

Wildwood Point Residents Request Lake Gaston Fire Boats

Residents of Wildwood Point on Lake Gaston in Warren County want improved fire protection on Lake Gaston and have asked the three counties of Warren, Northampton and Halifax Counties to join together in providing a fire boat for the lake.

In a letter under date of Aug. 19, addressed to the boards of commissioners of the three counties, Nathan E. Thomas, President of Wildwood Point Association, said that while he only officially represented members of the Wildwood Association, that he feels he expressed the views of other property owners on Lake Gaston who are well aware of the tax base generated from Lake Gaston and requests that a portion be returned for the protection of the taxpayers. His letter to the Warren Commissioners reads as follows:

"Gentlemen:
"Although I only officially represent the views of the 550 stockholders at Wildwood Point Association, after having talked with numerous other landowners around Lake Gaston, I feel this request is also in conformance with the views of property owners surrounding Lake Gaston.

"With the great increase in tax evaluations of Lake property, we would like to see a coordinated effort by the three counties surrounding Lake Gaston to do something constructive for the taxpayers on the lake.

"A fire boat on the lake, approved by the North Carolina and Virginia Fire Rating Bureaus, would be a great protection for our citizens in the area and would also reduce fire insurance rates in that area by a great percentage. The present fire departments and rescue squads in the surrounding communities are to be commended; however, a fire boat and rescue unit stationed on the lake would greatly improve the situation.

"We are aware of the tax base generated from Lake Gaston and we respectfully request that a portion of this be returned for the protection of your taxpayers.

"Sincerely yours,
"NATHAN E. THOMAS
"President Wildwood Point Association."

In Warrenton on Monday, Thomas said that a fire boat on the lake approved by the North Carolina and Virginia Fire Rating Bureaus, would greatly reduce the cost of fire insurance on the lake. In his own case it would mean an annual reduction of \$40. He suggested that the fire boat be equipped with two portable engines and hose so that the reach of the fire

boat would be extended beyond the lake. These portable engines could hold a residence or forest fire on the lake until the rural firefighters could arrive, he said.

Thomas said that one fourth of the Warren County tax base is due to tax generated by the building of Gaston Lake, and that the valuation of Wildwood Point is nearly \$5 million.

The request of Wildwood Point is expected to be considered at the regular Sept. meeting of the Board on Tuesday, Sept. 6, as Labor Day falls on Monday, Sept. 5.

Thomas also said that on behalf of Wildwood Point

Association, he had requested that the community be given better garbage collection, and that he had talked with County Manager Charles Hayes who promised to bring the matter to the attention of the board. At its Aug. meeting the board agreed to appropriate funds for additional containers over the county but said that due to shortage of funds these would be limited. How many of these additional containers would go to Wildwood Point was not stated.

Thomas said that residents of Wildwood Point are very much concerned about REA's ruling that since housing at Wildwood Point

is rated secondary residences, that each has a 25 per cent surcharge added to his or her monthly electric bill. This is of deep concern to all customers served on the Lake in North Carolina and Virginia and was protested at a meeting held at Enfield on August 18. An account of this meeting, under an Enfield dateline, was carried in The Rocky Mount Evening Telegram on the following day. It reads as follows:

The dispute over higher seasonal rates charged Gaston Lake residents erupted into charges that the Halifax Electric Membership Co-operative (REA) is violating the customer's

constitutional rights, after a meeting held with the REA Board of Directors here last night.

Nathan E. Thomas of Rocky Mount, president of the Wildwood Point Association, a group of Lake Gaston homeowners from North Carolina and Virginia, charged that the REA was "beating us like a borrowed mule" and were unsympathetic in listening to their complaints.

"We are charging the Halifax Membership Co-operative with specifically designing their rules and regulation to discriminate against Lake Gaston dwellers," Thomas said.

Thomas charged that the attitude of the board of directors of the REA was discriminatory against people they considered to be wealthy.

"Mr. R. E. Booth, the analysis expert, stated in response to one of our questions, 'Well, if you could not afford those expensive bills that you call extreme, you shouldn't be up there anyway.' That attitude is quite obviously the same as Mr. A. C. Cox, the chairman of the board," Thomas charged.

The meeting last night, attended by about 30 members of the Wildwood Point Association, was arranged to allow a discussion

of the seasonal rates which are about 25 per cent higher than regular rates. The REA customers argued that since they were year round residents of the lake, even though they did not live there exclusively, they were forced to pay extremely high monthly bills because of the penalty rate.

Cox argued that the majority of the lake residents did not maintain year-round homes there and that those attending the meeting were the exception to the rule.

