales tax and is administered by the state Revenue Department and returned to

the counties and towns quarterly.

Should Northampton adopt the tax, the county would realize about \$101,250 of the annual amount.

The municipalities would share as follows based on the estimate of \$128,000:

Conway, \$2,927; Garysburg, \$974; Gaston, \$4,660; Jackson, \$3,214; Lasker, \$481; Rich Square, \$5,289; Seaboard, \$2,577; Severn, \$1,501;

Woodland, \$3,138; Margarettsville, \$401; and Milwaukee, \$1,586.

(The figure listed for the town of Margarettsville was included this 1971 estimate. Since that time the town has lost its charter and is no longer a municipality and would not be eligible for the receipts.)

Northampton's neighboring (See COUNTY, Page 14)

Bloodmobile Set In Rich Square

RICH SQUARE — The Tidewater Regional Bloodmobile will visit here Monday in an attempt to improve the county's blood collection record for the year.

The program for the July to June fiscal year is 900 units of blood. Only 160 pints has been collected to date, leaving a

deficit of nearly 300 pints for the first six months.

The bloodmobile will set up in the Federal Building from noon to 5 p.m.

A new ruling permits prospective donors who have a history of treatment for an illness diagnosed as malaria may now be accepted as a donor, provided the person has lived in the country three years without a relapse of the disease.

The region served by the Tidewater Bloodmobile increases annually by 10,000 persons. Military donations are down since 1967 by 65 per cent.

Anyone between the ages of 18 and 66 is a prospective donor.

interviewing him for her syndicated column, "Postal Chatter".

Following a brief reception at the Severn Post Office, a few townspeople, the news media and honored guests from the U.S. Postal Service were treated to a meal at the community building with Ralph's Barbecue of Roanoke Rapids catering.

The general said he was impressed with Severn hospitality.

The folks in Gaston have done their fair share for the Roanoke Valley United Fund, a consolidated charities organization for Roanoke Rapids, Weldon and Gaston.

The Gaston division, headed by Ms. Emma Moseley, has topped its \$600-plus division goal for the third straight year.

The UF serves some 20 deserving charitable and non-profit organizations serving upper Halifax and the Northampton panhandle.

All over Northampton County resident motorists and travelers are realizing more daily how real this thing called the energy crisis really is.

More gas pumps are without gasoline than with in the towns and rural reaches of Northampton. Those that have gasoline to start the week generally are out by the weekend.

It appears the shortage of auto fuel has hit hard and fast in the rural sections of the nation. Cities still have not felt the pinch like small towns and farming communities.

It is rumored that some gas station operators, in order to save gasoline for their regular customers, are putting up fake "out" signs to ward off the passers-through and to keep the gas for county folk.

Still others are refusing to fill up tanks and are allowing only \$3, \$2 or even \$1 amounts.

No longer do gas station attendants inquire: "Fill 'er up?" "How much gas can I get today?" is a more common question of the motorist.

Job Corps

RICH SQUARE — Job Corps interviews will be held Friday in Rich Square.

Job Corps Counselor Hazel Taylor will be at the CADA Branch Office here to meet with interested agencies and individuals interested in the Job Corps program.

Energy Crisis Affects Mail

Northampton postmasters encourage postal patrons to "move up the mailing of Christmas packages and cards by one week."

The reason for the special appeal is blamed on the energy crisis and its effect on mail service.

Dec. 3 is the newly announced deadline for package mailing and Dec. 8 is the deadline for Christmas cards with guaranteed delivery by Christmas.

The dates had been Dec. 10 and 15, respectively, prior to this week's announcement. Fuel shortages have caused



VISITS SEVERN — Postmaster General E. T. Klassen (left) is greeted at the Severn Post Office by Postmaster Mildred Vaughan and Severn Mayor Rufus Johnson. Klassen later had lunch at the Severn Community Center.

Postmaster General Visits Severn PO

SEVERN — U. S. Postmaster General E. T. Klassen visited the Severn Post Office Friday and was extended a royal welcome by the people of this small farming community.

Severn was the only third class post office visited by Gen. Klassen on his whirlwind tour of several North Carolina postal operations.

