

Armed Man Robs Store On Friday

A Warrenton grocery store operator was robbed of between \$150 and \$200 Friday night by a man wearing a Halloween mask and armed with a sawed-off shotgun, according to reports from the Warren County Sheriff's Department.

Deputy Thomas McCaffity said Elmer Davis, shopkeeper of B&B Grocery on North Main Street just outside the city limits, was sweeping when the robber ran into the store about 8:40 p. m. and announced that he was holding up the store.

Davis, McCaffity said, reached over the counter to the cash register and gave the robber all the money on hand.

No shots were fired, and Davis offered no resistance.

The robber left the store on foot with the money and drove away in a vehicle he had parked on one side of the store, McCaffity said.

The robber was described as a black male in his 20s wearing a dark shirt and blue pants.

A spokesperson for the Sheriff's Department said this week that no suspects had been arrested.

McCaffity said that Davis' wife and a child were also in the store at the time of the robbery, and that no attempt was made to follow the robber to get a license number for fear he might fire his gun.

In another case, the spokesperson for the Sheriff's Department said several people had been interviewed in connection with the shooting death of Willie Cleaton Brown of Heck's Grove community, but that no suspects had been arrested.

Brown's body was found on Dec. 1 in the charred remains of his house which had been completely destroyed by fire. An autopsy showed that Brown had been shot twice in the back with a shotgun.



A crew from Neil Weeks Construction Co. of Goldsboro is shown last week as they began reconstructing the front porch on the historic Jacob Holt house in Warrenton. The exterior restoration work is being funded by a grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and an appropriation from the N. C. General Assembly. (Staff Photo)

Improvements Are Made To Historic Holt House

By KAY HORNER
Staff Writer

The historic Jacob Holt house at the corner of Bragg and Franklin streets in Warrenton is a little closer to being all dressed up, but it still has nowhere to go.

According to Richard Hunter, county clerk of court and member of the Warren County Historical Association, work has been underway since October to stabilize the exterior of the house.

A crew from Neil Weeks Construction Co. of Goldsboro, whose specialty is restoration masonry, has restored the home's two chimneys and the foundation

pillings, and is in the process of reconstructing a front porch and balcony.

The work, which Hunter said will cost about \$14,000, is being funded by a grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and a General Assembly appropriation.

The grants provide only for exterior restoration, and Hunter said he was not aware of any plans to seek further grants for restoration of the interior.

Unfortunately, no one seems to want the house. It was deeded to the Town of Warrenton by Anna G. Butler and her husband, R. B.

Butler, a little more than six years ago in hopes that the town could secure the necessary funding to restore and use the house.

The Warrenton Woman's Club, which restored the Warrenton Depot that was later destroyed by fire in the fall of 1982, recently expressed interest in leasing the house from the town.

But Mary Louise Limer, president of the club, said this week that it would cost "a fortune" to get involved with the house.

The club voted on the matter at a recent meeting, and the result of the balloting has not yet been disclosed to members. However, Mrs. Limer said that she had no doubt how the voting went.

"We have 19 members, and I know that at least 17 were planning to vote 'no,'" she commented.

The house is under restrictive covenants until the year 2007. The covenants were required in order for the town to receive state and federal grants for improvements.

The covenants mandate that the public have access to the house no less than 12 days a year, that the house be continuously maintained, repaired, and administered so as to preserve its historical integrity, and that adequate staffing and maintenance be continuously provided from funds other than federal or state government sources.

Mrs. Limer said there was no way the club, (Continued on page 11)

As Warren County Manager Hunter Rejects Offer; Charles Worth Hired

By KAY HORNER
Staff Writer

Charles J. Worth, a Manson real estate broker and accountant, accepted the post of Warren County manager last night after county commissioners voted 3-1 to offer him the position.

Commissioners last week had offered the job to Richard F. Hunter, a former town manager of Carrboro. Mrs. Eva M. Clayton, chairperson of the board, said last night following an hour-and-a-half executive session that week-long negotiations with Hunter were not successful and that he had declined the offer because of "family reasons."

His wife's position as assistant dean at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was a deciding factor, Mrs. Clayton said.

After Hunter withdrew, the commissioners interviewed Worth and two other candidates, James L. Willis, senior manager of Carolina Power & Light Co.'s Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant, and Carl J. Freeman, former town manager of Hope Mills.

A fifth candidate, Floyd McKissick, Jr., was not interviewed because time constraints made him unavailable, Mrs. Clayton said.

Willis was not able to be on the job before mid-February, and Mrs. Clayton indicated that the commissioners were anxious to have a county manager on board as soon as possible.

A native of Raleigh, Worth came to Warren County five years ago as director of finance for Soul City, a federal "new town" project that went under after the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development withdrew financial support for non-payment of government loans.

Worth is a graduate of A&T State University with a B.S. in accounting and additional courses in tax planning and real estate and development.

From 1976 to 1979 he was senior auditor for Bausch & Lomb, an optical company in Rochester, N. Y., and from 1974 to 1976 he served as senior internal auditor for General Signal Corporation in Stamford, Conn.

Prior to that, Worth was a senior auditor for Cooper & Librand, a New York based accounting firm.

Worth is one of three blacks who were among the five candidates chosen from a field of 35 for interviews by the full board.

Although the vote to offer Hunter, also a black, the post was unanimous by the com-

missioners, last night's vote was split with Commissioner Jack Harris opposing.