R. F. Booth, an electrification engineer and consultant to the Halifax REA, said that the 25 per cent rate was an attempt to spread

of the burden of expenses incurred in installing facilities to the customers. The initial loan to install lines, transformers, and other equipment must be paid within 35 years, he said, and the equipment must also be maintained and repaired.

Cox pointed out that "our revenue per mile of line is ridiculous when compared to surrounding counties." Cox said that the Halifax REA last year had a gross revenue of about \$1,700 per mile of line, while the Pitt-Greene co-operative had about \$3,800 per mile of line.

"You say you are being penalized 25 per cent," Cox (Continued on page 5)



SIGNS OF AUTUMN—Columns of clouds marching through Warren County, occasionally carrying rain and accompanied by thunderstorm, are the advance guard of the autumn season. Here, off a field on the Warrenton-Henderson Highway, clouds pass over a field which only days before was parched by the worst drought in years. (Staff Photo)

Plane Lands In Tobacco Field

A Greensboro man escaped without injury early Saturday morning after he belted a Piper seven-passenger turboprop plane through corn and tobacco fields.

Fred Smith made the emergency landing in a field near the Cokesbury community behind the home of Mrs. Annie Gill. He was en route from Richmond to Greensboro when he discovered he was running low on fuel and set the plane down to avoid a crash landing.

Major Richard L. Mathews of the Civil Air Patrol said that Smith did a professional job in landing the plane. The plane was being repaired early this week and Smith will probably take off from a dirt road, Mathews said.

The plane sustained an

estimated \$500 to \$1,500 damage after it bowled through a tobacco field farmed by Harold Stainback. The plane stopped in a corn field owned by Ronald Smith.

Damages to the corn were estimated at \$500 with damages to the half-primed tobacco crop set at \$2,000.

The plane was damaged with small holes in the fiberglass wings, possibly caused by the corn.

The Vance County Sheriff's Department and the Civil Air Patrol investigated the crash landing after the pilot was reported missing. He was. He had gone in search of more fuel.

No charges have been made against the pilot but the farmers may want to file for property damages.

Vance, Warren Lawmen Raid Liquor Still

Deputies Dorsey Capps and Danny Bartholomew joined ABC Officers H. D. Greenway and M. M. White of Vance County and Franklin County ABC Officer Luther King, and Fonzie Flower in a whiskey still raid in northern Vance County at 5:30 p. m. Friday.

The officers captured some 30 gallons of 100 proof moonshine whiskey, stored in plastic jugs, Mason jars and soft drink bottles. No arrests were made.

The still was dynamited and destroyed in the process were a 150 gallon galvanized boiler, two 180-gallon mash barrels, 40 feet of copper tubing, tubs, jars, and two 180-gallon double stills.

Town Board Has Zoning Meeting

The Board of Town Commissioners met in a 45-minute session at 5 p. m. on Wednesday of last week. B. G. White, Mayor Pro-tem presided in the absence of Mayor W. A. Miles.

The purpose of the meeting was to consider some proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

Present were Commissioners Massey, Leary, Butler, Cliborne, and Haithcock.

A motion was made by Commissioner Massey that the area between the Airport Road and Bowers and Burrows Oil Company be changed from Industrial to R-12 on the East side of the road; and that the area on the West side of the road from Ella Kearney's house north to the R-8 zone be made R-12.

That the area across the highway from Fowler-Barham Ford, owned by Sarah Kearney Watkins and the J. B. Davis Estate be changed to C-2.

That the area around the Lake at Peck Manufacturing Company and extending over to the industrial area including the High Dollar Warehouse should be considered industrial.

Grocery stores and produce markets should be added into C-1 district.

Tobacco warehouses would be added into the Industrial district and also their agricultural related uses.

These and other changes which were included in a suggested amendment to the ordinance as received from the Institute of Government on June 9, 1977, are to be included in the Zoning Ordinance amendment. (Continued on page 10)

Schools Receive \$454,338 Grant

Warren County schools have received a grant of \$454,338 under part A of Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, according to State School Superintendent Craig Phillips. This grant will support special educational programs during the school year 1977-78.

According to the Robert Marley, director of the Division of Compensatory Education for the state education agency, "Title I provides funds to local educational agencies for use in helping to break the cycle of poverty through equalization of educational opportunity. These funds must be used to expand and improve educational programs contributing to the special needs of educationally deprived children."

Almost all the school administrative units have used Title I funds to support special reading programs. A few have special programs in mathematics.