Klassen on his whirlwind tour of several North Carolina postal operations. Klassen's pre-holiday visits for the purpose of inspecting

facilities and encouraging early Christmas mailing due to the heavy volume and the energy crisis.

When asked how the crisis would affect mail service, Klassen said he had been assured the U. S. Postal Service will be a top priority recipient of fuel needed to keep its trucks rolling.

He did warn of heavier mail volume than ever before and encouraged patrons to mail early this year to avoid the last week rush and possible delay.

Severn Postmaster Mildred Vaughan, postal information officer for Northeastern North Carolina, was hostess for the general's visit. The Severn visit was the only announced stop on the cabinet officer's agenda and, subsequently, numerous television and newspaper reporters were on hand to interview the general.

Klassen is the highest government official ever to visit the community.

Scheduled to arrive at 1 p.m. he was over an hour behind schedule when he drove up to the small post office with Mrs. Vaughan. He flew to Northampton via helicopter which landed on a private air strip near Severn.

Several current and former postal employees were there to greet the governmental official as well as a number of curious townspeople who wanted to shake Klassen's

hand and welcome him to Severn.

Mayor and Mrs. Rufus Johnson greeted the postmaster general and officially welcomed him to the village.

Following the guest's tour of the post office and brief

exchanges with members of the crowd, the general and several townspeople were treated to a luncheon at the community building.

Following the visit here, the postmaster general continued his inspection of numerous other postal facilities in the state.

Man Remains Serious At Duke

WOODLAND — A Rt. 2, Conway man remains in serious condition at Duke University Medical Center in Durham with injuries

sustained in a Saturday afternoon motorcycle wreck near here.

Wallace Henry Grant, 23, was taken to Roanoke-Chowan Hospital in Ahoskie by the rescue squad and later transferred to Duke.

According to Trooper L. J. Pitula, investigating officer, a car driven by Gilbert Brown Timberlake, 56, of George was traveling north on US 258 and was making a left turn at a gas station.

Grant, operating a 1969 Honda, was traveling at a high rate of speed and struck the car in the rear.

Grant was later charged with careless and reckless driving. Damage to the Timberlake 1968 Buick was estimated at \$300 and \$275 to the Honda.

The accident occurred at 2:15 p.m.

Parades Set

Holiday parades are on tap this weekend for Northamptonians.

The annual Amvet Holiday Parade in Roanoke Rapids will be held Sunday at 2 p.m. Grand marshal for the parade is Bill Bowman, better known as Bowman Body on WXEX-TV's Schck Theatre. Over 100 units will be included.

Forty units are included in the Ahoskie Christmas Parade. William R. Raynor, Ahoskie businessman, will marshal the parade. This is the first holiday parade in several years.

northampton chaff

It may not be a bright Christmas at night in Rich Square this year, but the holiday decorations put up in town will certainly serve their purpose in daylight hours.

The town of Rich Square foots the bill for the streetside Christmas decorations at the tune of \$1,400 per year.

Rich Square is on a special rental program whereby different decorations are put up each year for a flat fee. The town has signed a three-year contract with the decorating company, assuring service for the next three seasons.

Town volunteer firemen were paid by the municipality to install the lights along the town's two main streets.

Due to the energy crisis, the President has asked towns not to burn unnecessary lights this Christmas. Rich Square plans to comply.

Last weekend it got to the point where motorists on busy U.S. 258 would literally fight for position at the few gas pumps operating in Rich Square.

One report has it that town Police Chief Willie Wayne Conner was called to a self service pump on 258 to break up a squabble between two gas-hungry motorists.

Both apparently drove away with their share of the juice.

Friday had to mark the largest gathering of newsmen and women the town of Severn has ever witnessed.

Reporters and photographers from numerous regional and local papers and television station converged on the farming community to meet the postmaster general of the United States.

Gen. E. T. Klassen was coming to Severn to inspect postal facilities at the small post office and to meet with vivacious Postmaster Mildred Vaughan.

Mildred, who was beaming from ear to ear that the top postman in the nation had chosen her office to visit, had met the general on three prior occasions when she was