Commissioner William Skinner was not present.

Harris said this morning that he had voted against Worth because of his lack of qualifications.

"His training is in accounting," Harris said. "He has no management and no government experience."

Worth commented in

a telephone interview this morning that the split vote was no surprise.

"I didn't expect it any other way," Worth said. "But I was hired to do a job, and I will put forth every effort to do that job."

Worth also said he wasn't concerned that he was the commissioners' second choice for the post.

"That doesn't affect me," he said. "Hunter was a rare bear. He had

a substantial amount of municipal training. You won't find that in your everyday individual. I have some attributes Hunter doesn't have such as my financial background....I can always get the municipal background."

In comments after the meeting last night, Mrs. Clayton indicated that Worth's lack of governmental experience was not "discouraging." She noted that he would be (Continued on page 2)

Along Discontinued Line

Local Railroad Considering Lease, Purchase Of Tracks

The abandonment of track between Norlina and Roanoke Rapids by Seaboard Systems Railroad, Inc. could isolate the 1.9 miles of track owned by Warrenton Railroad between Warren Plains and Norlina, but the president of the local railroad said Tuesday negotiations are underway either to lease or buy the track from Seaboard.

According to Willard Formyduval, the attorney for the railroad is currently in the process of arranging a meeting with the shippers involved to discuss the proposed abandonment and the options open to Warrenton Railroad.

Five shippers, Peck Manufacturing Co., Arcola Lumber Co., General Box Co., Farmers Cooperative Exchange, and Lebanon Chemical Co. (formerly

Smith Douglass Co.), are serviced by Warrenton Railroad.

Last February, Seaboard filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) a revised System Diagram Map showing that the 28.97-mile track between Norlina and Roanoke Rapids had been assigned to Category 1, which meant that filing of the abandonment application was anticipated.

The second phase of the abandonment process was put into motion this week with Seaboard's public notice of its intent to file on or about January 30.

Thomas Lynch, a spokesperson for the railroad at its Charlotte office, said Monday that little or no opposition to the proposed abandonment is expected because the track

currently is used by only one customer, Autoverters of Littleton.

The line is being abandoned to eliminate an unprofitable line and to avoid the maintenance expense on the line, according to Seaboard.

The ICC is receiving written comments on the proposed abandonment through February 29.

Jim Whitley, Warren County industrial developer, said this week that the abandonment would have a definite negative impact on the county's industrial recruitment, and that the Industrial Commission would discuss the matter at its next meeting.

Noting that the area around the 158 Bypass between Macon and Warren County High School is a "logical" area for industrial development, Whitley said lack of a railroad connection would "seriously impact the desirability of those sites" for companies requiring rail transportation.

If no protests are received by the ICC, the commission will grant the abandonment request and issue a certificate permitting the railroad to abandon the tracks within 75 days after the filing of the application.

Formyduval, who has been part owner of the Warrenton Railroad since 1979, said he expected a decision would be made by the end of the month on the local railroad's course of action.

Formyduval recently formed the Aberdeen and Briar Patch Railroad Company to run the 33-mile track from Aberdeen to Star. The track is being abandoned by Norfolk and Southern Railroad because of dwindling business.

Formyduval also has interests in railroads in Georgia and South Carolina.

J. T. Fleming Enters Race For Seat On County Board

James T. Fleming, Warrenton businessman, has filed for a seat on the Warren County Board of Commissioners, subject to the May 8 Democratic Primary. Fleming paid his \$10 filing fee on Monday.

Fleming, a resident of Ridgecrest Drive, is seeking the seat now held by W. J. (Jack) Harris, who represents the Warrenton Township District.

Harris has not publicly said whether he will be a candidate for re-election. The terms of Harris and Commissioner William Skinner expire this year.

Fleming, 41, is a licensed real estate broker and serves as vice president of the Kerr Lake Board of

Realtors. A licensed contractor, he also is a licensed insurance agent, a member of the N. C. Home Builders Association, and a real estate developer.

He is the Christian

Education director of his church and is president of James T. Fleming Enterprises, Inc.

He formerly served as executive director of the Warren County Chamber of Commerce, president of the Vance, Granville, Franklin, Warren Life Underwriters, a Cub Scout master, chairman of the Warren County Cancer Crusade and chairman of the Warren County 4-H Advisory Committee.

A member of the Warren County Nursing Center Advisory Group, he is a past chairman of the Warren County Rural Development Panel. He is a past chairman of the Kerr Lake Board of Realtors (Continued on page 11)



FLEMING

Dick Gregory Plans Visit Here Sunday

Comedian and activist Dick Gregory will be the featured speaker at a celebration of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on January 15 at 2 p. m. in Hawkins High School Gymnasium in Warrenton.

The program is being sponsored by the Political Action Council and local chapters of Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the NAACP.

Gregory serves as a board member for SCLC.

Local officials, including chairperson of the Warren County Board of Commissioners Eva M. Clayton; chairman of the Warren County Board of Education Henry Pitchford; and Seventh District State Representative Frank W. Ballance, Jr., will appear on the program and bring greetings.



GREGORY

The program is being coordinated by Mrs. Dollie Burwell, national board member and president of the Vance-Warren Chapter of SCLC.

Congress recently enacted legislation making Dr. King's birthday a national holiday beginning in 1986.