For fiscal 1978 North Carolina has been granted a total of \$59,094,099 in Title I Part A funds. This is up, statewide, from the total of \$51,885,667 received during the 1976-77 school year.



Building Committee J. B. Martin turns dirt as other members wait their turn. Pictured, left to right, are: William Lewis Fuller, Jr., J. B. Martin, Mrs. Joyce Mabry, Mrs. Doris Reavis, and Harold Harris, chairman.

Groundbreaking Exercise Held

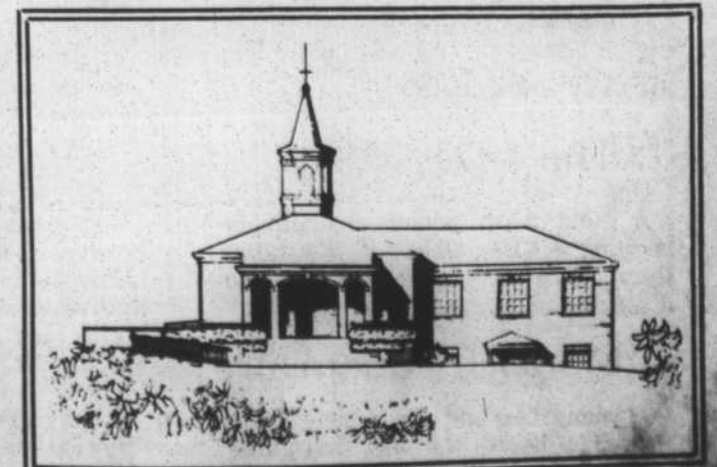
Groundbreaking exercises were conducted at Providence United Methodist Church at Afton shortly after 4 o'clock on Sunday afternoon.

Exercises were in charge of the minister of the church, the Rev. Dennis Levin, and included brief religious services as well as the turning of dirt by the pastor, Frank Grill, secretary of the Methodist Conference Divisions of Ministries, the chairman and members of the building committee, and the Rev. Warren Petteway, Raleigh District Superintendent.

The Rev. Mr. Levin sketched the work leading up to a decision to enlarge and renovate the church and his gratitude in the faith shown by the congregation in their church and their community. He also expressed his gratitude for the assistance rendered by Frank Grill, secretary, and the Department of Missions.

Plans call for renovating the front entrance to the church, and the building of an addition on the southside of the building with an entrance. Construction is expected to start shortly.

A social hour followed the groundbreaking exercises when light refreshments were served in the Fellowship Hall of the church.



Sketch Of New Afton Church Other Picture On Page 5

Report Of Past Year Reveals

Courts Handle Almost 3,000 Cases

By HELEN HOWARD
The Warren County District and Superior Court had 2991 criminal cases during 1976, according to a report by the Administrative Office of the Courts in Raleigh.

The report indicated that the District Court had 2682 criminal cases while Superior Court had 309.

Of the cases tried in District Court 109 were pending in January, 1976, and 2573 were filed during the year. Of the cases disposed of by the court, 1410 were motor vehicle charges and 1163 other criminal matters.

During the year 199 cases were disposed of by judges, 447 defendants entered

pleas, 1,110 were handled by waiver and 188 preliminary hearings were held with 502 being taken care of by other means for a total disposition of 2446 cases. This left 236 cases pending as of January 1, 1977.

In criminal session of Superior Court, 78 cases were pending on January 1, 1976, with 231 being filed during the year. Of those filed 104 were misdemeanors and 127 felonies. The Superior Court disposed of 9 cases by jury, 106 defendants entered pleas and 92 were disposed of otherwise, leaving 102 still pending as of January 1, 1977.

During the year 85 special proceedings were filed and

115 estate cases. Also filed were civil cases for district court—528; civil cases Superior Court—54; criminal cases, district—2573; and 231 criminal cases for Superior Court for a total filed of 3586.

Dispositions of these cases were special proceedings, 48; estates, 122; district court civil, 466; superior court civil, 54; district criminal, 2446 and superior court criminal, 207.

The report revealed that 159 special proceedings were pending at the beginning of the year, 85 were filed and only 48 were disposed of leaving 196 pending for 1977. This

indicates an increase in special proceedings.

On estate cases, 256 were pending while 115 were filed during the year and 122 handled, leaving 243 pending which shows a decrease.

In District Court civil cases 235 were pending on January 1 and 528 were filed for a total of 763. The court handled 466 cases during the year and 297 were still pending on December 31 for an increase.

Superior Court civil cases held over were 55 while 54 were filed and 54 disposed of leaving 55 pending at the end of the year. This caseload remained the same.